

The **castle**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District

August/September 2010



The passing of the Colors:
**A Change of Command
for Savannah District**

News magazine of the
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Savannah District

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FRONT COVER
South Atlantic Division
Commander, Maj.
Gen. Todd Semonite
(c) passes the colors
to incoming District
Commander, Col.
Jeffrey M. Hall, during
Savannah District's
change of command
ceremony June 4.
Outgoing District

Commander, Col. Edward J. Kertis, looks on from right. (Photo by George Jumara)

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The Safety and Occupational Health Office hosted a booth to promote safety during Corps Day 2010. Liller Kirksey, safety support assistant, handed out safety-themed items such as water, coloring books, flying discs, and bug repellent to Corps Day attendees. Charissa Lowe, a registered nurse with the District Regional Occupational Health Clinic was on hand to provide first-aid assistance to team members, if needed. See more Corps Day photos on page 13.

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Viewpoint

From where I sit

Opening the pod bay doors

Dave: *Open the pod bay doors, HAL*

HAL: *I'm sorry, Dave, I'm afraid I can't do that.*

– “2001: A Space Odyssey”

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the Savannah District’s offsite meeting, 2020 Futurist.com Think Tank, in Hilton Head, S.C. Facilitated by futurist Glen Hiemstra, the goal of the meeting was to envision what the Savannah District would look like 10 years from now. Attendees ranged in experience from the District Commander and executive staff to first-year interns. Over the course of three days, we explored the future of the district, the federal government, and the world at large.

During the meeting, we discussed “pie-in-the-sky” ideas like nanotechnology, biometrics, and limb regeneration. We also discussed issues more pertinent to the future of the district, such as implementing an electronic filing system, creating a more effective intern program, and facing the challenge of employee retention in a more competitive environment. While I certainly enjoyed the discussions and exercises, as civil servants we work for the presidential administration, and we respond according to congressional directive. In that sense, we have less control over what our work environment will resemble in 2020.

Surprisingly, despite the numerous video vignettes with every *2001: A Space Odyssey*-esque scenario imaginable, the topic that energized the group and resulted in the liveliest exchanges between group members was much simpler—demographics. While we can’t control or predict the agenda of a given administration, budgeting priorities, or core mission focus, we can shape one aspect that is more important and more mission-critical—our people.

The Savannah District like many other federal agencies consists primarily of two distinct groups of workers. We have the seasoned, experienced, yet aging specialists, which we commonly refer to as Baby Boomers, and the young, ambitious, technologically-savvy, yet inexperienced professionals referred to as Millennials. As a member of Generation X, I am one of a smaller group caught in the middle, trying to absorb as much wisdom and knowledge as possible from the older generation, preserve it, and attempt to integrate it into all the new technologies at our disposal.



Mackie McIntosh, Civil Programs and Project Management, presents the results of a discussion about what their group liked most and least about the Corps, during the Savannah District 2020 Futurist.com Think Tank in Hilton Head, S.C.

So, where do I see the people that comprise the Savannah District in 10 years? I certainly see a shift in senior leadership from a group comprised almost exclusively of Baby Boomers to include some Generation Xers and a few Millennials. More importantly, the ability of this diverse group to work together, focus on commonalities, and recognize the value of one another’s experiences will be crucial in determining the future of the district. Accomplishing this will allow the district to create its own niche within the core mission areas, and truly capitalize on what certainly will be a talented, well-educated, diversified workforce that will be reaching its stride 10 years from now. I just hope HAL 9000 won’t be listening in. 📺

By Mackie McIntosh, Civil Programs and Project Management

Editor’s Note: *Another session of the 2020 Futurist.com Think Tank is scheduled for the fall, and additional team members—Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials—will be invited to attend to exchange ideas and help chart the course for 2020.*

Col. Jeffrey M. Hall assumes command of the Savannah District

Ceremony symbolizes the passage of authority, responsibility and accountability

With time-honored tradition and ceremonial honors, Col. Jeffrey M. Hall assumed command of the Savannah District from Col. Edward J. Kertis on June 4. Maj. Gen. Todd Semonite, Commander of the South Atlantic Division, officiated at the ceremony and welcomed Hall and his wife, Elyce, to the district. Lt. Col. David London, Deputy Commander, served as master of ceremonies, and Peter Oddi, Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, assisted with the passing of the Colors, symbolizing the partnership between the district's military and civilian team members.

During his remarks, Semonite praised Hall's experience:

"Colonel Hall's ability to come in as a leader, understand the issues and



Immediately following the ceremony, Col. Jeffrey M. Hall addresses questions posed by local media. (Photos by George Jumara)



The Color Guard from the U.S. Army 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Ga., prepares to post the Colors.

champion them will serve this district well," Semonite said. "He is the right guy at the right time."

