



District Tides

NORFOLK DISTRICT

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Monumental Move!

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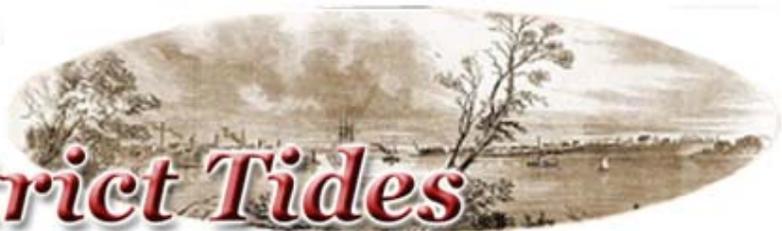
District Small Business Office succeeds in awarding largest small business contract in district history.

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Saint Nick walks the halls at the Waterfield Building.

From the Cover

The 1st Logistical Command Memorial sits feet away from its new home, after traveling 150 yards across Seay Field at Ft. Lee, Va. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)



District Tides

Commander's Corner

We're in a Marathon

Many marathon runners' favorite "hymn" is "There is no wall." Even at the peak of their training and fitness levels, many marathoners have experienced the phenomenon of hitting the wall. Whether this mental trap lasts for a few steps or several miles, the agonizing test of endurance brings up a struggle between body and mind that can go either way. The runners can finish the race or not.

As I think about our tremendous workload, our support to the Global War on Terror (GWOT), the environmental challenges, Civil Works budget challenges, our increasing work force coming of retirement age and our commitment to taking action on our vision, I cannot help but think that we are indeed in a marathon.

The biggest difference is that this is not an individual effort but a team effort that really extends beyond our Norfolk District internal team. It's because of this team effort that I am confident that we'll overcome any "walls," real or imaginary, that may come before us. With the right concentration, the right cooperation, the right effort and the right people (in the right seats) we will deliver our products and services on time, within budget and of high quality, while caring for each other and improving our quality of life. We cannot accomplish this as a District alone. It will take our customers', our stakeholders' and our industry partners' focused efforts and innovation to achieve these results.

Never in the 128-year history of the Norfolk District have we witnessed such an opportunity in terms of work load and challenges. While we tackle this "marathon" of opportunities, let's remember to pace ourselves and build from the strengths of our teammates. Keep striving for that finish line, anticipate bumps in the road and work strategies to address them.

But like marathoners, remember to pace yourselves, scheduling in rest stops wherever possible.

As was once stated in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology newspaper, "The Tech:" "Keep an eye on your fuel gauges and make sure you don't hit that wall head-on..."

remember that there is some joy in running, not just in reaching the goal."

Challenges ahead

I am very comfortable that we are aggressively setting the conditions to be successful on all fronts. By the end of this fiscal year and into the 2008 calendar year, we will have awarded the majority of our high visibility BRAC projects and will be well on our way to definitizing two of the four construction packages on the Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. This effort alone will consume a significant part of the district leadership's attention to ensure risk and uncertainty are minimized across all fronts.

The District's Residential Communities Initiative (RCI), Privatization of Army Lodging (PAL) and Unaccompanied Personnel Housing (UPH) programs continue to gain national attention as the Army and DoD begin to seek innovative ways to improve the quality of life for our service men and women and their families.

On the Civil Works front, with the authorization of the Water Resource Development Act, our nation is expecting the district to deliver over \$700 million in projects across all Civil Works business lines once we gain the appropriations.

These are exciting times as our collective efforts will make a remarkably positive impact on the national and local economy, while simultaneously protecting the Commonwealth's environmental capital. A few projects of particular note are the Eastward Expansion of Craney Island, the construction of the Deep Creek Bridge, the flood damage reduction work on Tangier Island and our continued efforts to restore the oyster population in the Chesapeake Bay.

Of course we will continue to work with our port partners and stakeholders to ensure that safer, deeper and wider navigation channels are available when needed throughout our region. We must be bold and flexible in our approach and possess the right long-term vision to



Col. Dionysios Anninos

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Commanders Corner: Going the distance

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enable us to react when needed and to anticipate requirements.

On the regulatory front, we will continue to strengthen our relationships with the Commonwealth on all regulatory matters—this is of utmost importance to ensure our program remains effective, sustainable and efficient.

On our Vision. We have made progress in addressing this year’s visioning process recommendations. You have, perhaps, seen that we’ve completed and hung the district’s Army Values posters, procured new workspace and conference room chairs and tables, initiated planning/coordination for upgrading Fort Norfolk’s entrance gate and accessibility, made a number of interior improvements to our building, increased our outreach with displays and recruiting efforts, and boosted even further our Welfare Council activities. Honing those initiatives, as well as taking a more systematic approach to individual/team training and award process improvements, completing our Waterfield space study and succession planning, will continue to be our focal points for the 2008 calendar year, as well as other recommendations emanating from the visioning process given the availability of resources and time.

Our deployed comrades. Through this holiday season, let’s keep in our hearts and minds those deployed Norfolk District members who are overseas supporting the Global War on Terror (GWOT):

Jaime Pastrana and Nandy Perillo of our Engineering Branch, and Johnnie Saunders of our Logistics Office. This is the second tour of duty for Johnnie and Nandy, which is not uncommon for some that have deployed from Norfolk District. We also welcome back from his second deployment, Antonio Bastidas – Langley RO.

