

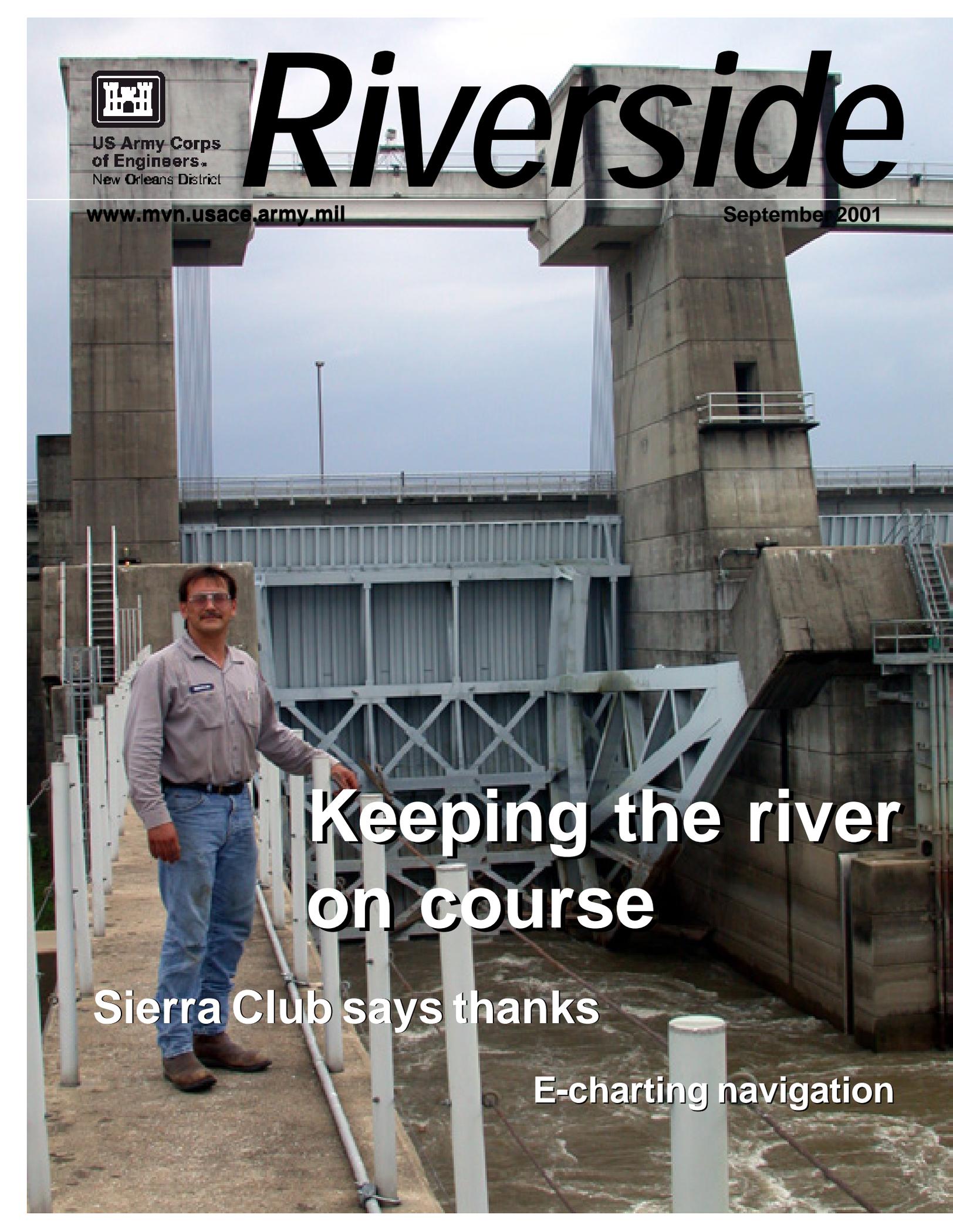


US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
New Orleans District

# Riverside

[www.mvn.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil)

September 2001

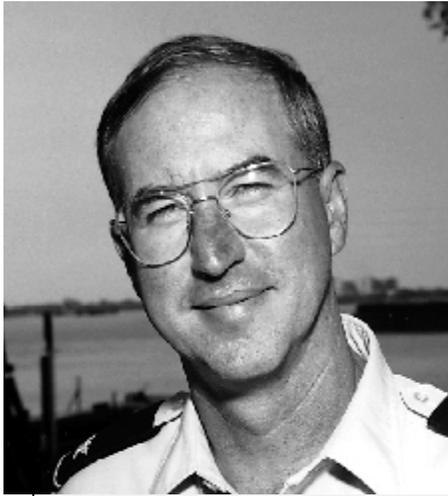
A man in a light-colored button-down shirt, blue jeans, and safety glasses stands on a concrete walkway with a metal railing. Behind him is a large concrete dam structure with a metal gate. The sky is overcast.

