

Charleston

DISTRICT DISPATCH

"Just Doing It"

Vol. 26 No.4

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District

Winter/Spring 2004



Our Heroes Who Serve in Iraq



Shawn Boone, Biologist
21 September 2003 - Present

Tony Lijewski, Civil Eng Tech
28 September 2003 - Present



Dennis McKinley, Project Manager
25 May 2003 - 14 January 2004



Max Hayes, Electrician
22 February 2004 - Present

Fred South, Construction Rep
3 May 2003 - 15 June 2003



B.J. Fagan, RM Officer
9 January 2004 - Present



Bruce Seltzer, IM Chief
26 February 2003- 8 June 2003



Vernard Cleveland, Civil Engineer
28 September 2003- 9 December 2003

Charleston District Dispatch

Volume 26, Number 4
Winter/Spring 2004

District Dispatch is an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, authorized under the provisions of AR360-1. The editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the Department of the Army. *District Dispatch* is a command information publication of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District. Circulation is 250. Articles, photographs, and other contributions are welcome and encouraged. The editor reserves the right to make editorial changes to all material submitted for publication. Letters to the editor are also encouraged. The deadline for submissions is the 1st of the month preceding publication.

Send submissions to: Editor, *District Dispatch*, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, 69A Hagood Avenue, Charleston, SC 29403. Details may be obtained from the Public Affairs Officer at (843) 329-8123. Written material may be electronically sent to: alicia.m.gregory@usace.army.mil.

Commander:

Lt. Col. Alvin B. Lee

Public Affairs Officer:

Alicia Gregory

Inside the Dispatch

Ode to Baghdad	Pg. 4
“Kudzu of the Beach” Threatens SC Dunes	Pg. 5
District Reaches Out	Pg. 6
Umatilla Tribe Journal	Pg. 8
CO2 Training	Pg. 11

District Commander's Corner



Lt. Col. Alvin B. Lee
Charleston District Commander

Welcome back from a well deserved respite Team Charleston! It is great to have everyone back safely from the holidays and spring break, and ready to refocus our efforts for FY 04 and beyond.

A few months ago, Brig. Gen. (P) Castro came to Charleston to recognize some of our great team members that have retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and to speak with our team. During the town hall meeting he talked about his command philosophy and his belief in "Teams of Teams". He explained that we are all members of teams and that we are involved in teams both professionally and personally.

The underpinning of our Project Management Business Process (PMBP) is project-focused teamwork. The PMBP imperatives lay the framework to form teams in accomplishing

our work. Each project is placed in the hands of a Project Delivery Team and a single PM for management and leadership of a projects entire life cycle. Many of our team members are part of multiple PDTs as well as other teams. Team Charleston is not a single team, but is a Team of Teams.

As we start the last half of 2004, I would ask each team member to think about the teams that they are part of both professionally and personally. Then I would ask each of you to reflect on each of your responsibilities to those teams. The team concept focuses on what the entire team can accomplish versus a single individual.

Each team member brings his or her expertise, experiences, skills, and personality to the table. The team is lead by a project manager, who is often referred to as a PM. Each team member has a inherit responsibility to the team in developing and maintaining team relationships. Just as the Project Manager has a responsibility to lead the team, every individual team member has just as critical a responsibility to help develop, nurture, and maintain team relationships and contributing to the team's efforts. Each team member has a responsibility to actively listen to all team members, respect their viewpoints, and to seek

opportunities for synergy.

The power of the "Team of Teams" philosophy is that teams we are involved with can create the best alternatives that are substantially better than solutions developed individually. As with many opportunities that we are involved in, embracing, empowering, communicating and interdependence comes to the forefront in teamwork. This philosophy also helps us to focus on team achievement instead of looking solely at the accomplishments of individuals.

I would ask each of you to reflect on the teams that you are part of and how they fit into the overall strategy of how we do business in Team Charleston, across our region and throughout the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Essayons!