Our commodities team members. My thanks to all those district employees who have volunteered their time and expertise to serve on the district’s Commodities Team, one of seven such teams Corps-wide in support of regional and national emergencies. You are key to our district, region and the Corps being able to respond to aid our nation and its citizens in times of need.

Holiday Safety. The upcoming holiday period is one of the deadliest times for alcohol-related highway accidents. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) estimates that “each year nationally, more than 1,000 people typically die during Thanksgiving to New Year’s in drunk driving crashes.” **Please don’t drink and drive!** Watch out for other drunks on the road. Also, continue to think about fire and personal injury safety as you’re going about your holiday activities — cooking your meals, decorating your trees and negotiating icy streets. Have a happy and safe holiday season.

Thank you for all you do!!

Project Management Professional talks about the PMP

Story and photo by Patrick Bloodgood

The Project Management Professional (PMP) accreditation is an achievement that only five District employees have obtained. The accreditation is obtained through the Project Management Institute (PMI) and, according to PMI’s handbook, it is one of the world’s most widely recognized professional credentials.

“It establishes your dedication to and proficiency in the project management profession,” said District Project Manager Margaret Bridgers, who received PMP credentials on September 22.

The process, according to Bridgers, involves five steps: application submission; completeness review; an audit process once you’ve been selected to ensure you meet all the standards;



Margaret Bridgers is one of five district employees to achieve the PMP certification. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)

examination test; and three-year award certification.

“You gain distinction and recognition in a growing community of project management practitioners, and it acknowledges your abilities in project management,” said Bridgers.

Having as many people as possible obtain the PMP credential is an Army

Corps of Engineers initiative, and the district is working to get as many project managers into the program.

The district will pay for those who take the test for their credentials. “District Policy 19 allows for the district to reimburse those who pass the test,” said Program Manager Jorge Nadal.

Nadal said he is encouraged with the amount of interest here in the program.

“It truly is an international recognition. PMI is worldwide and it is

open to non-traditional project managers as well. If you are in charge of a project that has a beginning, an end, produces a product, and uses man hours, then you can qualify to apply for the PMP,” said Nadal.

For more information on the PMP Credential program, log onto www.pmi.org.



Global War on Terror

Stars and Stripes flown in honor of deployed support



Mechanical Engineering Technician Christopher Service (left) holds the display case which is being presented to Family Support Group Coordinator Jerri Wehrle (center) as Commander's Secretary Sherri Jefferies looks on.

Story and photo by Patrick Bloodgood

To those who have deployed abroad, the importance of receiving care packages from home is a huge thing. It brings with it not only the items inside, but a huge morale boost and a feeling that back home people are thinking of them.

"It's a big motivational boost, especially when your box is bigger than everybody else's; those things don't last long over there," said Executive Secretary to the Norfolk District Commander, Sherri Jefferies, who has deployed to Afghanistan three times.

Here at home, Jerri Wehrle of the Engineering Branch Office oversees the District Family Support Group and leads the effort to assemble and send

What the Family Support Group does....

- Sends deployment care packages out
- Makes monthly phone calls to family members
- Sends cards to family members for birthdays, anniversaries, holidays and other special events
- Sends fruit baskets/flowers and gift certificates for the holidays to the spouses
- Coordinates the donation of items for care packages
- Places welcome home decorations on the cubicles of deployed employees
- Conducts welcome home luncheons
- Coordinates Video Teleconferencing between families and deployed personnel
- Sends Video Messages via Army Knowledge Online (AKO)

out care packages, as well as checking in on families of deployed members.

"Just after 9-11, I approached Wehrle to start up and lead a family assistance group," explained Deployment Coordinator Glenn Seay. "She agreed and ran with it, expanding the program beyond what I had originally intended to include families of deployed members."

"Having been in the same shoes as a spouse of a deployed Soldier, I know the struggles and loneliness one experiences," said Wehrle, "and how good it feels to receive a phone call from someone to see if all is going well."

Because of her selfless work, Seay felt Wehrle needed to be recognized in a very special way. That recognition came in the form of flying the U.S. Flag over the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq.

"The idea came to me while I was deployed to Iraq. I remember receiving a flag flown in my honor during my deployment to Afghanistan, so I went to my command in Iraq, presented the idea, and after visiting with Embassy staff, it was flown," said Seay.

In a District ceremony, Wehrle, filled with tears of joy and thanks, received her flag in a commemorative case, along with a plaque.

"Words can't describe how I feel. I'm deeply honored that the Group did this for me," said Wehrle.

Wehrle was quick to point out that it takes the support of the entire District to make the program successful, and she sees firsthand the appreciation and joy that the program brings.

"It makes you feel good when you get the letters and emails from our deployed team members and their families, and also from these young Soldiers on how much they appreciate the support we give them," said Wehrle.

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Survey team spots possible 'Spirit-gashing' culprit



From left to right: Joe Moore, Dusty Brooke, Chris Rowe, Mike Williams and Al Perkins stand in front of the Corps Vessel Sea Ark which they used to locate the large obstruction in the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)

Story by: Patrick Bloodgood

In the early morning hours of Nov. 8, the 'Spirit of Nantucket' was traveling south on the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) when it struck something underwater, resulting in a gash in the cruise ship's hull and causing the vessel to take on water. According to news reports, the ship's captain beached the vessel in a successful effort to save it from sinking.