**Keeping the river  
on course**

**Sierra Club says thanks**

**E-charting navigation**

# Carrollton Gage



## Col. Thomas F. Julich

### *A Celebration on the Atchafalaya*

I was honored to represent all of you at a recent ceremony in the Atchafalaya Basin. The purpose of the ceremony was to celebrate our district's acquiring of nearly the entire 50,000 acres of public access lands in the basin. The ceremony was held on August 8 at the Indian Bayou Wildlife Management Area.

A significant point about this ceremony is that one of the organizations hosting the event was the Sierra Club, Delta Chapter. The other host was the LA Department of Natural Resources. The invitation to the ceremony read as follows: "In grateful recognition to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, and Participating

Landowners." Why is that significant? The Corps has oftentimes in the past not seen eye to eye on a number of issues with environmental groups, to include the Sierra Club. I believe that the direction the Corps is moving these days on environmental issues means that there are actually many things that we can mutually agree on with environmental groups. And there are many great things that we can do for Louisiana by working together with those groups to solve the many issues we face. Many of you are working daily with environmental groups. That is good. By developing good working relationships with them and successfully dealing with issues they raise you help build trust between our organizations. That helps us better accomplish our mission here in Louisiana.

At the ceremony, the Sierra Club presented the district with a very nice plaque. It is currently mounted on the wall across from the elevators at the main entrance of our building. At the end of September we'll move it to Real Estate where they will proudly display it. Stop by and take a look at it.

Many of you have been involved with this true success story over the years. It was truly a team effort, with Real Estate Division handling most of the work. Thank you for your hard work in helping preserve the unique treasure we have here in Louisiana, the Atchafalaya Basin.

### *Louisiana Coastal Summit*

On August 15 Gov. Foster hosted the Louisiana Coastal Summit. The main purpose of the summit was to hear the commitment from the state on taking the necessary action to support the Coast 2050 effort, and to begin the dialogue on where we go from here. From the discussions I have had with many people after the summit it was quite a success.

I was able to sit on the last panel at the summit, which was facilitated by Mark Davis of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana. Joining me on the panel was Jim Tripp of the Environmental Defense Fund, F.G. Courtney of the National Wildlife Federation, Wendell Curole of South Lafourche Levee District, and Dr. Dhamotharan, URS Corporation. We were each able to give our perspective of where we go from here, with my talk focused on the federal role. It was important to have Tripp and Courtney on the panel because we will need the support of national environmental organizations to get the entire Coast 2050 effort authorized and funded. They gave a candid assessment about the situation along our coast and the challenges that we face getting something the size of Coast 2050 approved.

We have had a great start with our involvement with Coast 2050. But we've only just begun. Please keep up your efforts in this high priority effort.

## Riverside

September 2001 Vol. 12 No. 9

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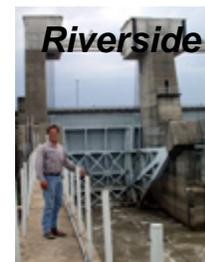


photo by Amanda Padalewski

Elliot Bordelon is one of 15 employees at Old River Control Structure involved in diverting water from the Mississippi into the Atchafalaya River.

# Letters to the Editor

## About the word "customer"

I am writing in response to Col. Julich's Carrollton Gage article in the August 2001 *Riverside*, subject: A new vision for the Project Management Business Process (PMBP) Strategic Vision and Policy. I'm responding in particular to the Colonel's "emphasis on delighting our customers" statement.

I, as well as a very, very large number of my co-workers have a problem with the use of the word "customer." According to the American Heritage Dictionary, a customer is 1. "A person who buys goods or services." 2. "A person with whom one must deal." I was unaware that we, the Corps of Engineers, were selling anything.

There are a number of different missions that the Corps performs, such as Flood Control, Waterways Maintenance, Environmental Cleanup, or Coastal Restoration. The Corps is involved in these missions because there is a national interest, a benefit to all federal taxpayers and we can show in one form or another that there is a benefit to the nation.

I am primarily involved in the mission areas dealing with local sponsors so my response is relative to referring to local sponsors as customers. A much more appropriate word would be "partners" because this better defines the relationship we are in with local sponsors. According to the dictionary, a "partner" is "one that is united or associated with another or others in an activity or a sphere of common interest." This much better defines what I understand, and have understood for 28 years, to be our job. That job is to represent all federal taxpayers, assuring that their tax dollars are being wisely spent,

and that there is a federal interest.

If the Corps of Engineers were a company in business to make a profit then, yes, we would be interested in delighting our customers so that they would be repeat customers. However, as far as I know, that is not why any government agency exists. We enter "Partnerships" for the achievement of a specified goal and that goal is not profit. We provide varying degrees of capital in these partnerships. As a matter of fact, in virtually all these partnerships the eventual financial participation by the federal side makes us a majority partner and our job is to represent the interest of those supplying this capital, the federal taxpayers.