Ode to Baghdad

by Vernard Cleveland
Technical Services

Trip to TAC

As I arrived at Dulles Airport, in Virginia, from Charleston International Airport, I proceeded to the baggage claim area thinking, “Well someone will be here to meet me and all the other volunteers.” It was at baggage claim that I noticed a gentlemen holding up a sheet of paper with a Corps of Engineers logo on it. I asked him if he was with the Corps of Engineers. He responded in the affirmative and stated “Grab your baggage and take it down the stairs to the waiting area at the bottom.” If I only knew what adventure lay ahead.

Twelve of us with our luggage gathered together as our driver proceeded to drive through the quiet towns between the airport and Winchester, Virginia, our temporary home. The towns between the two destinations were quaint little villages that had the feel of colonial days. We were the fourth and final group making the trip to Baghdad as part of the Task Force – Restore Iraqi Electricity. In Winchester we learned how to keep ourselves from harm. The Transatlantic Program Center military experts demonstrated how to assemble and wear gas masks, inspect vehicles for tampering by enemy forces, use satellite telephones, and answer our many questions. We also received our uniforms. A number of the personnel grumbled about having to wear military uniforms, but soon we would realize the benefit of wearing the uniforms. On our final night in the United States everyone got together at the local steakhouse and celebrated our newfound friendships.

Travel To Baghdad

Our travel to Baghdad was by military flight. To give us the genuine feel of being in the military, we boarded a bus in Winchester, Virginia, at two o'clock Saturday morning and drove to Charleston, S.C., to board the plane. Our flight to Baghdad had layovers at Dover AFB (Delaware) and Moron AFB (Spain) for refueling. After a twenty-hour flight, we arrived in Spain on Sunday morning. The crossing of time zones played havoc with my sense of time. The opportunity to view the Spanish horizon was breath taking for me. To see the mountains and hills in the distance was quite thrilling. We had a five-hour layover to eat, wash and make merry. First we found the sleeping quarters



Vernard Cleveland visits the sites during a layover in Moron, Spain. Courtesy Photo.

where there were showers. The local mess hall had a variety of food for your selection. We spent the next three hours exploring the base until we found the commissary. At the commissary we purchased beverages, sat back and watched the planes come in and take off. After a few hours, our flight was ready and we boarded the military plane and took off for Baghdad, Iraq.

Baghdad South

We arrived at Baghdad International Airport at midnight Sunday. Unknown to us, but because of travel restrictions at night, our comrades would not be able to meet us until midmorning. We sat on the edge of the tarmac where incoming troops gathered awaiting in processing. There were large tents set up for processing personnel in and out of Baghdad. In the morning, our coworkers arrived and helped us gather our baggage then proceeded to transport us to our Baghdad home.

At the Baghdad complex, Essayon Base, we were introduced to the other members of the staff who would all become our new family. The office in Baghdad was headed by military personnel and had the feel of a military operation. Work began at 0730 and ended at 2000 hour each day, seven days a week. Recreational activities consisted of working out at the gym, jogging, and watching television. Many nights were spent just sitting on the balcony smoking cigars watching the sights and sounds of downtown Baghdad.

The office was one of Saddam Hussein's palaces adjacent the Tigris River. The building is within a section of Baghdad east of the river where Saddam and his supporters had lived. This area known, as the “green zone”, is where the more affluent people lived. The homes and palaces in this area are quite comfort-

Continued on Page 10

*District Dispatch
Winter/Spring 2004*

“Kudzu of the beach” threatens South Carolina Dunes

by Tommy Socha, Charleston District, and Robin Roecher, forest ecologist and botanist, Francis Marion and Sumter National Forest

During the 1960s an interest developed in finding a plant that would help protect and build front beach sand dunes. These plants had to be drought resistant, tolerant of salt and blowing sand, and fast growing. Just such a plant was discovered in Korea. This plant is the beach vitex or ‘*Vitex rotundifolia*.’ Unfortunately, the plant’s prolific nature and resilience are now causing it to take over the natural vegetation along the South Carolina shore. For eight years, Tommy Socha, plant specialist for Charleston District, has observed the growth of this plant. He was concerned about its growth because it had taken over and created a monoculture (a community of only one plant) by shading out native vegetation.