The U.S. Coast Guard arrived on scene and safely removed the 66 passengers who were on a 10-day cruise along the AIWW to Charleston, S.C. Meanwhile, up the AIWW, a Norfolk District survey vessel and crew were hard at work behind the scenes, using side scan SONAR to try and locate what may have caused the damage to the cruise ship. As an added safety measure, the Corps temporarily shut down the AIWW to commercial vessels until whatever potentially caused the incident could be found and removed.

"We didn't know what they hit, they (Coast Guard) gave us an approximate location and we started scanning," said Survey Technician Dusty Brooke. "It took between two to three hours for us to find a target."

It took a while to locate it because the survey crew of Team Leader Mike Williams, Al Perkins, Joe Moore and Brooke on the Corps Vessel Sea Ark, were given vague directions that the obstruction was "over there somewhere", by a Coast Guardsman as he pointed up the river.

Once the target came into the view of the side scan SONAR, the experienced survey crew

thought they knew exactly what it was that had sunk to the bottom of the channel.

"The picture on the side scan made it look like a boat, it had all the features of a bow and stern, that's what we figured we had," said Williams.

On Saturday, Nov. 10, the survey crew of Williams, Moore and Chris Rowley were back on scene to survey the area once the obstruction was removed. It was at this point, when contractor Crofton Industries of Portsmouth, Va., began bringing the obstruction to the surface, that everybody realized it wasn't a boat.

"We were like, 'what the hell is it?'" said Williams. "It was a big, heavy puppy, that's all we know. It snapped through two steel cables like they were nothing."

The 50,000-pound, 40-by-14-foot obstruction was finally identified as a bundled mass of large, wooden

beams, steel plates and large screws, and has baffled everybody as to what exactly it is and how it got into the channel. Crofton Industries had to bring in straps which were rated for 60,000 pounds to raise the massive structure off the bottom of the channel. It is not known if this obstruction caused the damage to the *Spirit of Nantucket*, but this potential obstruction is no longer in the channel.

The survey crew ended up working 29-plus overtime hours on their holiday weekend.

"It's just the nature of the game," said Williams.



The 50,000 pound obstruction sits on a Crofton Industries barge after being lifted from the bottom of the AIWW. (Photo by Brittany Brown)



The Norfolk District fiscal year 07 in review

Military Construction

Awarded an unprecedented \$1.16 billion in overall MILCON construction contracts.

Broke Ground on the \$ 747 Million new Fort Belvoir Community Hospital.

Broke Ground on the \$57 million Langley Air Force Base Hospital Addition.

Broke Ground on the \$39 million Distributed Common Ground System Operations Facility.

Broke Ground on the Sustainment Center of Excellence (SCOE) building at Ft. Lee, celebrating the start of all BRAC 05 work at the installation

Langley's Air Combat Command selects NAO Project Engineer, John Clark, as its 2007 ACC Construction Project Manager of the Year.



A scale model of the new Ft. Belvoir Community Hospital sits at the construction site where the hospital is being built. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)

Contracting/Small Business

NAO Contracting successfully realigns from a local organization to the National Contracting Organization (NCO).

The Small Business Program awarded the largest 8(a)/HUBzone contract in its history to Fort Sill Apache Industries, valued at \$38.8 million, for the second phase of the Training Area 5 Infrastructure project at Fort Lee.

Small Business Director Jack Beecher, as the Army's representative, also received a Defense Department Golden Talon Award for contributions in advancing the goals and objectives contained in the National Strategic Plan for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses.

Completed 1,113 contract actions for a total of more than \$1.1 billion worth of work.



The second phase of Training Area 5's Infrastructure project at Ft. Lee is the largest 8(a)/HUBzone contract ever awarded in the district. (Photo courtesy Jack Beecher)

Real Estate

Norfolk District's Real Estate Office transferred the Army's Big Bethel Reservoir project to the Air Force as mandated by BRAC 2005, as well as 680 acres of land at Fort Pickett to the Commonwealth of Virginia for a State Police Drivers' Training facility.

Provided support for the entire Army's Privatization Initiatives, including the multi-billion dollar Residential Communities Initiative (RCI). Norfolk's RCI Real Estate team privatized three more projects (4,347 housing units) this year for a total inventory of 87,863 homes at 29 RCI projects located on 37 Army installations throughout the continental United States.



Ft. Belvoir's RCI project is one of three projects the District privatized this past year

Regulatory

Evaluated over 4,000 permit applications and performed another 4,000-plus pre-application site visits and jurisdictional determinations.

Made substantial progress developing a more streamlined and consistent permit process by authorizing the Commonwealth of Virginia greater authority under the federal State Programmatic General Permit (SPGP) program.



Environmental Scientist Melissa Nash performs a wetlands delineation on Fort Eustis. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)

Operations

Assisted NOAA in placement of the Captain John Smith Water Trail interactive buoy just off shore of Jamestown, Va.

Built new spillbox #6 at Craney Island.

Managed truck haul contract to raise dikes at Craney Island. Managed contract to maintain the AIWW and Dismal Swamp Canal. Operated and managed the Gathright Dam.

Assisted the Coast Guard and the Virginia Stranding team in removing the remains of a dead whale from the Norfolk harbor.