Hall came to the Savannah District following an assignment as the Command Engineer for the Army and Air Force Exchange Services (AAFES), a global military retailer, where he led a \$2.5 billion capital construction program and oversaw the maintenance of 3,100 facilities in 35 countries, five U.S. territories, and all 50 states.

Before AAFES, he served in numerous engineer command and staff positions in the United States and overseas. Hall was born at Fort Riley, Kansas, and raised in San Antonio, Texas. He graduated from Trinity University in San Antonio in 1984 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He also earned a Master of Science degree in General Administration from Central Michigan University in 1997 and a Master of Science in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College in 2007.

“I am humbled, honored and privileged today to serve with the Savannah District,” said Hall at the ceremony. “The district is a high performing and extremely talented team, which has a reputation of excellence at every level and at any time. I look forward to serving with my teammates and meeting the challenges that lay ahead of us.”

Col. Edward J. Kertis, completing the standard three-year tour leading the Savannah District, will become the commander of the Corps of Engineers’ Pacific Ocean Division in Honolulu. During his tenure in Savannah, he oversaw a significant growth in the military construction program and managed Savannah River basin water resources during record-breaking drought.

The tradition of the Change of Command ceremony dates back to the passing of the scepter (a symbol of authority) from the old Caesar to the new, in the progression of the Roman Empire. The U.S. Army adopted the custom of passing the Colors from the British, and instituted it in the 18th century when General George Washington assumed command of the Continental Army in Boston on July 3, 1775.

The district was honored to have the presentation of the Colors by the U.S. Army 3rd Infantry Division Color Guard from Fort Stewart, Ga., and music provided by the U.S. Army Signal Corps Band from Fort Gordon, Ga. 



Col. Jeffrey M. Hall cuts the celebratory cake, provided by the Employee Recreation Association, with his wife Elyce, during a welcome reception following the Change of Command Ceremony.



The U.S. Army Signal Corps Band from Fort Gordon, Ga., provided music for the ceremony.



Col. Jeffrey M. Hall passes the Colors to Pete Oddi, Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, symbolizing the partnership between the district’s military and civilian members.

Command Philosophy

On the day he took command of the Savannah District, Col. Jeffrey M. Hall provided team members with his command philosophy, indicating the importance he placed on ensuring the team understood his background and how it shaped his command approach. “As with each of you, I have been shaped by my experiences and by the leaders and colleagues with whom I have served,” he said.

Based on his philosophy, Hall spoke with *The Castle* staff about his leadership approach and expectations.



Col. Jeffrey M. Hall

The Castle: What would you describe as the most important expectations you have for the district?

Hall: As I said when I took command, it is an honor and a privilege to serve with the Savannah District. It has a distinguished reputation of excellence at all levels. At the same time, I bring certain expectations with me as the new commander. The key principles I have followed over the years focus on precision performance, responsive power and agility, smooth operation, time-honored workmanship, and ensuring a meaningful experience for the customer. These are by no means all inclusive or in any specific order; however, they are some of the characteristics of great organizations.

The Castle: What do you see as the key to a meaningful experience with the customer?

Hall: Communication is key! We cannot over-communicate with our customers. According to the Project Management Institute, 90 percent of a project manager’s time is spent communicating with customers and the project delivery team (PDT). Customers want to be an integral part of the PDT. Just like us, they want to be heard and have us understand and address their concerns and limitations. They want to be kept informed about the current status of their projects along with any issues that may add scope, cost, and/or schedule. Effective two-way communication is essential to the customer understanding us, and our understanding of them and is also critical for our organization’s success. Most importantly, we must do what we say we are going to do.

The Castle: How do you view employee empowerment—showing initiative?

Hall: The bottom line is Savannah District employees are empowered. Employees should stay within their authority, do what is right and take the initiative. They don’t need permission, but I do ask that they keep their leadership, managers, and teams informed. When given direction and guidance, my expectation is the employee will take the mission and execute. Likewise, if the direction is unclear, I expect the employee to ask for clarification. Leaders and managers should provide an end state or vision, and the employee and/or team should develop and execute the plan to achieve the specified outcome.

The Castle: More than 1,000 people—across three states—make up the Savannah District. How do you intend to make them feel like part of the team?

Hall: First and foremost, we must take care of our people. The greatest resource of the district is, and will always be, our people. Every team member shall treat each other with the utmost respect and dignity. Leaders and managers should make their employees feel part of the team by keeping them informed and involved. We must capitalize on employees’ unique skills, experiences and backgrounds as well as afford them the necessary training opportunities to succeed.