Last summer Socha joined the South Carolina Exotic Plant Council and brought beach vitex to their attention. Socha suggested a study be done to see if this plant should be placed on the noxious plant list, or somehow keep it from being planted on the beach. Socha first noticed the plant while working on a Corps project to rebuild 25 miles of the South Carolina coast from North Myrtle Beach to Garden City Beach. In spring of 1996, the Corps planted two plots to test dune stabilization plant materials. The Corps spent more than \$2 million on grass and fencing to establish frontal dunes along the South Carolina coastline, and the dunes were doing exceptionally well. In some areas they have grown to more than seven feet tall with a bottom width of 30 feet. So the last thing the Corps wanted was this dune system to be placed in danger. In plant material planted in a beach side yard of a residence on Pawley’s Island, Socha noticed a vine plant with beautiful blue flowers. This plant was below the high-tide line and healthy. It surrounded the test plants, which were mingled sea oats and bitter panicum. Then, a couple of years ago in Georgetown County, Betsy Brabson, a sea turtle volunteer, saw beach vitex spreading quickly on the beach near her home. Last year, Brabson documented that the plant



***Vitex rotundifolia* in bloom** Courtesy Photo.

was spreading when she counted 167 new plants in less than half a mile of DeBordieu Beach. Brabson and other sea turtle volunteers have observed the plant spreading in or near turtle nesting areas, where its fibrous roots can trap turtles and destroy eggs. Socha invited Dr. Robert Eplie and Randy Westbrook from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Plant Protection and Quarantine, and Gene Hardee, Alex Johnson, and Debbie Mann from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to identify and evaluate this plant for possible use in the dune stabilization project. After a short time of examining the plant, both Westbrook and Eplie strongly agreed that this plant should not be used. They discovered that on the backside of the dune, the beach vitex had overtaken silver leaf eleagnus, itself an aggressive plant. The beach vitex was creating a monoculture on the frontal dunes. Additional sites along the beach were identified where beach vitex was well established. Its runners measured more than 10 meters (about 33 feet) long, and may have been longer but the plants were so thick that team members could not go any further to measure. It was learned later that this location had been landscaped with more than 500 vitex plants at the request of the homeowner. Eplie identified this plant as beach vitex. Robin Roecker, President of the South Carolina Exotic Plant Council, researched the plant and found out that it is a member of the mint family, a sprawling, woody

Continued on Page 7

Charleston District Reaches Out

by Lindsey Jones
Executive Office

One of the most important objectives of all Charleston District employees is the ability to communicate in a clear and productive fashion with both other members of the Corps and members of other agencies and organizations.

Luckily, the Charleston district has excellent communication within its own agency, and is now looking to improve the ways in which we convey information to the employees of other agencies, especially in relation to the services available to other organizations through the Corps of Engineers.

In order to build relationships with existing and potential customers who may take advantage of the services provided by the Corps, the district has incorporated an Outreach Program.

“As part of the South Atlantic Division’s 2012 effort, a regional outreach team made up of each District’s Outreach Coordinator and Division leadership is being established to enhance customer interface, develop an integrated approach to maximize new business opportunities and to optimize our talents and resources regionally,” said Bill Stein, deputy district engineer for Project Mangement.

“The Corps has realized the importance of relaying information to others who may not have

otherwise known of the services available to them, including individuals and other large enterprises.”

Joe Jones, the head of the Outreach program in the Charleston District,

believes that helping United States tax payers get the most aid from their few resources is one of the most important aspects of the Outreach.

“In a time of constrained agency budgets, there is a need for more efficient use of taxpayer dollars, at all levels of government,” said Jones. “The Charleston District’s Outreach Program is striving to inform all interested parties of all of the opportunities the Corps has to help them leverage their scarce resources.”

The Corps believes it is only fair to inform public officials on how they can get the most from the money they pay.

“Outreach is important, especially in the civil works arena, because there are federal funds and services available to states and local communities to help them resolve problem areas like flood damage reduction, shoreline protection, ecosystem restoration, water supply, and more,” said Stein. “Many local governments are unaware of



programs available to them, so through our outreach efforts, Charleston District can inform communities of what is available, who and how they can apply, what does it cost and how long does it take.”