The "business process" as I have seen it work in this district takes on an air of the USED CAR INDUSTRY, fast talkers who will promise anything and say little of substance, with the bottom line not being the interests of the taxpayers, but spending the money budgeted without regard to the product. From what I see it looks like an enormous amount of manpower is being spent on "THE PROCESS" and I do not believe the taxpayers are getting their money's worth. I'm not saying that we are not getting work done because a lot is being accomplished, and a lot to be proud of, but it is not because of the PROCESS; our pride comes from the fact that it is being accomplished in SPITE OF the PROCESS.

*Ronald R. Elmer  
Engineering Division*

See **LETTERS**, page 12



**Lafayette Area Office Engineers Day Picnic 2001**

# Old River: *Never a dull moment*

By Amanda Padalewski

Feeling the thunderous sound of water rushing 50 feet below you is the experience you get on top of the Auxiliary Structure at Old River Control. With a capacity to divert 300 million gallons of water per minute (an average 211 million gallons per minute pass New Orleans), the Old River Control structures provide a big shield of flood protection for the people living along the lower Mississippi.

One of the main duties of the employees at Old River is to regulate the diversion of water from the Mississippi into the Atchafalaya. Thirty percent of the Mississippi's flow on an annual average must be sent into the Atchafalaya River to maintain the distribution of flow and sediments between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers, and prevent a change in the Mississippi's course, which would create disaster in New Orleans.

On a daily basis, employees at Old River take gauge readings on the river levels and transmit them to Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch. Engineers in H&H make the calculations and send back the gate changes to maintain the correct diversion of water.

Cary McNamara, Operations project manager for Old River, said it's important for everyone to know a little bit about everything. Because Old River is located an hour from the nearest town, New Roads, employees must be trained to conquer all of the different obstacles that can arise.

Elliot Bordelon, maintenance worker, said, "Teamwork is the name of the game." His primary task is to operate the structure by adjusting the gates to regulate the flow. He also performs maintenance on the structures, which includes making in their own welding shop pieces that are needed rather than buying them from a manufacturer.

Sheila Wallace is an office assistant at the structure. Her duties include VISA purchases, travel orders, training requests, taking gauge readings, timekeeping and answering phone calls from the public.



*courtesy photo*

**Amanda Padalewski (PAO) gathers with some of her Old River Control hosts for a group photo, posing with: (l. to r.) Dan Brouillette, Henry Smith, Wayne Bordelon, John Lemoine and Cecil Moreau. (Read more about Old River at "Brochures" on our Web site)**

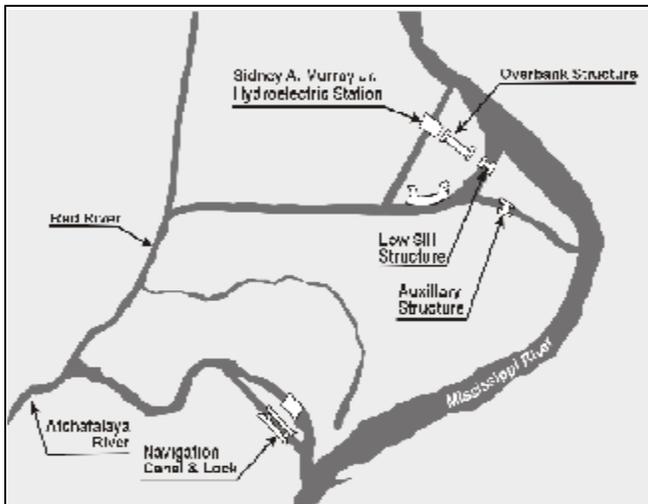
Wallace, who's been with the Corps a year and a half, claimed, "I don't think there's ever really a dull moment. There's always something that's either going on or about to happen. It keeps my mind active and it's interesting."

McNamara said Old River employees don't just operate and maintain the structures. They also handle tourism, recreation and maintenance of other projects in the area. On top of that, McNamara said they're trying to develop a visitors center due to the high demand for tours of the Auxiliary and Low Sill structures. They receive up to 250 visitors on an average weekend.

Wayne Bordelon, who previously worked at the Old River Lock and moved to the control structures, commented, "The mission is big. It's very spread out and diverse."

Paul Averitt, leader man at Old River Control, likes the recreation aspect of Old River. More recently his daily routine consisted of holding down the foreman's duties when he was out for three months. "I enjoy the woods and seeing the wildlife," he says. As a Corps employee of 11 years, Averitt loves to hunt and he finds that he's in the right spot around Old River.

