

CORPS' PONDENT

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US Army Corps
of Engineers
Portland District



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On Aug. 27, 2005, Hurricane Katrina slammed into the U.S. Gulf Coast, devastating Mississippi and Louisiana. Army National Guard and Corps of Engineers employees work to free an earth-moving tractor shortly after recovery efforts began. Debris cleanup continues one year later; more than 20 million cubic yards of debris has been picked up so far and the Corps hopes to complete the mission by September. The Corps was tasked by FEMA to accomplish three missions: debris removal, temporary public buildings and Operation Blue Roof.



As a Soldier and a commander, fitness – physical, mental and emotional – has always been important to me. Being fit meant I was better able to serve my country; from a personal perspective, it complimented my active lifestyle. Being fit is critical to a Soldier – whose very life can depend on physical and mental stamina. For employees, fitness can reduce stress and improve morale. It's critical to the Portland District that we have a workforce that understands the benefits of being physically active.



Col. Thomas O'Donovan

I am an endurance athlete; I enjoy the challenge of pushing myself to new limits. That's the great thing about exercise: everyone

of you to get out and enjoy the great weather with family and friends. Be fit, be safe and enjoy the rest of the

policy was less comprehensive than the others. I recently took steps to change that.

The District now provides for employee fitness membership, whether it is paying up to \$25 per month toward membership fees at a local fitness facility, or providing a fitness facility on-site. Many of our field offices also encourage participation in planned wellness activities and now Corps employees working at RDP can join Club Fed, the fitness center located downstairs, for \$3 per pay period rather than the \$10 it was before.

As we begin the dog days of summer, I want to encourage all

Congratulations to “Dog Gone Fast” team members Ken Duncan, Rick Benoit, Jim Sherman, Tracy Williams, Mindy Simmons, Kathy Burke and team captain Louis Landre.

can find an appropriate level of physical activity that improves their quality of life. For some, that may be a walk around the block or a 10-mile run in Forest Park. I encourage you to find your own challenge.

I'd like to extend my congratulations to seven District employees who recently tested their own new limits when they finished second in their category during the Willamette Valley Relay. During the Portland to Eugene walk relay, each team member walked three 6-mile segments during the nearly 30-hour event. That by itself is quite an accomplishment, but six of these participants had never participated in an event like this before! Talk about new challenges! Congratulations to “Dog Gone Fast” team members Ken Duncan, Rick Benoit, Jim Sherman, Tracy Williams, Mindy Simmons, Kathy Burke and team captain Louis Landre.

The annual Hood-to-Coast relay run is coming up later this month and I am proud to be participating with a fine group of team members. More on this next month after we accomplish our task.

Each district in Northwestern Division has a policy to encourage employees to be physically active, but they were not consistent. As the district commanders sought a balance between the districts' policies, I discovered that Portland District's fitness

summer season. In fact, do you have an activity you would like to challenge the rest of the Portland District to accomplish? If so, let me know. April may seem a long way away, but it is National Fitness Month and I want to find a challenge for the entire District, so let's start thinking about it now.

Essayons!

CORPS'PONDENT



US Army Corps of Engineers Portland District

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Editor, Corps'pondent
Portland District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 2946
Portland, Oregon 97208-2946
Email: CENWP-PA@usace.army.mil
All manuscripts are subject to editing prior to publication.

Commander
Col. Thomas O'Donovan
Chief, Public Affairs
Matt Rabe
Editor
Diana Fredlund

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Had a great time at this year's picnic!



First stop: welcoming committee



Relaxing with friends



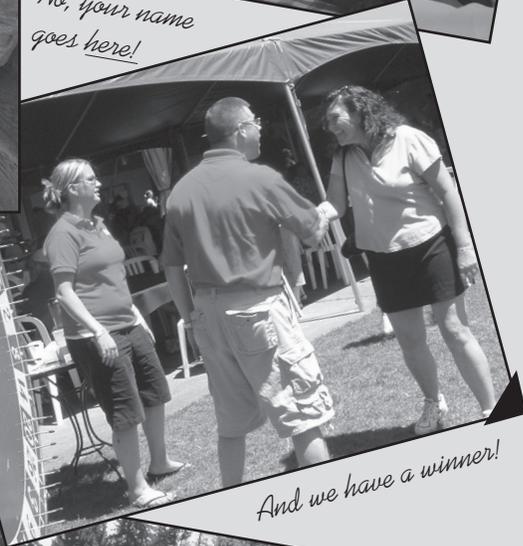
Mmmm! Animal crackers are big around here!