This means that if a person in the region has a flooding problem in their neighborhood, there is a very good chance that they will not have to simply endure this potentially dangerous problem near their home, according to Stein.

“Outreach is also important among federal agencies. Manpower and budget cuts are a reality of the federal government so it is imperative we understand each others capabilities and be able to leverage each other’s resources.”

By ensuring that all federal agencies are aware of one another, Outreach also ensures that important projects and employees will not be cut due to budget.

Continued on Page 7

*District Dispatch
Winter/Spring 2004*

The thing about the Charleston District's Outreach program is that it prides itself on being much more accessible to the general public and other agencies. By creating brochures and sending representatives to speak face to face with other agencies and

individuals about the services offered, Charleston District is guaranteeing that no one who needs a service that the Corps can provide will go without due to lack of information.

"What makes the current Charleston Outreach Program

different," says Joe Jones, "is the approach we are using. We are approaching Outreach, in more of an advisory role in terms of assist the public in identifying potential issues and then finding the most ideal way to solve them."

Plant From Page 5

shrub native to Hawaiian and Korean beaches. It was introduced to the South Carolina coast in the 1980s to control erosion, and as a salt-tolerant, fast-growing landscape plant. Beach vitex appears to thrive in full sun, sandy soils, and moderate temperatures. Also known as chasteberry, kolokolo kahakai, or monk's pepper, beach vitex typically grows up to eight feet in diameter and from six inches to two feet tall, but it can reach four feet tall and 12 feet wide when protected from wind and salt spray. The round leaves are gray-green to silvery, one to two inches long, and have a spicy fragrance. The flowers are typically bluish-purple, one inch wide, and grow in small clusters at the branch ends. The round fruits are about a quarter-inch in diameter and bluish-purple to black when ripe. Documentation of impacts of this plant to the dune ecosystem is ongoing. Besides impacts on sea turtles, beach vitex could threaten sea beach amaranth, and sea oats. Any beach vitex occurring on the dunes was either planted illegally or arrived there from nearby landscaped yards. It has been seen on Pawleys Island, Debordieu, Garden City, Surfside, Litchfield, and Isle of Palms. The plant is still being sold in local

nurseries, as well as wholesale growers in Texas, Virginia, and Alabama. Planting on the dunes is regulated by the state Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, which requires people to get a permit before planting in dunes under its jurisdiction. Permits are only granted for planting sea oats, American beach grass, and panic grass, though there is no requirement that other plants be removed. Today, beach vitex appears to be taking over primary beach dunes. It has been described in news articles as the "kudzu of the coast." Major efforts are underway to document the occurrence and spread of beach vitex, to increase public awareness of its potential invasiveness, and to explore methods of control while restoring native beach dune vegetation. Charleston District is working with invasive species researchers at the Engineering Research and Development Center. They are working with Clemson University and the U.S. Geological Survey to determine the best procedure to rid the beach of beach

vitex. Removing the deep-rooted plant will likely involve herbicides or digging, which could be tricky in the fragile beach dune ecosystems. The district is trying to implement an environmental restoration project. This would entail identifying the problem areas, determining how to deal with beach vitex, write plans and specifications, award a contract to remove the plant, and inspect contractor work. Charleston District is working with the U.S. Geological Survey, Clemson University, the South Carolina Exotic Plant Council, NRCS, Office of Ocean & Coastal Resource Management, Georgetown County, U. S. Fish and Wildlife, a private contractor, chemical manufacturers, and sea turtle volunteers like Betsy Batson to remedy the problem created by beach vitex.



Vitex rotundifolia in full bloom and growing in the dunes along the South Carolina coastline. Courtesy Photo.

Team member journals her Experience with Umatilla Tribe

by Tracy Hurst
Regulatory Division

A chronological debriefing of my week with the Umatilla Tribe would fulfill the task of highlighting the events of the week. For this, I would refer you to the training course agenda (which was appropriately ignored). However, the ordering of events over time is not of importance here. Rather it is the richly interwoven themes of culture, relationships, and nature that I will try to make an honest attempt to put onto paper.

