

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.