Locked through 11,397 vessels on the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal and 1,914 vessels on the Dismal Swamp Canal before having to shut it down due to low water levels.



District employees use a piece of heavy equipment to drag a dead whale on shore at the district's Craney Island Dredged Material Management Facility. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)

Dredging Operations

Completed the first full maintenance dredging of the six-mile long, 800 to 1,250-foot wide, inner portion of the Norfolk Harbor 50-foot channel between Sewells Point and Lamberts Bend.

Dredged the following Channels:

James River (three areas — Deepwater Terminal, Goose Hill Channel, and Dancing Point-Swann Point Channel)

Chincoteague Inlet (with Corps dredge CURRITUCK)

Rudee Inlet (with Corps dredge CURRITUCK)

York Spit Channel (performed surveys and engineering for this channel for Baltimore District, using the Corps dredge MCFARLAND)

Civil Works

The Lynnhaven River in Virginia Beach is the focus of the first phase of a native oyster restoration project that will involve the construction of about 30 acres of oyster reefs, combined with an aggressive oyster seeding strategy

Norfolk District, along with its cost-sharing partners, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, became the first agencies in the nation to sign a project cooperation agreement (PCA) under the Estuary Habitat Restoration Act. The recently approved \$95,000 project will restore 40 acres of bay grasses (submerged aquatic vegetation) in Virginia's Eastern Shore coastal bays.

Continued to work with Maryland and Virginia and other federal agencies toward preparing the draft EIS for oyster restoration in the Chesapeake Bay.

Completed the first civil works client survey, covering the year 2006, which gave the district a 1st place (tied) rating within districts that have a Civil Works Program which handle \$100 million or less.

Completed a beach replenishment project in the Sandbridge section of Virginia Beach, Va.

Completed the clearing of the 16th street outfall pipes and began work on the 42nd street outfall pipes at the Virginia Beach, Va., Hurricane Protection Project.



Fossilized oyster shells are being used to build oyster reefs in the Lynnhaven River, Virginia Beach, Va. (Photo by Nancy Allen)

Ft. Lee BRAC Update**Corps makes monumental move of 150 yards**

The memorial is rotated around to face the main entrance to Ft. Lee, making it a more prominent feature on the installation.

Story and photos by Patrick Bloodgood

For the past 33 years, the 1st Logistical Command Memorial has stood proudly on Seay Field at Ft. Lee, Va. The monument is a white curved concrete shell in the shape of an arrow and honors those Army logistics Soldiers who paid the ultimate price in Vietnam. It also occupies the site where the new Sustainment Center of Excellence (SCOE) facility is being built by the Corps.

“People were concerned it might be destroyed and urged senior leaders here to try and preserve it,” said Command Historian Dr. Steven Anders of the Quartermaster Center and School.

In order to preserve the monument for future generations, contractors decided they could move it 150 yards away from its location and set it directly in view of the main gate, achieving the contractor’s goals of making it and a flag pole a prominent part of the SCOE design.

“This being a monument to the Army logistics group [that served]

in Vietnam, it was important that the monument be saved and placed into a new location,” said Bill Robson, Corps Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Area Engineer for Fort Lee.

According to Robson, the contractor looked to the popular TV show *Mega Movers*, to acquire names of companies who could complete this task.

“When we learned it was going to be preserved and moved, there was serious concerns as to would it survive the move,” revealed Anders.

Concerns about the move quickly turned into excited anticipation when it was learned that the monument’s fate would rest in the hands of the same company that moved the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, in North Carolina.

Prior to the actual moving day, the Corps’ contractor Ayers House Movers lifted the entire structure using airbags, then supported it with large steel beams and positioned hydraulically controlled wheels underneath. This would keep the structure level and propel it to its new resting place on the corner of Lee and A Avenues. With the monument resting on wheels, the contractors pre-staged the structure for its major move the next morning.

When daybreak arrived contractors were greeted by an overcast sky and cool temperatures. They fired everything up and moved the concrete shell towards the final resting spot. Within an hour the monument was almost to its new home, but the new challenge of having to rotate the structure so that it would face the installation’s main entrance presented itself to the contractor.

Inch-by-inch the contractor nudged the structure into place. The hydraulic wheels struggled on the loosely compacted soil. Eventually front-end loaders were chained into place to help pull the concrete shell to its final home. Nearly six hours later the 1st Logistical Command Monument stood facing the front entrance, once again resuming its role as a bastion of remembrance to those brave Soldiers who lost their lives while serving in Vietnam.

“I think the group that paid for it to be built will be very pleased to see how it looks in its final location,” said Robson.



The 1st Logistical Command Memorial traveled 150 yards to its new home on the opposite side of Seay Field.

District sees new projects with WRDA passage

Story by Nancy Allen

Nearly \$23 billion in projects nationally, more than \$700 million of which are in Virginia, were authorized when the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (WRDA) became law on Nov. 8. WRDA 2007 was passed when the Senate voted to override a Presidential veto, following a similar vote by the House of Representatives. The bill authorized construction of several new Norfolk District projects, as well as several other studies, projects and programs that will benefit the Commonwealth of Virginia.

A WRDA bill is the primary vehicle for the authorization of Corps of Engineers projects for environmental restoration, flood damage reduction and improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States. Project authorization includes a figure for the cost of a study or project; however, funds are required each fiscal year through the Energy & Water appropriations bill.