Second, Savannah District is a “Team of Teams.” Whether you are in the technical, contracting, personnel, logistics, support or legal field, every employee is part of a functional team—sometimes multiple ones. These teams rely on talent, initiative and drive of the individual members so that Savannah District remains a world class organization. However, even with extensive individual talent, we need to work as a team – pull in one direction, not in many different ones. Also, leaders and managers need to recognize high-performing individuals and teams.

Last, but not least, two-way communication is essential to the team. It is difficult to celebrate successes and help with issues unless you know about them. So I ask you to think, “Who else needs to know?” and communicate with them.

The Castle: What is the overarching theme to your philosophy?

Hall: Provide sustainable solutions to our customers, ensuring we deliver quality, on time and on budget with integrity, respect for others, and safely.

Operating in a customer-focused industry and a rapidly-changing environment, we must be responsive, agile, flexible, and have a disciplined approach to accomplish our missions. We need to leverage emerging technologies, industry best practices, and USACE capabilities in order to deliver sustainable solutions to our customers.

Additionally, we must operate with a common set of organizational values, the Army Values, the Soldier’s Creed, and the Army Civilian’s Creed and processes.

As Larry the Cable Guy would say, “Let’s Get’r Done!”

New oxygenation system to improve fish habitat at Thurmond Lake

Underwater injection system boosts striped bass habitat and allows operation of pump back turbines at Russell Dam

After a decade in the making, the Savannah District reached an historic milestone in April with the delivery of two 20,000-gallon liquid oxygen tanks, bringing it closer to completion of an underwater oxygenation system for the J. Strom Thurmond Lake. The project, near Modoc, S.C., is one of 126 federally-funded construction projects in the district made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) supporting economic growth with funding initiatives totaling \$224 million.

This \$9.1 million ARRA project supports the completion of the Richard B. Russell Pump Back Project, located on the Savannah River, near Augusta, Ga. Although the total \$12.6 million project, which includes \$3.5 million in general construction funds, will immediately benefit fish and fishermen, the oxygen system is part of a broader plan for wiser use of Thurmond and Richard B. Russell Lakes' sometimes sparse water supplies and ability to generate more electricity.

The tanks, part of an environmental mitigation program for the power plant at the Richard B. Russell Dam, will ultimately supply pure oxygen to a series of underwater tubes in Thurmond Lake. The oxygen injection system will allow full operation year round of the four pump back units at Russell Dam. Currently, no more than two pump back units may be operated during summer months. The pump back turbines at Russell Dam generate power normally during daytime peak demand hours, then reverse direction at night to pull water back into Russell Lake for reuse the next day, thus providing power even during drought. When combined with the four conventional units there, Russell Dam will have a capacity of 648 megawatts of clean, renewable energy, making it the largest Corps of Engineers power plant in the eastern United States.

Construction began during the summer of 2009 on a cryogenic oxygen storage facility that will pump 20 to 100 tons per day of liquid oxygen through seven miles of perforated pipes submerged 80 to 90 feet below the lake's surface. The idea is to add oxygen to the lower lake during hot weather, when falling oxygen levels force fish to swim upstream.

Corps experts developed a series of measures to offset any negative impacts to the fish habitat during the pump back turbines' operation. One of those included



Liquid oxygen will be stored in the \$2.8 million ARRA-funded above-ground tanks recently installed by ABUCK, Inc., of Mableton, Ga. Small business firms received contracts for all three construction phases of the \$12.6 million project. The cryogenic system is slated for completion in Sept. 2011. (USACE photo)

an oxygenation system to improve striped bass habitat in Thurmond Lake. The oxygenation system, located five miles upstream from Thurmond Dam creates new habitat for large striped and hybrid bass whose conditions for survival are very stringent.

"Currently, this portion of Thurmond Lake experiences thermal stratification and oxygen depletion in water depths greater than 40 ft. during the summer," said Jamie Sykes, Savannah District fisheries biologist. "The deeper water contains the appropriate water temperature for striped bass habitat, but doesn't contain sufficient oxygen," Sykes said. The system will add oxygen to these deeper layers to provide both cool and oxygenated water.

The completed facility is expected to go online by September 2011.

Although the project will be almost invisible to visitors, its impact will come in the form of highly oxygenated water that will lure and hold sport fish during the hot summer months. Once operational, it is expected to increase dissolved oxygen levels by up to three parts per million along a five mile-swath from Modoc downstream to the face of Thurmond Dam, where oxygen levels fall to less than one part per million during warm weather.