A group of Corps and Bonneville Power Authority employees committed to 4 days in the care of the Umatilla tribe on their reservation. The ground rules were fairly simple: respect one another, conduct no sidebar work conversations, and treat others as equals (leave your GS rank behind). This leaves a bunch of government bureaucrats in a quandary – if you can't lead off with "Hi, I'm Tracy from the Corps' Charleston District", then you are forced to divulge more private information of real substance. The tone was set for the week. Office niceties were not necessary or welcome – it was time to look others straight in the eye.

The Umatilla are no longer a tribe untouched by modern influence. Most live in Pendleton, a town bordering the Reservation. They drive trucks, play golf, wear Nike shoes, and munch on M-n-M's, just like you and me. But despite these influences, they hold a powerfully strong bond with tribal customs, with the land, and with each other. I am puzzled at the impact modern technology has had on my life, while the Umatilla seem to retain the bonds of life that the cell phone,

T.V., and email have eroded in the lives of those closest to me. The Umatilla also do not sleep in teepees, as we did during the week.

The tribal chief, Carl, was a dominant figure throughout the week. Like all members of the tribe, he spoke directly from his heart with an unflinching confidence. He spoke of tender issues, sometimes highly personal, without the slightest hint of embarrassment. Even the small children spoke with certainty. Carl's granddaughter, Ronnie, asked casually in the sweat lodge, "why are you wearing bathing suits?", as it is customary to wear no clothing. By week's end, I could only guess this self-assuredness comes from understanding one's relationship to family, culture, and the natural world.

Jeff, the training director, spoke with great wisdom. This is not to say he was a bore, as he was not. Native Americans have a unique sense of humor. If they like you, they pick on you in a light-hearted manner. In one of his more serious moments, Jeff shared an anecdote highlighting a key difference between Indians and non-Indians. The Indian and non-Indian stumble across a large rock covering a hole. They both remove the rock and discover a dark, descending stairwell. The Indian is overcome with feelings of dread, sensing this hole is better left alone, and leaves. The non-Indian must get to the bottom of things (literally) and explore. Jeff emphasized that we



Tracy Hurst works with her team to build a teepee where some of the team members will sleep. Courtesy Photo.

must not rely solely on our rational, cognitive processes to make decisions; we also need to listen to our feelings and intuition.

Jeff's story reminds me of something a favorite boss of mine used to tell me: "When you receive a project, the first thing you should ask yourself is 'Is this a good thing or is this a bad thing?'" As a regulator, I was astounded that rather than apply the numerous regulations of my field, this boss wanted me to first ask whether this was a good thing or a bad thing. I nervously chuckled as I imagined myself in front of a judge defending my decision using this strategy. It is only now that I understand what my boss meant. He wanted me to use my intuition as well as my scientific training to assess a project. I struggle with this in my work for the Corps. There are

things that I know are bad (bad for the environment and bad for the community), but I cannot justify denying a permit because something is “bad” and I am constantly pushed in the direction of ignoring my intuition. At work, intuition is almost synonymous with “best professional judgment”. As the Corps faces the challenges ahead and tries to fully adopt the Environmental Operating Principles, we are going to have to take the calculated risk of relying on best professional judgment, not just numbers. If I learned anything from the week, it was that we have to make decisions today based on their impact on future generations. In other words, we should be living off the earth’s interest, not its capital, so that we do not burden our children.

The week was a busy one, but there was much time for reflection as well. We were freed from the reach of phone calls, emails, errands, and all of the distractions that commonly consume every waking hour of our normal lives. We were all given the opportunity to construct traditional items from natural materials. We first soaked the inner bark of a red cedar tree to soften it and then it was cut into strips. Some made hairpieces and hatbands, while some of us, myself included, tackled what seemed like a simple basket. I spent hours hard at work on my basket, under the direction of Rhonda, a member of a coastal tribe, as she shared stories of her childhood. “You cannot hurt the cedar....make the cedar do what you want it to do” she preached as we timidly constructed our cedar pieces.