Norfolk District construction projects authorized by WRDA 2007 are:

Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Deep Creek Bridge – Replacement of the existing bridge (built in 1934) on Rt. 17 over the Dismal Swamp Canal in Chesapeake, Va. The preliminary plan is to replace the bridge with a five lane, split leaf pit bascule bridge at a cost of approximately \$37.2 million. The primary benefits are to public safety, hurricane evacuation and transportation efficiencies.

Craney Island Eastward Expansion – Construction of a 680-acre expansion of the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area in Portsmouth, Va. The fourth cell will not only provide additional dredged material disposal area, but also

a site for the Virginia Port Authority to construct a fourth marine terminal for the region. The total authorized cost for the project is \$712 million, to be cost-shared 50/50 between the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Chesapeake Bay Oyster Restoration — Funds for the restoration and rehabilitation of habitat of native oysters in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries in Virginia and Maryland, to include the construction of oyster bars and reefs, the rehabilitation of existing marginal habitat, the use of appropriate alternative materials in oyster reef construction and other activities. The Corps mission is the ecological restoration of the oyster and is focused on increasing the population of native (C. Virginica) oysters.

Tangier Island Seawall – Construction of a seawall on Tangier Island, Va., to protect the inner channel and harbor from direct wave attack and from damage caused by sheets of ice pushed into the inner channel and harbor. It will also reduce erosion of the shoreline and sediment inflow to the navigation channel. The total cost for the design and construction of the projects is approximately \$3.6 million.

Other provisions in the WRDA 2007 included authorizations for a study of Sandbridge Beach; studies, designs and construction within the Continuing Authorities Program and/or the Section 22 program; Regional Sediment Management; Water Resources Assessments for each of the major watersheds within the Norfolk District Civil Works Area of Responsibility; and the National Levee Safety Program.

According to Norfolk District Chief of Planning and Policy Mark Mansfield, citizens in some 65 cities, counties or localities in Virginia will be positively impacted by studies or projects authorized by the WRDA 2007.

District Safety

Highway chief launches holiday driving tips campaign

The nation's top highway official launched a "check-in, check-up, check-out" program of holiday driving tips designed to help drivers steer clear of traffic congestion and delays and stay safe while on the road during the holiday travel rush.

Federal Highway Administrator Mary E. Peters said drivers should first "check in" with travel information sources that help travelers plan trips and maneuver around trouble spots caused by traffic jams, construction areas, accidents, bad weather or other problems that may result in delays. Travel information Web sites and 5-1-1 telephone services sponsored by state departments of transportation are helpful highway information tools.

Since crashes and disabled vehicles cause 25 percent of highway congestion, Peters said drivers should give their vehicles a "check up" prior to holiday traveling. Preventive maintenance, such as checking for proper tire pressure and to see if belts and hoses need replacing, can help avert on-the-road breakdowns and the traffic tie-ups they cause.

Finally, Peters said drivers should practice safety when they "check out" for holiday travel. She encouraged drivers to pay attention to signs and flaggers in highway work zones, slow down in bad weather, avoid tailgating and make sure that they and their passengers use safety belts.

"We're working to take the frustration out of holiday travel," Peters said. "If more drivers check-in and check-up before they check right out of town for holiday trips, it will go a long way toward helping everyone get to where they want to go safely and on time."

Long-distance travel increases by as much as 23 percent during the December holiday period, according to U.S. Department of Transportation figures. About nine out of 10 holiday travelers use personal vehicles for their trips.

A complete list of the "check-in, check-up, check-out" holiday driving trips is available at www.fhwa.dot.gov/holidaytraveltips.htm.

Source: News release from the U.S. Department of Transportation



District leads nation in aquatic vegetation restoration

Story by Brittany Brown

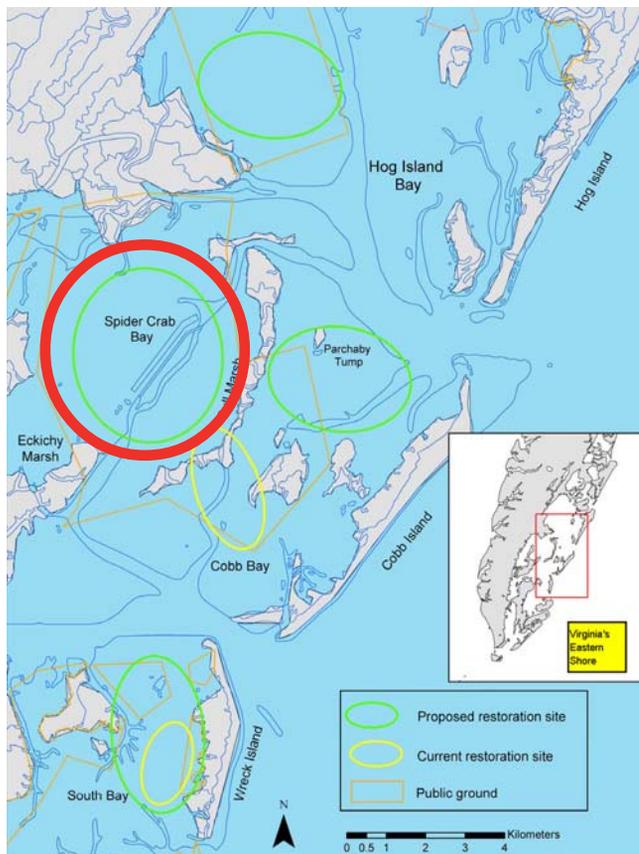
Decades ago, enormous beds of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) could be found in the Chesapeake Bay and vicinity. These grasses serve as nursery areas for juvenile crabs and finfish where they find food sources and refuge from predators. Additionally, SAV protects bottom areas of the bay and tributaries from erosion, reducing suspended sediments in the water column. A majority of these underwater grasses have been lost due to water-related and man-induced changes. The importance of these underwater grasses has spawned efforts by various agencies to attempt to restore this valuable resource by implementing innovative restoration approaches.