No, your name goes here!



Who's that? Oh wait - that's the colonel in civvies!



And we have a winner!



Great turnout - was everybody there?

*Portland District
Annual Picnic
July 14, 2006
Portland Zoo*



August 1806:

Friends and companions leave the company



By Melissa Rinehart
Operations Division

In July, the expedition had formed two parties; Lewis took a direct route to the Missouri, exploring the Maria's River, while Clark followed the Jefferson River and descended to the Three Forks River, as well as exploring the Yellowstone River. These separate journeys continued into August, until the groups were reunited Aug. 12 at Reunion Bay near New Town, N.D. This month also saw the release of the Charbonneau family and a hunting injury for Lewis.

As both parties traveled, they visited sites where they had camped during their westward journey. As before, they were forced to make way for vast herds of buffalo and encountered large bears, whose curiosity brought them close enough to the party to cause concern. The mosquitoes were so troublesome that all complained of them; Clark wrote that "The child of Charbonneau has been so much bitten by the mosquitoes that his face is much puffed up and swelled."

On Aug. 11, Lewis and Pierre Cruzette traveled to a thickly willowed sand bar, hunting elk from a large herd located there. As Lewis prepared to make his second

shot, a bullet struck his "left thigh about an inch below his hip joint ...the stroke was very sincere...." He called out to Cruzette, "Damn you, you have shot me!" Since all the men wore leather clothes, Lewis assumed that Cruzette had mistaken him for an elk and fired at him. When Cruzette did not respond, he then thought it could be Indians in the area and called out for him to retreat. The group found no Indians, and Cruzette declared, "if he had shot him it was not his intention."

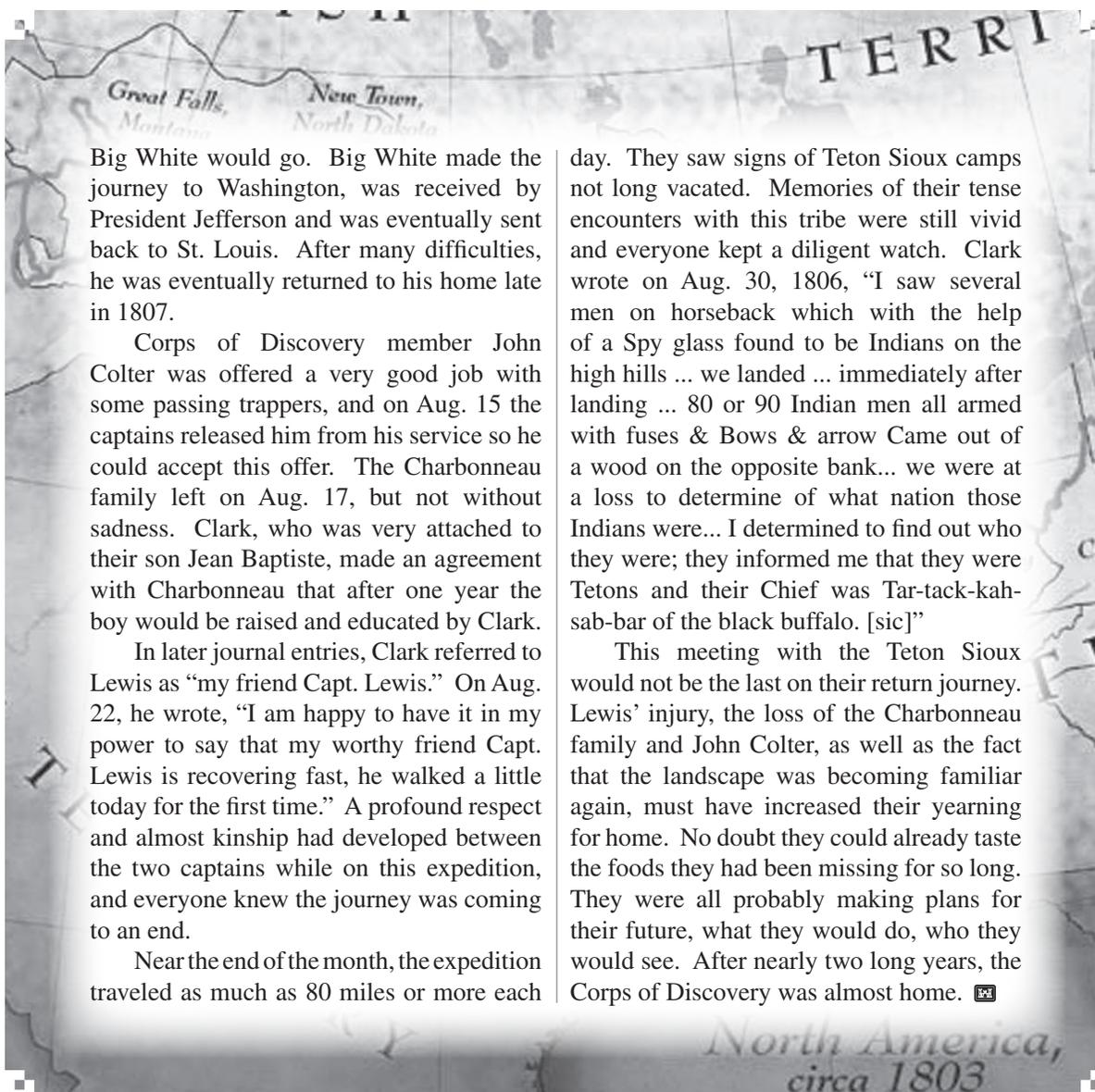
His wound was too painful for him to sit upright, so Lewis was forced to discontinue writing. Thankfully, on Aug. 12, the two parties were reunited and Clark was able to attend to Lewis' wounds and continue the journal entries.