"The resulting good from this project is our ability to fully utilize the 320 megawatts of additional power generating capacity at the Russell Dam, while protecting the world-class striped bass fishery resource in Thurmond Lake, with an annual estimated value of almost a million dollars," Sykes said. 

By Jeanne Hodge, Corporate Communications Office

Corps improves quality of life for military families

What Sarah Cole enjoys most about the Child Development Center at Fort Stewart, Ga. is the bright colors. “It’s so cute,” said Cole, as the children’s excited screams and laughter echo around her. Cole, a military spouse, uses the center to provide hourly care for her 16-month-old son.

Like Cole, many military families call on the help of childcare facilities on military installations to care for their children. Family support facilities like these not only help to improve the quality of life for deserving military families who support Soldiers, but they also provide convincing incentives for Soldiers to continue their service.

With this in mind, more than \$145 million in construction projects in support of Soldiers and families are under way within the Savannah District. These facilities, which will support thousands of military families on six installations, uphold the Army Family Covenant, which pledges to improve the quality of life for Soldiers and families. Included are facilities such as Soldier and Family Assistance Centers, schools, and child development and youth centers.

Providing peace of mind

Since January 2009, the district has constructed four childcare facilities – one at Hunter Army Airfield, one at Fort Stewart, and two at Fort Benning. Several others are under construction at Hunter AAF, Forts Stewart, Bragg, Gordon, and Moody Air Force base.

Quian Huff, facility director of Indian Head Child Development Center at Fort Benning, said that childcare facilities on military installations help to accommodate the need for quality, convenient childcare.

“The last thing a Soldier needs to be worried about is their family when they are deployed,” said Huff. “Our facility provides them with peace of mind, so that they can focus on their mission, knowing that their child is in a safe environment.”

Child Development Centers on military installations typically provide care for children ages six weeks to five years, and strive to provide a stimulating environment where children can develop motor, cognitive, social, and emotional skills. The Savannah District builds the centers with this goal in mind. The childcare rooms at the centers also come equipped with child-sized sinks, toilets, and water fountains.

“These centers are not only visually appealing, but conducive to learning,” said Evelyn Egings-Alston,

facility assistant director, Child, Youth & School Services at Fort Stewart & Hunter Army Airfield.

At Fort Bragg, there are several family support projects underway to meet the demands of Soldiers and families arriving at the installation due to the Army’s stationing initiatives. In particular, childcare facilities and schools are in demand.

According to Michelle Peralta, Savannah District Project Manager for Schools and Child Development Centers at Fort Bragg, there are more than 17,700 school age dependents of Soldiers and civilians assigned to Fort Bragg eligible for care. Due to the influx of military families with school age dependents, there is a shortage of youth and childcare facilities. “The stationing initiatives are anticipated to create an additional requirement for facilities to accommodate 1,300 six-to-10 year olds,” said Peralta. “Currently, school age child development facilities are full with extended waiting lists.”



All Child Development Centers, like the one shown here at Fort Stewart, Ga., are equipped with a playground area. Each classroom has a private door that leads to the playground area, where sets of play equipment accommodate different age groups.



Education Specialist Janeen Rosenberg discusses bachelor's degree program options with Staff Sgt. Jaime Perez and Sgt. Juan Batista at the new Soldier and Family Assistance Center at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Convenience at a critical time

When Soldiers become ill, wounded, or injured, they need to rehabilitate in a supportive environment.

That's exactly the type of peace the new Soldier and Family Assistance Center at Fort Stewart strives to provide to Soldiers and their families, according to Diane Smith, director of the facility.

"Our facility provides a peaceful, supportive, and safe place for Soldiers to share stories and express what's on their mind," said Smith.

The district completed the 15,000 square-foot center in June, and plans to award two more contracts this year for similar facilities at Forts Benning and Bragg. Designed to complement Warrior in Transition units, Soldier and Family Assistance Centers provide a "one-stop location" for support to family members who are caring for ill, injured, or wounded Soldiers who are transitioning back to military or civilian life.

The center's staff provides guidance, assistance, and information on finances, child care, family advocacy, military personnel issues, legal assistance, and a variety of other support services. The facilities "one-stop shopping" helps speed the recovery of Warriors in Transition and aids their families.

With a kitchen, computer lab, childcare room, playground, and fireplace-equipped sitting area on site, Smith says that the center provides a relaxing place for families to come and seek the services they need.

Sgt. Tracy J. Smith, A Company, Warrior in Transition Battalion, says that she loves the resources available at the center. "I love the people, and it's one of those places where you go to find your niche, and discover what you want to do. Whether its obtaining a degree or legal advice, the resources are here, but you have to fully embrace them," said Smith.