Meanwhile, my co-worker Chris learned that although you cannot hurt the cedar, obsidian CAN hurt you. He was rushed to Pendleton for a total of 14 stitches. Of course, in the tradition of Indian humor, he was promptly nicknamed “Stitch”. I soon discovered myself just how hard flint-napping an arrowhead out of obsidian could be. A pressure-flaker (traditionally a material such as antler bone, but in

our case a wooden dowel with a heavy cooper wire inserted) was used to flake bits of the obsidian until the desired thickness and shape was achieved. I will never look at another arrowhead the same way. We discussed the reasons arrowheads and other Indian artifacts were so abundant in the archeological record. If Indians were so efficient, then why didn’t they reuse these stone tools? Jeff clarified to us that the hunter (and the gatherer) prepared their minds and bodies for the task at hand. For example, had the women that gathered the roots for our meals not prepared themselves in this manner while collecting the food items, the entire group would have gotten sick from our meals. Similarly, the hunter prepares his weapons for the hunt, focusing his mind and energy on the hunt ahead. With all this preparation, it would make no sense for a hunter to pick up someone else’s arrowhead for use. He would have no idea what frame of mind that hunter was in when chiseling the tool. Thus, he would not want to endanger his tribe by using this foreign tool. Indians are very thankful for the natural resources that they rely on for their survival. They give thanks to the Creator and the animal that they hunt. Before we gathered Yarro and other healing herbs, we also thanked the Creator and earth for producing such sustaining materials. In fact, in the theme of sustainability that permeated every action of the Tribe, we gathered our Indian tea by plucking only the upper leaflets, leaving a whorl of leaflets so that the plant would continue to thrive.

There was great interest in plants on the Reservation and their associated herbal remedies. With each new plant we discovered, we were quick to ask, “So what does this cure?” I noticed a skeptical look of disbelief among the group as we noticed that the cures all started to sound alike. They all seemed to cure the common cold, including a cough, stuffy nose, sore throat, etc. The Chief pointed out that you could not

categorize these herbs like Western medicine that treats the symptoms. There was, instead, an emphasis on treating the cause of one’s illness. One must internalize and believe in the power of the herb for it to be effective. Again, it is how one prepares oneself to receive the cure that is important.

The event I looked forward to each evening was the sweat. Once the men came back from their sweat, the women gathered up and headed to the other side of the lake for our sweat. The sweat lodge was constructed out of willow and canvass. Several rocks were moved from the fire into the lodge to commence the sweat. About 10 women sandwiched in the small lodge each night to clean ourselves. You could actually peel the loose skin right off due to the heat and moisture as water was thrown over the stones. The sweat was a sacred, relaxing time during which we were urged to express our innermost thoughts. Bambi, a member of the Tribe, always opened up during the sweat, revealing very personal thoughts to a group of almost total strangers. It was harder for the rest of us. It amazes me that Bambi freely opened up to us while we, having very similar backgrounds and cultures, could not open up to her and to each other. But night after night we began to talk in sweat and you could feel people slowly open their hearts to each other.

A week after I returned from the training, I met with my doctor to discuss the effect of some medicine he prescribed shortly before the trip. He asked if it had helped my condition. I told him point blank, “Since I’ve seen you last, I spent two weeks in the office and 1 week in the middle of nowhere living in a teepee. The medicine made no difference, but during my 1 week out of the office I felt wonderful”. To this he replied, “So, are you telling me you need a new job?” I smiled, knowing such valuable training WAS part of my job.

ODE TO BAGDAD

From Page 4

able, located on what appeared to be half-acre to one-acre lots. There was a man-made brook that ran through this approximately four square mile area. Entrance to the green zone is controlled and monitored by the U.S. Army. When I departed Iraq, the size of the green zone was expanding.

Meals within the green zone were provided by contractors.

Four meals a day are served at the Presidential Palace, the Al Rasheed hotel restaurant, and a multi-trailer mess hall. Meals were very nutritious and a wide variety of food was offered. While on a site visit, meals consisted of a MRE (Meals Ready to Eat), a self-contained military rations with all utensils necessary to heat and consume the meal.

Across the Tigris River on the west side was downtown Baghdad. This is where the average Iraqi worked day to day. The primary type of residence in Baghdad appeared to be crowded apartments with no yards. Children had to play in the streets. The further away from the green zone, the poorer the people appeared. On the outskirts of town people appeared to live in clay huts with little electricity.