First in Nation

The Norfolk District, along with its cost-sharing partners, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), was the first agency in the nation to sign a Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) under the Estuary Restoration Act of 2000. This act aims to restore one million acres of estuary habitat by re-establishing the chemical, physical, hydrologic and biological features and components associated with the Nation's estuaries.

In June 2007, the Secretary of the Army approved this PCA, which will implement a \$95,000 project to restore 40 acres of embayment areas (semi-enclosed coastal bodies of water) along the Eastern Shore of Virginia by harvesting, germinating and then broadcasting SAV seeds in areas where SAV once thrived.

According to Craig Seltzer, the District's project manager, this method of restoration is more economical and effective than hand



Spider Crab Bay is the site for Norfolk District's project in restoring submerged aquatic vegetation. (Map courtesy Virginia Institute of Marine Science)

planting individual sprigs, a more traditionally used technology. During the spring, when SAV beds are healthy, seeds are harvested in thriving beds where millions of seeds are being produced. Once seeds are harvested, they are taken to a lab where they germinate in large holding tanks. When the seeds reach the optimal germination point, they are collected and transferred to pails and placed on boats for dispersal in the field.

Using GPS technology, restoration sites are located and verified and seeds are broadcast from the boats. A majority of the seeds will sink to the bottom and take root to eventually become mature reproducing plants, continuing the cycle of providing seed to adjacent unvegetated areas.

Two-phased seeding & adaptive management

Over the past four to five years, VIMS has been investigating this methodology in Eastern Shore embayments. The preliminary results have indicated a 90 percent recovery of SAV where seeds were planted. Based on the success of these initial restoration efforts, the Corps and VIMS will do additional planting in two phases. During the first phase, one-fourth of the seeds will be planted this fiscal year. The

second phase will occur next fiscal year when the remaining three-fourths of seeds will be harvested and planted. Follow-up monitoring is also a part of the program and is critical for observing the success of the planted seeds and for implementing adaptive management measures.

The awarding of this restoration project has made Norfolk District a forerunner in the efforts to restore the projected goal of one million acres. "As the first PCA signed under Estuary Restoration Act, other agencies now have a model and are in a position to move ahead with projects nationwide," said Seltzer. "At the same time, the Corps is a forerunner in the effort to restore an important estuary habitat using an innovative approach that, hopefully, will have bay-wide implications for the Bay's health and the host of aquatic organisms that depend on SAV."



Reef building

As part of the district's native oyster restoration efforts, the Corps is building approximately 30 acres of new sanctuary oyster reefs in the Lynnhaven. The reefs are constructed of fossilized oyster shells dredged from the James River. Next spring and summer the reefs will be seeded with millions of baby oysters.

In the past 100 years, the population of the native Virginia oyster (*c. virginica*) has fallen dramatically due to over-harvesting, disease and poor water quality. The Lynnhaven River is considered a prime spot for oyster restoration because it is a trap estuary with high salinity, had historically high populations of native oysters and has considerably higher oyster recruitment today than many other sites in the Chesapeake Bay. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)

NAO Small Business program on track for 2008



The two-phase \$53 million Training Area 5 Infrastructure Project at Fort Lee, Va., is part of the largest 8(a)/HUBzone contract in District history. (Photo courtesy Fort Lee BRAC Area Office)

large business will have an adverse impact on the District's Small Business category percentages."

Percentages-low; opportunities-great

Still, Beecher projected that the District will award approximately \$150 million in FY 08 to small businesses. "Currently we have advertised small business set-aside projects that will have the capacity to obligate some \$300 million over the next five years. Of that amount, approximately \$150 million is earmarked for small businesses owned by Service-Disabled Veterans, our recent and most emphasized small business goal category. While the next five years, small business category percentage maybe low, the road ahead actually has more small business opportunities than at anytime in Norfolk District's history," emphasized Beecher.

For 25 years Beecher has championed the Department of Defense's (DoD) Small Business program and has won significant praise and national recognition. On Nov. 5, the Pentagon established a new awards tradition honoring 19 individuals and companies for their work with the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDV) program.

Beecher, as the Army's representative, was awarded a Defense Department Golden Talon Award for contributions in advancing the goals and objectives contained in the National Strategic Plan for SDV Businesses.

In a congratulatory letter to Beecher, DoD Small Business Program Director Anthony Martoccia said "it is through your dedication as an acquisition professional that DoD continues to improve its performance for those corporations owned by service-disabled veterans who do business with the Department of Defense. With this award, the Department expresses its gratitude for your service to the national security of our citizenry."