As the reunited party traveled east, they found the natives very happy to see their return. The chiefs of the Little Village of the Menitarre and the Black Cat Village shared food and smoked a pipe with Clark. The captains asked Mr. Jussome, a Mandan interpreter, to use his influence to prevail on one of the chiefs to accompany the party. After some discussion with the chiefs, Jussome informed them that Chief





Leaving Travelers' Rest
1806 Exploration routes
of Lewis & Clark



Big White would go. Big White made the journey to Washington, was received by President Jefferson and was eventually sent back to St. Louis. After many difficulties, he was eventually returned to his home late in 1807.

Corps of Discovery member John Colter was offered a very good job with some passing trappers, and on Aug. 15 the captains released him from his service so he could accept this offer. The Charbonneau family left on Aug. 17, but not without sadness. Clark, who was very attached to their son Jean Baptiste, made an agreement with Charbonneau that after one year the boy would be raised and educated by Clark.

In later journal entries, Clark referred to Lewis as "my friend Capt. Lewis." On Aug. 22, he wrote, "I am happy to have it in my power to say that my worthy friend Capt. Lewis is recovering fast, he walked a little today for the first time." A profound respect and almost kinship had developed between the two captains while on this expedition, and everyone knew the journey was coming to an end.

Near the end of the month, the expedition traveled as much as 80 miles or more each

day. They saw signs of Teton Sioux camps not long vacated. Memories of their tense encounters with this tribe were still vivid and everyone kept a diligent watch. Clark wrote on Aug. 30, 1806, "I saw several men on horseback which with the help of a Spy glass found to be Indians on the high hills ... we landed ... immediately after landing ... 80 or 90 Indian men all armed with fuses & Bows & arrow Came out of a wood on the opposite bank... we were at a loss to determine of what nation those Indians were... I determined to find out who they were; they informed me that they were Tetons and their Chief was Tar-tack-kah-sab-bar of the black buffalo. [sic]"

This meeting with the Teton Sioux would not be the last on their return journey. Lewis' injury, the loss of the Charbonneau family and John Colter, as well as the fact that the landscape was becoming familiar again, must have increased their yearning for home. No doubt they could already taste the foods they had been missing for so long. They were all probably making plans for their future, what they would do, who they would see. After nearly two long years, the Corps of Discovery was almost home. 📖



SMALL PROJECT TEAM

Thinks Big



By Heidi Helwig, Public Affairs Office

FEATURE

"It was absolutely perfect. You can handle this large aircraft as you can handle a bicycle," Jacques Rosay, test pilot, said after the A380's first flight on April 28, 2005. The Superjumbo A380, built by Airbus, is the world's first twin-deck, twin-aisle airliner, which promises lower fuel burn per seat and lower operating costs.

Of course, flying this jet requires a larger team, more processes and more money than riding a bike. The same could be said for the size of a Corps team needed to oversee a large or complex construction project versus the team needed for a smaller, simpler project.

Portland District's leadership studied the comparison and decided it was time for them to bring processes down to size, by assembling a Small Projects Team: a team geared more toward pedaling than flying.