Outside the 'green zone' was the 'red zone' where the military could not ensure our safety. After a few days I was assigned a project and started making site visits to the area. We normally traveled with armed guards to assure our safety. Not everyone who traveled to Iraq made project site visits outside the green zone. Traveling out of the green zone was only done as a mission essential function. To minimize travel the contractor established a base camp at the

project site where the Quality Assurance personnel resided.

I was assigned Baghdad South substation. This facility had two perimeter fences spaced several hundred feet beyond the facility. During my time at the Baghdad South substation I had the pleasure of accompanying the work crews while they erected power line towers, searched for unexploded ordinances, and retrieved supplies from the storage yard. Communication between the main base and the substation was through satellite email and a Video Teleconference meeting held three days a week. It was very evident many of the modern conveniences we take for granted in the United States were not readily available in Iraq. Telephones and computers were scarce commodities.

Our primary mission in Iraq was to repair the electrical power that had deteriorated as a result of neglect during the Saddam Hussein regime or destroyed as a result of the war. Four hundred kilovolt electrical transmission lines were our primary concern. These larger lines would be repaired prior to repairing the smaller lines.

Traveling to the project site and to the storage yard required armed guards. Normally two or three civilians traveling in separate SUVs with each vehicle

having one or two armed guards. Two sedans filled with Iraqi guards to help movement through traffic signals were required. Because traffic light signals were not obeyed, movement was sporadic. When our convoy approached traffic circles the sedans would move out in front and block traffic allowing the SUVs to pass quicker. Occasionally while traveling we would approach Army military convoys and our uniforms would identify us as friendly comrades.

During my time in Iraq the military leadership made sure we were aware of what was at stake. The general preached that by repairing the electrical interstructure we would improve the lives of Iraqis and make it more difficult for the insurgents to recruit followers. In our work we were making the country a safer place for all concerned. Hearing the general speak gave me the feeling I was doing a small part to improve the world and help fight the War on Terrorism.



Vernard Cleveland poses in front of an Iraqi building.
Courtesy Photo.

Consideration of Others Program

by Barbara Gathers
EEO Officer

The Consideration of Others Program began in 1997 under the command of MG Foley. It was defined as “those actions that indicate a sensitivity to and regard for the feelings and needs of others and an awareness of the impact of one’s own behavior on them...”

The Army endorsed the Consideration of Others Program as a program designed to build cohesion in the workplace and to reinforce Army values. Since that time, all Army components have accepted the challenge of developing and implementing their own Consideration of Others Program.

The intent of the Consideration of Others philosophy is simply to internalize the importance of treating one another with dignity and respect. The goals of the program are:

- 1) to enhance and improve human relations;
- 2) improve communication;
- and 3) eliminate harassment and discrimination.

The primary key to the Consideration of Others

execution is the small group discussions. Each quarter, groups of 15 – 20 employees meet and engage in an hour to an hour-and-a-half discussion on a selected topic. Topics cover a broad range of issues that deal with human relations. The Charleston District’s Consideration of Others Program was introduced to the district in 2000. Previous topics for discussion included “Consideration of Others”; The Prevention of Sexual Harassment”; and “Racism and Sexism”. Last quarter the topic for discussion was “Army Values” which was based on feedback from the climate survey.

Mr. Joe Crompton and MP Kenneth Jones, Consideration of Others facilitators from the U. S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) at Fort McPherson, provided training for the Charleston District’s facilitators on 1–3 December 2003. The 20- hour training included discussions and exercises on the climate survey; principles of facilitation; facilitators responsibilities; establishing ground rules; communication skills; encouraging discussions; and reporting procedures.

The facilitators play an important role in determining the spirit of the group. They encourage discussions, allow participants to fully contribute, and keep group discussions flowing. District facilitators include John Kassebaum, Debbie King, Ron Nesbit, Vernard Cleveland, Gail Simmons, Bill Easley, Chris Mack, Lisa Metheney, Charlie Crosby, and Joe Wilson. Hats off to our capable and most willing facilitators !!!!!