With 11 gates at the Low Sill Structure and six at the Auxiliary Structure, Old River Control keeps the Mississippi on course. Elliot looks down at his hands and says, "If you think about it, this structure right here controls the Mississippi River, one of the mightiest rivers in the world. It's great working here knowing that."



*graphic by Elena Napolitano*

# Corps praised for Atchafalaya work

By Eric Hughes

The Sierra Club and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources honored the New Orleans District on Aug. 8 for acquiring nearly 50,000 acres of public access land in the Atchafalaya Basin. It marked a major land acquisition goal for the Corps.

The basin, located in south-central Louisiana, covers 800,000 acres from Simmesport to Morgan City. It is a principal floodway of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project. Now, it is also one of the district's most significant environmental achievements and a major recreation project.

"There's not a lot of recreation in Louisiana to enjoy," said Marco Rosamano, chief of Direct Federal Acquisition Branch, who was part of the team responsible for acquiring the land. "One of the keys (of the project) is to preserve it."

In 1985 Congress authorized the Corps to purchase 50,000 acres, and since 1988 the Corps has spent \$91 million to

preserve the basin environment and make a portion of the land available to the public.

Corps park rangers will manage the 50,000 acres of public access land, allowing both hunting and non-hunting activities.

"The key is to preserve the land for future generations," said Deanna Walker, team leader for the acquisition project.

"People who use the land want to have it there for their kids to use."

Easements on another 338,000 acres will be acquired to protect the basin and prevent development. As of now, the district has negotiated perpetual rights to 144,000 acres of easement property for environmental protection and developmental control.

According to Yvonne Barbier, a review

appraiser for the acquisition, the hard part was getting willing sellers who understood the Corps' role in protecting the basin and purchase land that would allow the public easy access. "It did not make sense to purchase fee land that would be isolated from other acquired land," Barbier said.

"Unlike other districts, NOD hardly has any recreation involvement here," Rosamano said. "Therefore, this is a unique project and one that the district needs."

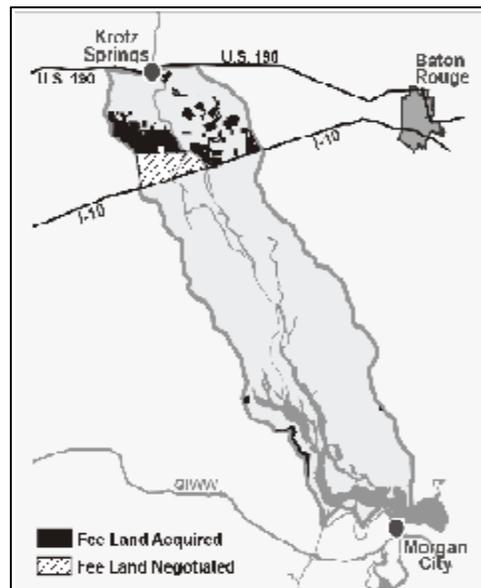


photos by Lane Lefort

**Charles Fryling, Chairman of the Sierra Club Atchafalaya Basin Committee, and U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu present a gift to the Corps for obtaining 50,000 acres of wilderness land for public use.**



**Real Estate members (l. to r. Marco Rosamano, Yvonne Barbier, former Division Chief Clyde Sellers, Acting Chief Bill Lewis, Linda Labure, Deanna Walker) and Col. Thomas Julich are all smiles after the Sierra Club presented the Corps a framed memento of appreciation.**



Graphics by Elena Napolitano

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# Problem

## Second of a series Solvers

By Leslie Terrell

Joey Dykes came to NOD after graduating from Mississippi State University 32 years ago. After a year in a rotational training program, he began working as a water resources planner, managing studies for several flood control, hurricane protection and navigation projects. In 1984, he completed the year-long Planning Associates Program at Fort Belvoir, Va., and in 1989 became chief of General Planning Section in Planning Division.

When the Planning and Project Management divisions merged three years ago, he became a senior project

manager. His project management group is currently managing the Southwest Louisiana Hurricane Evacuation Study, Larose to Golden Meadow Hurricane Protection Project, Bayou Sorrel Lock Study and the Alexandria to the Gulf Reconnaissance Study.



photos by Lane Lefort

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**Project Manager:** Brett Herr

**Study:** Southwest Louisiana Hurricane Evacuation Study

**About the study:** The Corps and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conduct studies for coastal basins in Louisiana that are vulnerable to flooding from storm surge. The state has been divided into two study areas, southeast and southwest. The Southwest Louisiana Hurricane Evacuation Study includes 12 parishes: Acadia, Assumption, Calcasieu, Cameron, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebone and Vermillion.