"I'm excited about the resurrection of the Small Projects Team," said Mike Colesar, chief of engineering and contracting at The Dalles/John Day/Willow Creek Project. Colesar's contributions as a member of the Small Projects implementation team are based on his role as a client, since many of the small projects occur at the field offices. As that client, Colesar is helping the team focus its efforts on how to accomplish small projects to the satisfaction of its customers at the District's multiple purpose projects in the Columbia, Willamette and Rogue basins.

"The Corps is set up to execute very large construction projects. Exacting and rigorous requirements are in place to ensure the projects are planned, funded, designed and built properly," Colesar said. "That's fine for big projects, but when applied to smaller projects, overhead costs become an unacceptably high portion of the total cost and execution is slower than it should be."

With constrained budgets and a growing backlog

of small projects, especially at the District's lock and dam facilities, the introduction of the Small Projects Team was a must, said Reed McDowell, team lead for the SPT and resident engineer for the Portland Resident Office at Troutdale.

To ensure a successful implementation, Chuck Cross, Engineering and Construction Division, was selected as the team's technical lead. Depending on the project, other members of the team may come and go, but Cross will be the team's constant.

"Chuck's got a good mix of skills for this job," said Pat Jones, chief of the Construction and Cost Engineering Section and Cross' immediate supervisor. "He worked in ISO a great deal and measurement was an important process in that," he said. Measurement will be an important process in establishing the SPT too, Jones said, and in evaluating the benefits of the team.

"At a large operating project like The Dalles/John Day/Willow Creek, there is a steady stream of projects that are fairly small—less than \$200,000 and relatively simple," Colesar said. "We complete many of these types of projects every year, but in my opinion not very efficiently," he said. "Our focus is (or should be) operations and maintenance, not design and construction. So, if there is an efficient and stable alternative to accomplishing this class of work we will use it, thereby allowing us to focus on the care of our equipment."

The alternative Colesar is hunting for is tied directly to contracting specialist George Williams and the SPT. Williams is Cross' go-to guy in developing a variety of contracts for future work, including Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contracts and bulk-funded purchase orders.

Having these contractual tools in place significantly reduces the amount of time customers, such



as Colesar, or engineering design teams spend on each task, Williams said, as the contracting and administrative tasks will have already been completed. "Over the course of a couple of years, the District will see a dramatic change in cost savings."

Modeled after similar programs at Seattle and Kansas City districts, the SPT is "pretty lean," Williams said, noting that a leaner team will mean cost savings on any project. "I absolutely think it is going to be great."

Project Manager Doug Putman's role on the implementation team is similar to Colesar's in that he represents the customer's point of view, but from within the District's Planning, Programs and Project Management Division.

"The goal of the team is to reduce effort and redundancy and make the process more efficient," Putman said. As a project manager for the District's Continuing Authority Program, Putnam said he can already see how the SPT will benefit him.

"Smaller jobs costing less than \$100,000, or larger jobs that don't require much engineering—that's the type of project I would go straight to Chuck for," Putman said. "It's something he could take and run with."

The key, Jones said, is simplicity, adding that "simple" jobs must meet at least four criteria to be considered for the SPT's workload: require little engineering; don't involve a lot of different disciplines; have a simple design and have an easily developed scope of work. "Just because there's a light switch [required for a construction job] doesn't mean we

need an electrical engineer on the team," Putman said. Jones echoed the thought: "If a project has more than one or two designers, it's not a small project."

While Portland District has about 10 small projects in its queue for the SPT, Cross used a "Tuff Shed" concept to explain how the SPT will streamline its processes to fit small projects.

"Let's say a customer needs a small building in back of their project," Cross said. "As the small projects tech lead, I'll look at the job. If it's complex, I determine whether or not to farm out some of the work or ask, 'Can I design it? Should I hire a contractor, or is there a commercially-available product that would work?'" he said. "Before the Corps gets a group together to scope out the project, design the building and hire a contractor to actually build it, maybe we'll just call Tuff Sheds and ask them to deliver a 12-foot by 12-foot building."

When the implementation team feels comfortable that the SPT is headed in the right direction, Putman and Colesar will serve only as sounding boards for the team, with oversight provided by McDowell and Jones.

In the mean time, Cross said his goal is to convince potential customers that the SPT can "do projects cheaper and better than you could do it yourself. Our focus is on what the customer wants." If that means buying a commercially available product to save money and time, that's what the team will do, Cross said. "Work is waiting in the wings at the projects," said Jones. "Our goal is to help the projects get their backlog done as quickly and cheaply as possible."