Building quality schools

In addition to youth and childcare facilities and Soldier and Family Assistance Centers, the district also has several construction projects under way for schools at Fort Bragg, N.C.

A new elementary and a middle school, both under way in the Linden Oaks area of Fort Bragg, will open next to the new family housing.

At 123,616 square feet, the elementary school will serve 714 students, pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. The middle school, approximately 99,300 square feet, will serve 550 students in the sixth through eighth grade. Located on one site, the schools will share a cafeteria and parking lot.

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Domestic and Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) will operate both facilities. Their designs meet DoDEA standards. With a comprehensive pre-kindergarten through 12th grade curriculum, DoDEA schools serve the children of military service members and eligible Department of Defense Civilian employees throughout the world.

"Military families place a high emphasis on their child's education, so they look at our schools as one of the benefits available for their families," said Cindy Gibson, DoDEA/DDESS public affairs officer. "Our teachers and staff truly appreciate the unique challenges military children face with deployments, separations and the transitions of moving."

The facilities that the district constructs for military families play a vital role in the support of Soldiers and the sustainment of the Army.

"It is an honor to provide these facilities to our Soldiers and families who have given so much to this country," said Peralta. "They deserve the very best." 

By Rashida Banks, Corporate Communications Office

Department of Public Works Installation Support Program of the Year

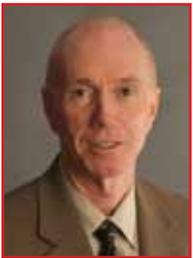
Because of outstanding support provided to Forts Benning and Bragg, the Savannah District was selected as the 2009 Department of Public Works Installation Support Program of the Year, by the U.S. Army Installation Management Command. In three of the past five years, the Savannah District has received this award — the Army's highest satisfaction rating among engineering agencies supporting the military — a testament to its dedication to Soldiers.

Corps Day 2010 Savannah District Annual Awards Ceremony

Fort Pulaski served as the backdrop for Savannah District's Corps Day activities on June 18. Savannah District Commander Col. Jeffrey M. Hall opened the program and recognized the accomplishments of employees, including Team Member, Supervisor, and Student Team Members of the Year. The Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees also gained an inductee, with family members on hand to celebrate the achievement. Savannah District employees who completed 30, 35, and 40 years of federal service were recognized during the Annual Awards Ceremony with a Longevity Service Award.

District Team Member of the Year Awards

Team Member of the Year, Engineering and Scientific



Thomas Brockbank, chief, Center of Standardization (COS) Section, Design Branch, Engineering Division, has been named Savannah District's 2010 Team Member of the Year, Engineering and Scientific Field. Brockbank applied new concept developments that led his team in the preparation of 70 task orders for \$1.38 billion in construction projects throughout the world. More importantly, Brockbank led and taught the other Centers of Standardization (COS) throughout the Corps in the methods and procedures they needed to follow in developing adapt-build models. The impact of this achievement has established Savannah District as the model for other COS districts to emulate. Brockbank's success has been widely recognized by Corps Headquarters, his peers, and other Corps commands.

Supervisor of the Year



Cynthia Turner serves as the Deputy Chief of Real Estate Division. As a supervisor, Turner not only leads her section but steps in as a true team player. She encourages her team by presenting them with opportunities to learn and grow within the Real Estate Division. She builds trust by verbally recognizing her staff in public, and nominating them for monetary awards for their exceptional work. Turner sets the standard and exemplifies leadership that shines through to her staff.

Team Member of the Year, Other than Engineering and Scientific



Barbara McComb, former budget analyst, Engineering Division, was honored posthumously as the District's Team Member of the Year, Other than Engineering and Scientific Field. Because of her perseverance and efforts, the Savannah District submitted the most efficient Consolidated Departmental Overhead budget in the region and exceeded all Command Management Review metrics. The respect McComb earned from her friends and co-workers is not new-- but developed over her 30 years with the Corps. Her actions will be remembered for years to come by those who knew her.

Student Team Member of the Year



Jeannine Dukes of the Equal Employment Opportunity Office was recognized as the District's 2010 Student Team Member of the Year. A student at Savannah State University, Dukes juggles her work and class schedule and still maintains a high grade point average. Her attention to detail has resulted in quick response to people seeking EEO advice. Her excellent assistance to the Special Emphasis Program is motivated by a drive to do not just a good job, but a great job. Her exceptional support has ensured that EEO is in full compliance with all regulatory requirements.



Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees



Gloria Williams, former Finance and Accounting Officer, Resource Management Division, was inducted posthumously into the Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees. Each year the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recognizes one retired or deceased employee who rendered distinguished and exceptional service to the Savannah District and the Corps.

Williams was honored for her long and dedicated career which includes more than 31 years of federal service, 16 of which were with the Corps. Her portrait will hang in the Employee Information Courtyard in the District headquarters building throughout the next year.

During her tenure, Williams spent countless hours working across functional lines developing processes, and standard operating procedures, facilitating training and coordinating with external auditors. She served on the P-2 Project Development Team and also played a major role on the Cost Sharing Clean-up Team which helped eliminate adverse impacts to district customers, and paved the way for the current Corps of Engineers Financial Management System enhancements. Williams' innovative efforts to train numerous accountants and develop processes led the Corps of Engineers to become the first Department of Defense Activity to obtain an unqualified opinion on its financial statements in 2008 and 2009.



2010 Charles F. Trainor Team Awards

Charles Trainor was assigned to Savannah District as a civil engineer in 1929 and became the first Chief of the Engineering Division. He served the District with distinction for almost 40 years, retiring in 1968. Some of his notable accomplishments include widening the District's design experience and organizing the Construction-Operations Division. The Trainor Team Award recognizes any team or group of team members who were significantly involved in executing programs, projects, or improving processes.

Military Project Team of the Year *Infantry Brigade Combat Complex*

The Military Project Team of the Year goes to the Infantry Brigade Combat Team Complex, a \$400 million, 457-acre site complex at Fort Stewart, Ga. The team overcame several hurdles including the Army's decision not to locate a fifth Brigade Combat Team at Fort Stewart. The project team developed a detailed plan to complete construction in phases allowing the District to turn over facilities to the customer as each building was completed. This helped balance the installation's facility shortages and troop occupancy dates. The site plan included a reverse osmosis water treatment plant not originally in the initial design to meet water and environmental concerns. Fort Stewart's Directorate of Public Works and the A-E firm remarked on how well Project Management timelines were met.



Infantry Brigade Combat Team Complex at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Civil Project Team of the Year

Savannah Harbor Disposal Area Dike Protection

This multi-organizational team faced a challenging time constraint of six months to analyze site conditions, then design the project, award a contract, and begin construction of six stimulus-funded projects without any negative environmental impacts in sensitive wetland areas. The construction required placement of 15,400 linear feet of armor stone along the banks of the Savannah River, construction of haul roads, plus mining and placement of 580,000 cubic yards of earthen dike construction and a four-acre bird-nesting island. The completed projects will protect three critical disposal areas in the Savannah Harbor from storm and ship wake damage while improving the environment and saving future dredging costs.



Excavation and placement of rock at Savannah Harbor disposal site

Special Project Team of the Year

The National Security Agency, Georgia Regional Security Operations Center

Because of the nature of the project, the Project Delivery Team for the National Security Agency, Georgia Regional



Harry Kye, area engineer, Fort Gordon, accepts the Charles F. Trainor Team award for the Special Project Team of the Year from Savannah District Commander Col. Jeffrey M. Hall.

Security Operations Center had to manage unique and rigorous security concerns on the construction site. The success of the project can be attributed to the team's use of innovative solutions to improve requirements in the contract, such as three-day, look-ahead construction meetings, and daily interaction with the NSA on-site project manager, the contractors, and other key players. The team's best practices in construction management and innovative critical thinking resulted in a finished project three months ahead of the scheduled contract completion date.

Environmental Project Team of the Year

Fort Drum Surfactant Enhanced Aquifer Restoration Design Optimization Investigation

The Fort Drum Surfactant Enhanced Aquifer Restoration Design Optimization Investigation Team was selected as the Environmental Project Team of the Year. The team needed to develop the fastest, most efficient and ecologically feasible way to identify the impact zone of spilled JP-8 fuel. They developed a unique tool assemblage and project execution plan, expedited contract acquisitions, and rapidly responded to site conditions that significantly impacted their progress. They mobilized people and equipment more than 100,000 miles apart, and successfully completed an essential design optimization investigation where other attempts proved to be either too costly or ineffective. The team used complex electronic tools, allowing them to receive detailed data in half the time and cost of other efforts. They developed a process unique to contaminant delineation in sand aquifers. The field team successfully completed the investigation and allowed the customer to minimize the treatment zone by 17 percent, for an immediate savings of a minimum of \$750,000 for the \$4.5 million project.



The Site Characterization and Analysis Penetrometer System collects soil type and contaminant distribution data at a site in Fort Drum, N.Y., using Cone Penetrometer Testing and an Ultraviolet Optical Scanning Tool.