There are three major steps in the study. The first step determines the potential levels of inundation throughout the basin for a variety of different hurricane scenarios. Hurricanes impacting the area are simulated using the National Hurricane Center's Sea, Lake, and Overland Surge from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model. Color-coded maps are produced showing the areas at risk for each hurricane scenario. This

information is used to determine the vulnerable population, best locations for evacuation shelters, and vulnerability of facilities that need special care in an evacuation. A behavioral survey is also conducted to determine the likely behavior of residents in response to an approaching hurricane. Lastly, the Corps conducts a transportation analysis to determine how long an evacuation would take.

The Corps provides a report to state and parish emergency management officials for use in developing evacuation plans. The Corps conducted a similar study for southeast Louisiana in the early 1990s, and has initiated a restudy area to gather updated information. The studies are cost shared between FEMA and the Corps.

**Time and Cost:** The study began in 1998 and will finish in 2001 at a cost of \$500,000.

**Study:** Larose to Golden Meadow Hurricane Protection Project

**About the Study:** This hurricane



flood protection project protects a 20-mile stretch of Bayou Lafourche between Larose and Golden Meadow. The Corps has constructed two navigable floodgates in Bayou Lafourche, at Larose and Golden Meadow, and is constructing over 40 miles of levees and floodwalls between the floodgates. When the project is completed, residents along Bayou Lafourche will have a 100-year level of hurricane protection.

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In order to prevent flooding along Bayou Lafourche, the floodgates are usually closed when stages are expected to exceed three feet NGVD. As a result of sea level rise and subsidence, the floodgates are closed more often with each passing year. The closing of the floodgates is adversely affecting navigation along Bayou Lafourche. The Corps is conducting a

study to see if constructing a second floodgate at Golden Meadow is economically justified. The new floodgate would be constructed just north of the existing floodgate and would form a lock allowing vessels to pass during high tide.

**Time and Cost:** Congress authorized the project in 1965 and construction began in the late 1970s. The flood-

gates were completed in the late 1980s. The project is 89 percent complete. The draft report for the extra floodgate will be finished this summer and construction of the lock will be completed by 2004. The cost of the project is estimated at \$116 million, but the additional floodgate will raise the cost to \$128 million.

**About the Study:** Bayou Sorrel Lock

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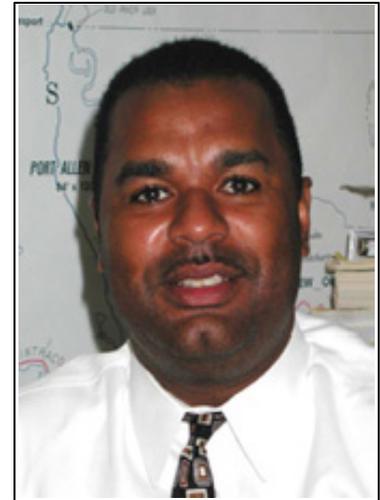
**Project Manager:** Darrel Broussard

**Study: Bayou Sorrel Lock Replacement Study**

is located in the middle of the 64-mile-long alternate route of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) between Port Allen and Morgan City. The lock serves two purposes: it is a flood control feature of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project, constructed in the East Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee, and it allows vessels to travel in and out of the basin and as a vital component of the GIWW, providing a shorter route for traffic north of Baton Rouge traveling west on the GIWW. The present lock, 797 feet long by 57 feet wide, is 50 years old and in good condition, but it must be replaced because of higher stages in the Atchafalaya

Basin, making the lock's elevation eight feet lower than the project flood design in Bayou Sorrel. In addition, Bayou Sorrel Lock is one of the smallest on the GIWW, having average navigation delays of five hours per tow. The Corps plans to construct a larger lock, 1200 feet long by 110 feet wide, to bring the lock up to flood design elevation. The larger lock will reduce navigation delays and save the navigation industry an average of \$15 million per year.

**Time and Cost:** The Corps will complete the final report in December and start the planning, engineering, and design in January 2002. Construction of the lock is scheduled for 2006 through 2008 at a cost of \$86 million.



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**Project Manager:** Mike Buford

**Study: Alexandria to the Gulf of Mexico Feasibility Study**

**About the Study:** This study involves flooding and irrigation issues in the 1,700-square-mile area west of the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee, between Alexandria to the Gulf of Mexico. The purpose of the first phase of the study is to reduce serious flooding in the Chatlin Lake Canal area in Alexandria while preventing flooding in downstream areas. To do so, the Corps would make improvements to channels, divert floodwaters to the Red River below the Overton Lock and Dam, and possibly construct retention reservoirs to store floodwaters until they could be released or pumped to the Red River. Flood control channels may also be used to divert

water from the Red River into the Chatlin Lake Canal for irrigation purposes during low flow conditions.

**Time and Cost:** The state legislature approved funding for the study beginning July 1, and the study will start when the cost-sharing agreement is secured with the La. Department of Public Works and Gravity Drainage District No. 1 of Rapides Parish. The study will last four and a half years at a cost of \$3 million.