New on the Intranet!

Find information about new employees, Employees of the Month, local and national news, and much more on the Charleston District’s Intranet.

Go to
intranet.sac.usace.army.mil
to find out more!

Around the District

Congratulations

... to **Chad Evangelista**, IM, on the birth of his daughter, Mackenzie Laurel Evangelista, on Dec. 18.

... to **Don Hill**, RD, on the birth of his granddaughter, Kathryn Diane Brodbeck, on Oct. 29.

... to **Nat Ball**, RD, on the birth of his son, David Ingram Ball, on Oct. 29.

... to **Travis Hughes**, RD, on the birth of his daughter, Laney Elizabeth Hughes on Jan. 29.

... to **Dianne McManus**, TS, on the birth of her grandson, Jonathan Edgar Wiggins, on Feb. 24.

... to Brandon Driscoll, son of **Bob Driscoll**, CT, won 2nd place in the Junior Division, Brown Belts, for his forms presentation at the 22nd Southeast Regional Tae Kwon Do tournament in Isle of Palms.

... to Lauren Ruddy, daughter of **Cynthia Ruddy**, TS, on winning a bronze medal at the 2004 Charleston Challenge Gymnastics meet.

... to Alex Mims, son of **James Mims**, TS, for receiving his Eagle Scout Award from the Boy Scouts of America on Oct. 20.

...to the Charleston District team for receiving special recognition from the Division Commander Brig. Gen.

Randal Castro on their safety record during fiscal year 2003.

Condolences

... to **Elmer Thomas**, TS, on the death of his mother, December 2003.

Retirees

Barbara Barnette, CT, retired this January.

Grace Dorn, CT, retired this January.

Chris Dowling, RD, retired this January.

Scholarship Committee Column

The Scholarship Committee has been hard at work trying to reach their goal of raising \$3400 to fund scholarships for the children of District employees. Since the start of the Fiscal Year, the committee has hosted a variety of events, mostly centered around food.

In an attempt to try something new and different, the committee hosted an Oktoberfest Luncheon outdoors on 16 October. The menu featured traditional German fare such as bratwurst, sauerkraut, potato salad and apple strudel; even traditional German festival music could be found at the event.

The second October event was the annual Halloween bake sale. A real crowd favorite, the event raised over \$100. "I really love Halloween and enjoy decorating for the bake sale," said Lisa Metheney, Committee Chair. "Everyone has their favorite items they look for, like Jean Wallace's cookies, or anything by Robin Crosby. The District really supports this event well."

November and December were busy months for the committee. The Corps Wear sale and the Holiday Party raffle added to the Scholarship Fund coffers. November's Soup and Salad lunch and December's Hot Dog Lunch added almost \$300 more to the fund.

Since January weather was so chilly, the Committee decided to warm things up with a Taco Lunch and Salsa competition. Randy Fowler of RD was the winner of the salsa competition.

February was full of events. On February 5 there was BBQ with Brig. Gen. Castro, where record attendance proved once again that Bruce Seltzer's BBQ is a crowd favorite. The Valentine's Day Bake sale let everyone satisfy their sweet tooth before warming up their palate at the District's Annual Chili Cook-off. Competition was fierce, but in the end, Rose Smalls of CT was crowned the champion, with Paul Hinchcliff of RD placing second and Bill Folk of the Powerhouse placing third. As is also

the tradition, the giveaways at the chili cook-off were just as popular as the chili. In total, the whole event raised \$516 for the fund.

March was a light month, with only one event, the St. Patrick's Day Breakfast. It was a great start to the morning, with wonderful breakfast items like biscuits & gravy, pancakes, eggs, and bacon. The event brought an extra \$90 to the fund.

The rest of the year promises to be just as eventful. The Used Book Store remains in operation, with new books coming in all the time. The BBQ by the Pound Sale is ongoing until 7 April, with Bruce's BBQ being made available in take home containers for \$6 per pound. April will have two events, the April Fool's Day Lunch and the Tax Day Sub Lunch. May brings a Cinco de Mayo Lunch and a Pizza Lunch.

Scholarship applications will be available beginning 1 May.