(Above): Despite the heat, team members enjoy an exhilarating game of volleyball. (Right): Wyatt, the son of Angel Irwin, Resource Management Division, stands in amazement as he observes Lt. Col. David London, deputy commander, Savannah District, floating in the Dunk Tank during the District's annual Corps Day event June 18. (Photo by Brittany Phillips)



Corps Day 2010

Fun in the Sun at Fort Pulaski

After the annual awards ceremony, Savannah District team members braved the heat on the volleyball court, while others found a way to keep cool. Other activities included the dunking booth, and the moon bounce and giant waterslide for the kids. A trolley ran back and forth between the Corps Day site and the Fort Pulaski Visitor's Center, where team members were provided free guided tours.



Nora Grace, the daughter of Ryan (Operations Division) and Jennifer Hartwig (former Corporate Communications Office intern) shows off her new dance moves. (Photo by Brittany Phillips)



(Left to right) LaSheena Vaughn, Tabitha Polote, and Nick Lee prepare to board the trolley for a tour of Fort Pulaski National Monument.



Canton Gardenhire (l) and Valjean StellBurns(r), from the Internal Review Office take a second to pose for a photo under the blazing sun. (Photo by Brittany Phillips)

District welcomes new chief counsel

G. Rogers Sloan, the new District Counsel, began her duties May 17, making her the first woman to assume a GS-15 position in the Savannah District. As the District Counsel, Sloan serves as the primary legal advisor to the Commander and the senior civilian staff.

Sloan entered federal service with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1986 when she joined the Vicksburg District as a real estate attorney. Since that time, she has served as Assistant Counsel for the Mississippi Valley Division/ Mississippi River Commission, interim District Counsel for Pittsburgh District, and as Counsel for Task Force Hope during Hurricane Katrina. She has also worked



in private practice, serving as both a criminal defense attorney and city prosecutor.

A native of Clinton, Miss., Sloan holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn. She also holds a juris doctor degree from the University of Mississippi, Oxford, Miss., and a master of laws degree (Government Procurement) from The National Law Center, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Sloan is a member of the Federal Bar Association, the American Bar Association, the Mississippi Bar and numerous local and national professional, civic, and academic associations.

She has received numerous awards, including a Commander's Award for Civilian Service, two Department of Army Achievement Medals for Civilian Service, and the 2007 Attorney of the Year award from the Chief Counsel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, D.C. 

Kramer selected Chief of Information Technology



Herman H. Kramer was selected Chief of the Information Technology Office in June where he manages a staff of 18 technical and professional staff members. The office is responsible for network infrastructure, desktop support, information security, strategy and overall IT service delivery for the district.

Kramer entered the U.S. Marine Corps in 1990

and completed basic training at Parris Island, S.C., as a Small Arms Repairman. His first assignment was to Camp Pendleton, Calif. Following that, he was assigned to Camp Fuji, Japan with the Small Arms, Intermediate Maintenance Activity. Upon returning to the U. S., he was assigned to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island where he transitioned to the Tactical Air Control field, controlling Air-to-Air combat missions

and managing Tactical Data Link network. During his military career, Kramer supported training missions and real world events such as narcotic operations and safeguarding public and private property during the civil unrest associated with the 1992 Los Angeles riots.

Kramer earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Management from the National University in 2000 before separating from the Marine Corps.

After leaving active duty, Kramer was a subcontractor with the largest Department of Defense Information Technology outsourcing effort, the Navy Marine Corps intranet program. Later he accepted a position as Site Transition Manager with Electronic Data Systems where he led the network planning, implementation, and initial Service Delivery of enterprise IT Services at The Washington Navy Yard and Naval Surface Warfare Centers in Maryland and Virginia. Following this, he was selected for a position with the U. S. Army Materiel Command in Fort Belvoir, Va. Most recently, he served as Product Delivery Manager, Materiel Enterprise Portal for which the AMC Chief Information Office was named a 2010 Computerworld Honors Program Laureate. The program recognizes achievements of men, women, organizations and institutions worldwide, whose visionary applications of information technology promote positive social, economic and educational change. 

Sykes named Natural Resources Management Stewardship Employee of the Year

Caring for the environment comes naturally for James “Jamie” Sykes. Sykes, a fisheries biologist at the Richard B. Russell Dam and Lake Project, received the Corps of Engineers’ Natural Resources Management Stewardship Employee of the Year award.

Sykes oversaw several successful projects in 2009. One notable accomplishment included managing the technical portion of the selection of a contractor for the above ground and in-water portion of the Thurmond Lake oxygenation system (See page 7).