*Joey Dykes' group also manages eight Continuous Authority Program (CAP) projects and other studies and projects, including Port Fourchon Project, West Shore Lake Pontchartrain*



*Hurricane Protection Feasibility Study, and the Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf and Black Reconnaissance Study.*

## Float your boat



courtesy photo

**SAFETY CERTIFICATION**—*Wheeler* crewmembers took part in Standards for Training, Certification and Watchkeeping training held at UNO (for Delgado College) in August. This training was part of a new nationwide effort to ensure that all U.S. ocean-going vessels are compliant with International Maritime Organization treaty standards for safety of life at sea. They practiced survival techniques, wearing life jackets and floating with an inflatable life raft. Pictured are: (l. to r.) Mike James, Alton Dawkins, Roland Gonzales, John Shinnars, Bill Kicklighter, Stella LeJeune, Raul Romero, Hilton Zumbro, a non-Corps participant and Robert Starling.

## Project Management

**ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION**—The Corps is turning a former clay mining site, eight miles northeast of downtown Baton Rouge, into a park by planting 7,000 trees and building two lakes in the area. The Comite River at Hooper Road Ecosystem Restoration Project will restore wildlife, improve water quality, reduce erosion, maintain floodwater storage and provide recreational facilities. East Baton Rouge Parish, the city of Baton Rouge and the Recreation and Park Commission for East Baton Rouge Parish (BREC) will share the cost of the \$974,000 project. Work should be completed by December.

**SELA DRAINAGE PROJECT**—The Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control Project continues to improve drainage in Jefferson Parish with 14 contracts complete, 16 under-way and 14 to be awarded. The Corps is improving two pump stations on the east bank to increase their capacity 70 to 75 percent, and building a new pump station on the west bank that will pump water to the Barataria marshes. The new pump station should cost \$18.5 million and be finished in 2002. The pump stations' improvement cost is estimated at \$16-18 million and will be completed in 2003. Jefferson Parish reported that some of the work has already helped reduce flooding in tropical depression Allison.

**LAKE KILLARNEY RESTORATION**—In July the Corps began a feasibility study to restore Lake Killarney, an old oxbow formed from the Mississippi River near Angola State Penitentiary. Located within the levee system around the prison, excess silt has accumulated in the lake and oxygen levels are depleted, harming fish. The Corps is placing instruments in the lake to monitor water quality and has taken soil

borings to test the soil for construction. Next fiscal year, the Corps will look at alternatives for restoring water quality and wildlife in the lake.

## PM/Engineering

**WATER CONCERN**—On July 23, Project Management and Engineering met with the Louisiana Commercial Crawfish Producers Association (LCPA) to discuss its concern about water in the Atchafalya Basin and the operation of Old River Control. The Corps assured LCPA members that NOD is operating Old River in accordance with the law and the Corps' water control plan, and has not diminished flows into the basin in favor of the hydroelectric station, which has no impact on water going into the Atchafalaya.

## Operations/Engineering

**UP AND OVER**—In July Engineering and Operations reviewed and assessed the impact of moving a Chevron chemical vessel across the right descending bank of the Mississippi River levee at mile marker 166. The vessel was being transported to replace one that burned in December 2000. The 975-ton, 350-foot-long vessel is the largest single piece of equipment ever to be moved over the levee.

## Operations

**FRESHWATER BAYOU LOCK IMPROVEMENT**—In July Freshwater Bayou Lock personnel in Vermillion Parish moved into a newly renovated office building. The lock's employees hope the new facility will boost local tourism.

# Rollin' on the river, electronically

By Terri Jackson

Out with the old and in with the new. The future of modern navigation is here. Technology is increasingly changing the way things are done at the Corps.

NOD now maintains River Electronic Navigational Charts (ENC) for the Atchafalaya River. The Atchafalaya River begins in Louisiana at the lower confluence of the Red River and the Lower Old River, flowing 165 miles to the Gulf of Mexico.

"Two years ago while collecting data to update the navigation and hydrographic survey books, the district decided to initiate a river ENC of the Atchafalaya River as a pilot project," said Mark Nettles, cartographer in Engineering Division.

River ENCs are digital databases, regulated as to content, structure and format for use with electronic charting systems in navigable rivers and waterways. It contains all the chart and hydrographic information

necessary for safe navigation on inland waterways. River ENCs are used with other shipboard equipment such as radar, sonar, and global positioning systems (GPS) in a software or hardware form.

With this new river electronic navigation chart, mariners have "instantaneous view of their location on the river," said Nettles. The river

route planning and monitoring," Nettles said. They display additional navigation and chart related information such as water depths, current flow and weather.