Replacing the crane rails for the intake gantry crane at Bonneville Lock and Dam's second powerhouse was the first project tackled by the SPT, McDowell said. Cross hit the ground running, developing procedures, designing a scope and working on initial contractual documents.

Once the SPT has a broader customer base, which is being developed by word of mouth, Cross said he'll work to further streamline the District's processes.

"It's like in the film *The Aviator*, when Leonardo DeCaprio's character, Howard Hughes, said, 'We'll get to the point where we start shaving off rivets on the airplane to make it better.' There's always a place to improve." How those improvements will be assessed is yet to be determined, but Cross said his team is working on it.

"It's too early to tell exactly how the successes will be evaluated," Cross said. "That would be like asking how the airplane flight was while we're still taxiing down the runway." 



FEATURE

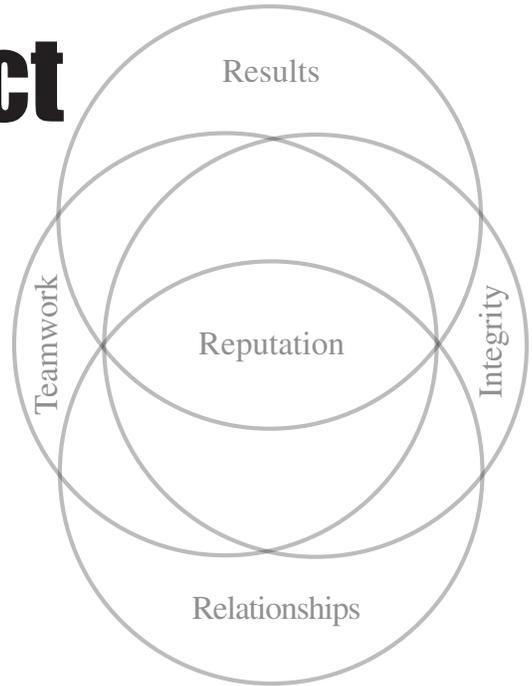


In this photo, work is underway on the Delta Ponds Project, a cooperative environmental restoration project with the City of Eugene authorized under the Corps' 206 program. Completed in 2005, the project improved water quality and aquatic habitat by reconnecting about 144 acres of floodplain ponds, channels and wetlands to the Willamette River via earth work and installation of culverts. Had it been a new project this year, it would have fallen under the Small Project Team because of its simple design. Doug Putman was project manager for the effort.



Portland District

OPLAN sets the stage for action



By Diana Fredlund, Public Affairs Office

In July's issue, the Corps' pondent introduced the Portland District's updated Operations Plan, or OPLAN. In this issue, two of the five OPLAN objectives are reviewed.

One of the greatest challenges faced by any organization is how to manage change, yet change is not only an ever-present challenge, it is often critical to an organization's success. Employees often cite change as one of their greatest causes of stress. Leaders can minimize that stress by including employees in the process of change and ensuring that few of the changes take them by surprise.

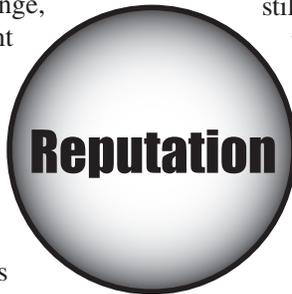
The Portland District is facing many changes in how it accomplishes its missions. There is pressure to be more responsive to its customers; to better safeguard the environment during its daily operations; and to anticipate new challenges forming on the horizon. In an effort to integrate changes to its business practices, the District recently updated its Operations Plan. Many employees are aware of the five objectives included in the Portland District's OPLAN, but not as many understand how any of the five will affect them and how they work.

"Every member of the team needs to be involved at some level in managing change," Col. Thomas O'Donovan, Portland District Commander,

said. "Not every objective or action will affect all employees, but at some level, each one of us will be impacted. I want to ensure that the impact is positive, for us and for our customers.

"We looked at each action in the previous plan and asked, 'Has this action been completed? Is it still a good idea?'" O'Donovan said. "We were able to sharpen the OPLAN's focus to five objectives I believe are critical to our success." The next step is to execute the actions associated with each objective within a two-year timeframe. "Two years gives us a chance to put these actions to the test and see if they're effective," O'Donovan said.

Each action has an overall reviewer, or champion, who is joined by at least one action plan manager. It is their responsibility to ensure their action is meeting required suspenses and to manage the efforts of the process development team.