In addition, Sykes was instrumental in coordinating enhancements to the fishing environment at Hartwell Dam and Lake. As a result of his work with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and other natural resource trustees, a new fishing pier was constructed in the dam’s tailrace. This allowed tailrace fishing to resume at the lake for the first time since the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

He also led efforts to determine the cause of bass deaths in the summer of 2009 by communicating with state natural resources agencies, fishing groups, and the media. His communication skills helped explain this complex issue to the public and stakeholders. In addition, he worked with experts from Georgia and South Carolina to collect the dead fish to augment a South Carolina study of striped bass age and growth. In this way, he created a positive outcome from a difficult situation.



District Fisheries Biologist Jamie Sykes, plants native aquatic vegetation at Hartwell Lake to establish shoreline fishery habitat. The project was done in partnership with Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, Georgia and South Carolina Departments of Natural Resources, and the Lake Hartwell Association.

“I can’t think of anything I’d rather do or any place I’d rather be than what I do on the Savannah River lakes,” he said. “It’s just the right place for me.” 

Powering Up!

Rick Kellett, a powerplant mechanic at the Hartwell Dam, won first place in the 181-pound weight class for the 50-54 year old division at the USA Masters National Power Lifting Championship on May 1 in Killen, Texas. Kellett had a 920-pound total in the squat, bench press, and dead lift at a 170-pound body weight. An accomplished power lifter, Kellett holds two South Carolina records for bench press and dead lift in his age and weight class. Kellett also competes three times a year at local, state and national levels.



Powers wins Resource Management Award

Cynthia Powers, chief, Budget and Manpower Branch, Resource Management Division, received the Department of Army's Resource Management Award for Budgeting during a ceremony held on June 2 in Orlando, Fla. Through the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC) Professional Development Institute program, DA presents Awards of Excellence at its annual conference for resource management professionals. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, Mary Sally Matiella, CPA, recognized outstanding Army financial managers during the 2010 Army Day conference.

The worldwide competition represents military and civilian leaders in the Army's Financial Management System in the areas of government and business processes, enterprise business transformation, technology and communications, and financial management.

Judges for the Award of Excellence selected Powers based upon her accomplishments over a 12-month period. During this time, she assumed the role of Facility Account Standardization Project Delivery Team Leader providing significant oversight and advocacy to develop standard methodology for recording and distributing facility costs across accounts.

"Although my name is on the award, it's actually a reflection of the exceptional effort of my entire team," said Powers after the ceremony. "Receiving an award for something that I love to do – it doesn't get any better than that," she said.

Powers' performance has had a significant, positive impact on the quality of resource management within the entire Army Corps of Engineers. "Cynthia has demonstrated how passion for what she does inspires her staff and the rest of the resource management community," said Tami Garrett, chief, Resource Management Division. 



Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, Mary Sally Matiella, CPA, (left) presented Cynthia Powers, chief, Budget and Manpower Branch, with the Department of Army's Resource Management Award for Budgeting during the 2010 Army Day conference.

Crawford receives national EEO award



Gwen Crawford, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Manager for the Savannah District, is presented the 2010 Secretary of the Army Award, EEO, by John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, during a ceremony at the Pentagon.

Gwendolyn Crawford, chief, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office, was recently honored at the Pentagon, as the winner of the 2010 Secretary of the Army Award in EEO. Secretary of the Army, John McHugh, presented the award and recognized Crawford for her superior performance as Savannah District Equal Employment Opportunity Manager. Under Crawford's leadership, the EEO office has become a center of expertise regionally and within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She has also supported the Department of the Army Minority College Relations program and renewed the district's partnership agreement with Savannah State University, a Historically Black University.

Other accomplishments include supporting employees' nominations for national-level EEO awards, which resulted in Savannah District receiving four such awards in 2009. The Savannah District also continues to have a low EEO complaint rate—resolution of 85 percent of its cases—and the office processes complaints quickly with an emphasis on early resolution. Crawford initiated an alternate dispute resolution program that facilitates early neutral, yet effective informal resolution of disputes.

"Gwen has taken a proactive approach by working to meet civilian workforce needs," said Terry Peters, Savannah District's chief of staff. "She has been successful in integrating EEO into the organization's strategic mission, management and program accountability. This award recognizes her outstanding efforts for the district."

Crawford sees the award as a reflection of a team effort. "I was honored to receive the award; however, it really recognizes the dedicated work of the complete EEO staff," Crawford said. "I, in turn, commend them for their extensive knowledge, sound judgment, and enthusiasm in support of the EEO program."