The Atchafalaya River ENC is a venture into a new technological field for the Corps. The district has converted the chart data from printed, paper products to a full

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**"Overall, the Atchafalaya River conversion was highly successful," Nettles said.**

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ENC provides a computer-based navigation information system capable of determining a vessel's position in relation to land, charted objects, navigation aids and unseen hazards.

"The Corps' goal is to make river ENCs as readily available to our customers as GPS receivers are today," explained Nettles.

"As an automated, interactive navigation tool, it also assists the mariner in

hydro version of a Geographic Information System (GIS) and digital data production for the Internet.

"For one week in May, we conducted field tests 160 miles along the Atchafalaya River," Nettles said. "We chose significant features and points to evaluate the accuracy of the River ENC." The testing started at the Old River Control Structure and ended at

Eugene Island near the Gulf of Mexico.

The data proved to be exceptionally accurate. "Overall, the Atchafalaya River conversion was highly successful," Nettles said.

To get a firsthand view of the ENC database for the Atchafalaya River, visit the Maps and Data page at [www.mvn.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil). Click on "Atchafalaya River Electronic Navigational Chart."

Contacts for the Atchafalaya River ENC are Julie Vignes, Operations, and Ralph Scheid, Engineering.

Presently, NOD is initiating an extensive electronic chart for the lower Mississippi River. A river ENC of the lower Mississippi River will eventually be available via the Web.



*courtesy photo*

**Mark Nettles onboard the survey boat MV Burrwood, where he tested 160 miles of the Atchafalaya River ENC in May.**

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# An ongoing success story

By Terri Jackson

**T**hree-year Corps employee Quynh Dang, Internal Review, is one of 22 Asian Americans working and making a significant difference at the district.

A native of South Vietnam, Dang immigrated to the United States in 1992 with aspirations of achieving a successful life. "After living pay-check to paycheck, I realized that education was the only way I was going to achieve the success I desired," Dang said.

While working part-time and struggling to learn English, Quynh Dang earned an associate's degree in general studies with a business concentration from Delgado in 1996. She then went on to the University of New Orleans where she obtained a bachelor's degree in accounting in 1999.

Dang comes from a family of teachers, so the importance of education was heavily instilled in her. She is now completing her MBA. Her next step is to become a certified public accountant.

Dang first became interested in accounting to escape her fear of communicating in English. Not very familiar with the language, she chose accounting as her major with the belief, "It would be just me and a

Corps has a very friendly working environment. I felt so welcomed and honored to work for the government," Dang said.

In Internal Review, Dang audits the different offices within the district. Her job is to insure that each office is in compliance with regulations and laws. The audit reports provide the district's decision makers with objective, reliable and timely information.

When asked to describe her work ethic, Dang said, "I firmly believe in the



photo by Scott Riecke

**There is always something exciting in Internal Review for junior auditor Quynh Dang.**

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**"I firmly believe in the chief's 'Just do it!' philosophy," Dang said.**

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computer and I would have to communicate very little," Dang said. "Realizing that I was wrong, I then became very fond of both accounting and communicating."

Dang's first position here was as a student co-op in Resource Management while studying at UNO. She performed many duties that gave her experience in accounting.

Dang always knew that she wanted to go full-time at the Corps. "The

chief's 'Just do it!' philosophy."

Now a junior auditor for Internal Review, Dang finds herself asking the three questions Lt. Gen. Flowers, chief of engineers, encourages all Corps employees to ask before making decisions at work.

Most people who know Quynh Dang say that she has a natural generosity. "She has a very big heart," said Cindy Doan, Engineering Division.

In 1999 there was a terrible flood in central Viet Nam that killed hundreds of people and left thousands homeless. Van Nguyen, Engineering Division, and other Vietnamese-American engineers who started a group called the Freedom Club, asked Corps employees for donations to help the desperate flood victims. "I asked Ms. Dang to donate only \$5 because I knew she was just a co-op student and didn't have much money. Ms. Dang surprised me with \$50 to add to our relief effort," Nguyen said, recalling Dang's kindness.

"I want to help wherever I can," Dang said.

In her spare time, she enjoys tutoring Vietnamese-American children at her Buddhist temple.

# Around the District



photo by Anne Marino

**Darwin Reed, who retired September 3 after 30 years of service, enjoys a farewell gift from Real Estate co-workers. Reed is going to work part-time for g.c.r. & associates, Inc.**

## Congratulations

to **John Hall** (PA) and Beverly Hall (Castle Kids) whose son, Flannery L.S. Hall, graduated from the Navy's Basic Enlisted Submarine School in Groton, Conn. on August 9. Yeoman Seaman Hall has been assigned to the fleet ballistic missile submarine USS Henry M. Jackson, whose homeport is Bangor, Wash.

to **Brenda Jones** (WCSC) whose son, Russell Wilcox, graduated from UNO with a 3.65 GPA in engineering. Russell is currently employed with Entergy.

to **Ronald W. King** (ED), who was married to Valencia V. Johnson on August 4 at The Carrollton.

to **Ada Benavides-Hill, Julie LeBlanc** and **Mark Wingate**, who were promoted to GS-13 senior project management positions. Ada will be assigned to PM Branch-East, Julie to CWPPRA Branch, and Mark to PM Branch-West.