Beecher commented that the award was an unexpected honor and that he has always held a special place in his heart for SDV businesses. "Someone once asked me why I was so focused on the SDV Business category," revealed Beecher. "I told them there were three reasons. First, I have my marching orders: Public Law 108-183 establishes and

mandates the federal program and the President's Executive Order, which further prioritizes and promotes the SDV program. Second, I think it's a good business decision to hire SDV companies. The vast majority of these veteran owners possess the strong values we seek in contractors, such as integrity, honor and loyalty. Third, my great grandfather served in World War I; my dad and four uncles served in WWII; my brother and I served in Vietnam; and my son served in the Marines during the Gulf War. I'm honored to play a small role in helping the men and women who served our country."

Story by Jerry Rogers

2007 proved to be a year of both success and uncertainty for Norfolk District's Small Business program. Under the leadership of Norfolk District Small Business Deputy, Jack Beecher, the largest 8(a)/HUBzone contract in District history was awarded to Fort Sill Apache Industries, valued at \$38.8 million, for the second phase of the Training Area 5 Infrastructure project at Fort Lee, Va. But for the first time in eight years, Norfolk District's Small Business category percentages did not exceed the majority of its assigned goals/targets.

Norfolk District awarded an unprecedented \$1.16 billion in overall military construction (MILCON) contracts in fiscal year (FY) 2007. Of those construction awards, Beecher explained, the majority were BRAC contracts of such high-dollar value that small businesses could not openly compete, nor could the District use its federally-authorized set-aside authority.

"It doesn't appear that FY 08 will be a good year for the District's Small Business program if the focus is on overall percentages," continued Beecher. "For example, in FY 08 the District will modify its recent Fort Belvoir Community Hospital MILCON contract, adding approximately \$300 million. A \$300 million award to a



Norfolk District Small Business Deputy Jack Beecher (left) explains the federal Small Business process during a recent Minority Small Business Conference and Exposition, held in Virginia Beach, Va. (Photo by Jerry Rogers)



Santa works for district, even during holiday season

Story and photos by Patrick Bloodgood

Whether you believe in Santa Claus or not, every day a bit of holiday cheer walks the halls of Norfolk District's Waterfield Building headquarters. By day Paul Sheehan is a Computer Aided Drafting and Design (CADD)/Building Information Modeling (BIM) manager contracted to the Norfolk District. He's responsible for providing customer service to the various CADD and BIM users, as well as managing the specific standards for the two systems. By night, this bearded man is a professional Santa who entertains children of all ages at parties and special events.

To many of his coworkers and people in the community, it's not a far stretch to think of him as Saint Nick.

"I was going noticeably gray at age 17. I dyed my hair brown until I was 40, and then I went pearl gray. Children started calling me Santa, and the rest is history," explained Sheehan.

On any given day Sheehan can be seen walking around the District in a red shirt and either red or green pants. His beard is real, as is his passion for the jolly old elf, which he has played for over two decades. In 1988, Sheehan was



Carolyn Sheehan has gotten into the act as well, and has to take vacation time from her job with Xerox to play the part of Mrs. Claus.

trained as a professional Santa by Brady White, "Santa to the Stars," who many may recognize from movies, commercials and other well-publicized public appearances, including at the White House.

Sheehan is a member of the Amalgamated Order of Real Bearded Santas, as well as www.Santa-America.org and takes his role as Kris Kringle extremely serious.

"I have to be very conscious of where I go and what I do. I can't exactly go out and grab a beer at a bar. It wouldn't look good for Santa to do that. I go to Wal-Mart to fill my prescriptions and am approached by at least 17 kids for photos or who want to talk to Santa; it's a lot like being a movie star," said Sheehan.

Sheehan said he has also paid his dues to claim the anointed title of Professional Santa.

"In order to be considered a real Santa you have to be a mall Santa at least once. I did it in 1989 in a small mall in rural New Hampshire and it is extremely hard work. You have to know your stuff because you could wreck a kid if you don't have the story spot on," said Sheehan.

Sheehan says that during that 1989 appearance in New Hampshire, he had at least 17,000 kids sit on his lap. He also gave great praise to the current mall Santas but said he won't do it again.

His role as Santa is rather infectious. His wife Carolyn, an account associate for Xerox, started out as his handler and manager when she caught the Santa bug. She now plays Mrs. Claus alongside her husband. The two stay extremely active throughout the year, not just during the peak Christmas holiday season.

"It's been a good business and I am looking into starting a booking service because I am overbooked and I have had to dove-tail off business to other Santas who are overbooked as well," said Sheehan.

The Sheehans also perform a lot of charity work as Mr. and Mrs. Claus. They appear year-round at various charities throughout Hampton Roads, garnering donations and helping families and children in need. It's part of Sheehan's philosophy of bringing a little holiday cheer and spirit to everybody.

"If we can all do the little bit of good we can do, then everybody will be a little bit better for it," emphasized Sheehan.



Paul Sheehan attends the Norfolk District Angel Tree Lighting Ceremony as Santa.



Tides' spotlight on district employees

Here's looking at you kid!