## Condolences

to **Gayle Lawrence** (OD), whose mother died on August 5.

to **Mark D'Antoni** (OD), whose father died on August 3.

to **Joe Giardina** (PM), whose sister died on July 27. to the family of **Hugh Wright** (PM), who died on August 8.

to the family of **Gail Mayeaux** (retired), who died on August 10.

to **Joe Dicharry** (PM) whose father died on August 27.

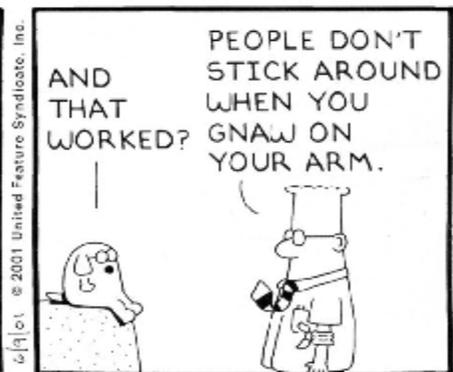
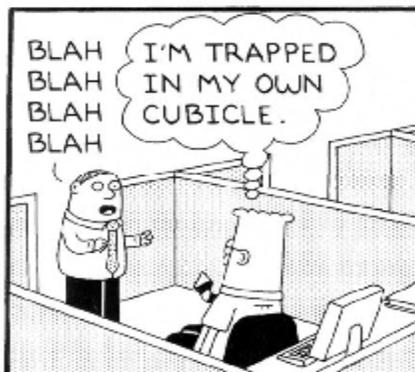
## Health Events

Come out and support NOD's Annual Health Fair October 11 at 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Vendors will give out information on their health services, take blood pressure, diabetes, glaucoma and cholesterol screenings, give massages and much more.

October is *National Breast Cancer Awareness Month*. On October 17-18, Adrian Boutin will speak about early detection of breast cancer and educate women and men on how to perform self-examinations. June Murphree (RM) will be sharing her own personal fight with breast cancer. Employee Enrichment Series and the Wellness Program are sponsoring the event.

The Recreational Activities Council will sponsor *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer*, a 3.5-mile walk on October 20 at the Lakefront at 10 a.m. Participants will receive a free shirt.

**DILBERT**® by Scott Adams



# Talk Back

*A Letter to the Editor replaces this month's Talk Back*

LETTERS, from page 3

## Who are our customers?

I find Col. Julich's discussion of the new project management business process in the August *Riverside* to be rather disturbing. Perhaps I've been missing something essential in my 20 years with the Corps. I've been under the impression that this is an engineering organization doing its part for the betterment of the United States of America. Now I see that we're supposed to focus on "delighting our customers."

I'll confess it's not entirely clear to me who our customers are. I keep hearing hints that our local sponsors are our customers, but that hardly seems appropriate. Local sponsors are our partners, and in partnership we pursue feasibility studies to determine whether projects avidly supported by those sponsors are in the best interest of the federal taxpayers. To tell the truth, I've always thought that the taxpayers were our customers. They're the ones who pay us to do what we do, and they have the right to expect their money to be well spent.

It's never occurred to me that my job might be about "delighting" anyone. As I

said, this is an engineering organization; are we supposed to behave as though we were a theater company? We're not looking for smiles and applause. We're looking for solutions to water resources problems. Sometimes, we're presented with problems whose solutions are not in the federal interest. If that's the case, we tell the proponent (the local sponsor) that we can't participate in the solution to this particular problem. In general, I would expect the proponent not to be delighted by the news. However, to express the belief that there exists a feasible solution to every problem requires one to be either a trifle naïve or less than completely honest.

Our relationships with our customers (whoever they may happen to be) should be based on demonstrated competence and integrity, not a willingness to accommodate whatever request happens to arrive in the day's mail.

*Stan Green*  
*Project Management*

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IDEAS PRINTED  
IN THE NEXT ISSUE

AND

WIN A RESERVED  
PARKING SPOT FOR  
AN ENTIRE MONTH

RESPOND BY  
SEPTEMBER 26

LET US KNOW WHAT  
YOU THINK ABOUT  
THIS MONTH'S  
Talk Back TOPIC:

INTERNET SERVICES

>WHAT OTHER SERVICES  
CAN THE DISTRICT PROVIDE  
USING THE INTERNET?

*The editor reserves the  
right to pick which re-  
sponses to publish and  
award.*

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