Non-verbal communications no problem for these two

Story and photos by Patrick Bloodgood

Day in and day out the Logistics employees in the District keep things going behind the scenes. Whether it's cleaning the bathrooms, trimming trees, mowing lawns or just simply washing windows, these dedicated employees keep Fort Norfolk in tip-top shape. For two of these employees the task of maintaining the District is compounded by what many may consider a disability.



(Above) Thomas "Junie" Washington cleans the men's room on the third floor as part of his daily duties of keeping the Waterfield Building looking in tip top shape. (Right) Rita Simpkins emerges from the lady's room after cleaning the floors



Thomas "Junie" Washington Jr. and Rita Simpkins communicate situations with the rest of the District in various ways. Though both are deaf, these two people have found ways to get around the potential barriers of not being able to have verbal communications with employees who don't know American Sign Language.

"Some people I can use gestures to, some I write notes to, and others have taken sign language classes to talk with us better," said Washington through an interpreter. "Sometimes it can be difficult, but for the most part not too bad."

"I mostly write things down when I need to talk to someone, and sometimes, well, it's a little like playing charades," said Simpkins.

Washington came to the District in October 2001 from Fort Monroe and is a very competitive bowler as well as a huge New York Yankees fan. In fact, if you catch him at the right time he will be sure to show you his bowling score card from his last game.

Simpkins came to the District in September 1996 from the former Naval Aviation Depot, Norfolk, and enjoys baseball and volleyball in her free time. According to Simpkins, she truly enjoys working here at the Waterfield Building headquarters.

"The people are really nice here; they say good morning and good bye and they treat me great," said Simpkins.

Both employees feel right at home in the District and say they wouldn't change a thing about it.

District groundbreakings



(Left photo) Congressmen, military officials and distinguished guests turn the ground in a ceremony to start construction on the new Ft. Belvoir Community Hospital. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)



(Right photo) Airforce and Corps officials break ground on the first "Dorms-4-Airmen" facility at Langley Air Force Base, Va. Norfolk District Project Manager Doug Martin is fifth from the left. (Photo by Jerry Rogers)

Welfare council serves district well beyond bake sales

Story by: Brittany Brown

For several decades, the Norfolk District Welfare Council has served District employees in many capacities. The Welfare Council is a non-profit organization whose mission objective is to "...maintain the highest morale of civilian employees and to host welfare activities for the common good and benefit of all civilian employees and military staff of Norfolk District."

Each year, Welfare Council members work hard to plan and host events which offer opportunities to foster team spirit among district employees. These events include the Parade of Sails, Engineer's



Veronica McGuire counts pennies to figure out who won the Welfare Council-sponsored penny war event. (Photo by Brittany Brown)

Day and Fall Harvest. Other activities organized by the council include bake sales, Corpswear sales, winter fruit sales and food drives for the Salvation Army, to name a few. All of the events give Norfolk District team members the chance to take a break from their cubicles and work and mingle with fellow teammates, old and new.

Angel Tree lighting... most recent event

Each December, the Angel Tree Lighting ceremony is an opportunity for district employees to give to the St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children in Norfolk, Va. During the ceremony, the District Corpsaleers sing festive holiday carols to St. Mary's children and staff and district employees. District team members then take an "Angel" from the tree and provide special gifts for their St. Mary's child.

"This outpouring of charity provides the children a ray of hope for a brighter future and the reassurance that someone does indeed care about them," said McGuire.

Engineer's Day biggest event for council

According to Welfare Council President Veronica McGuire, one of the biggest events planned by the council each year is Engineer's Day. The Engineer's Day event, which this year was held at the Great Bridge Military Reservation in Chesapeake, Va., allows Corps employees to bond as they enjoy great food, music and competitive games. This outdoor fete is family-oriented and well-attended by not only current employees and their family members, but retired district employees as well.

"Engineer's Day is an important event for the district," emphasized McGuire. "It allows members the opportunity to get away from the office and meet others who work to achieve our organization's mission."

In addition to off-site events such as Engineer's Day, the council also works to accommodate district team members at the Waterfield Building headquarters. In the event the cafeteria closes for foreseen or unforeseen reasons, council members will arrange to provide for another lunch option, such as pizza, to meet the needs of employees. This arrangement is beneficial for everybody because it provides a flexible arrangement for contracted cafeteria staff, a lunch option for employees, and a fund-raising opportunity for the council.



The district's Angel Tree is adorned with the names and wishes of children from the St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children.

The success of the Welfare Council's ongoing activities relies heavily on district team member involvement, especially the strong support received from District Commander Col. Dionysios Anninos and his Executive staff.

Over the past 18 months, McGuire has seen a tremendous increase in the amount of support and encouragement from District employees. "The council's continued success remains dependent upon Norfolk District team members who give their time, energy, and innovative ideas to create events and activities for the welfare of all," said McGuire.

Upcoming Welfare Council Events

HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTEST

Each branch/division/office is encouraged to participate in the holiday decorating contest. The competition will be judged in two categories. Offices of 15 or less will compete in the small office category and offices larger than 15 will compete in the large office category. Judges will walk through the district on Thursday, Dec. 13th, to rate the décor.

HOLIDAY PARTY

The annual Norfolk District Holiday Party will be Thursday, Dec. 13th, at 11:30 a.m. in the Norfolk District Multi-Purpose Room. This year's event will be catered by Beach Bully of Virginia Beach. Tickets can be purchased from any Welfare Council Member until Tuesday, Dec. 11th.