Objective #1: Ensure an effective and efficient organization

This objective is challenging, because the District must first define "effective" and "efficient" as well as determine how to meet that definition, said Howard Jones, small projects team champion. One action, implementing a small projects team, was brought forward from the previous OPLAN. "The Corps is very good at large projects, because our engineers and design-

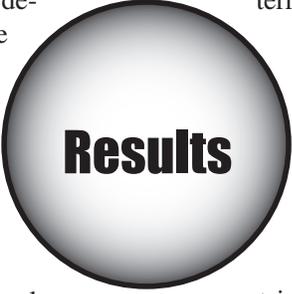


ers have lots of experience with projects the size of Bonneville or John Day,” Jones said. “There is a shift toward smaller projects, however, and we needed to adapt in order to excel in this area.” Whether it is repairing the roof at Bonneville Dam’s Washington Shore Visitor Complex, or repairing the floor at John Day Dam, smaller projects don’t need all the staffing and processes normally brought to more complex ones. “This team is helping us retool our processes to be more effective,” Jones said.

It’s not enough to change how the District conducts its business, however; there must be quantitative measurements for success. Bob Buchholz, supervisory hydraulic engineer, is forming a team to ensure what is being measured is correct. “This team will review not only how well progress is monitored, but whether the metric itself is appropriate.” The goal of this action is to make sure the metrics are meaningful and useful to the current and new business practices being developed. The team will look at how the data is being collected, Buchholz said. “There is so much information available through our automated information systems, like P2 and CEFMS. We want to capitalize on the information that’s already in place before we look at gathering more.”

Part of the challenge of keeping regional or headquarters counterparts informed is that reports have been passed from employee to employee without being reviewed for continued usefulness. This objective includes an action to identify all reports required from each division, branch or section in the District and then eliminate the unnecessary, non-functional or obsolete among them. “There are thousands of reports and data calls being prepared by District employees,” said Dean Criscola, chief, Resource Management Office and champion of this action. “Our team’s first task is to find out what is out there. Only after completing that list can we begin to find opportunities to combine or eliminate redundant reporting tasks.” In order to remove a task, the team must determine the report’s relevance and whether it is a data call required by law. “This is going to be a big job,” Criscola said. “Bob’s team will work closely with us, since making sure the report is useful means it also has to be reporting the right data.” Criscola believes the team

can have the list completed by the end of the year. “By starting it now we believe we can complete the action by the end of FY 07.”



Enhance readiness - being prepared for and responsive to manmade and natural disasters

“If anything can go wrong, it will.” Credited to Capt. Edward Murphy, an Air Force engineer, this axiom could become the rallying cry of the OPLAN’s second objective. “Readiness has always been important, but Sept. 11 taught everyone how critical it is to be prepared to respond to any emergency, whether it’s a man-made or natural disaster,” said O’Donovan. Emergency response plans have always been in place for situations like earthquakes or flooding, but there is greater emphasis on responding to man-made disasters since the terrorist attack in New York.

“We can take certain steps to mitigate risk and position the District during a significant man-made or natural disaster so that it can continue to execute its mission-essential functions,” said Capt. Brian Szydlik, program manager for this action.

The Corps and the Portland District are applying lessons learned from each emergency they respond to, Szydlik said. “Not long before Katrina hit, Portland, like many other districts, was considering getting rid of its VHF radios. New Orleans District actually did. One of the lessons learned the hard way was how critical those radios were during the emergency.” Based on the availability of cell phones, satellite phones and email, the district decided VHF radios were no longer needed, Szydlik said. “Hurricane Katrina proved how critical those radios were: first the cell phones and then email service failed. The satellite phone service was overwhelmed shortly after that, because all the emergency responders had to use it and the system couldn’t handle the volume.” Redundancy is key to readiness, Szydlik said. The VHF radios will remain in Portland District. “You can’t have too much back-up, but there is always a cost benefit analysis done to ensure our actions make sense.”





CORPS OF ENGINEERS PHOTO

Columbia south jetty interim repairs continue

By Mike McAleer, Public Affairs Office

Ship captains have always known sailing can be a dangerous endeavor. Early sailors worried about whether Poseidon, the ancient Greek god of the sea, would send waves and storms to swamp their tiny craft. As technologies advanced, efforts were made to minimize the dangers sailors faced, including where a river meets the sea.

Work is underway to minimize those same dangers faced by ships crossing the bar that forms at the mouth of the Columbia River. The north and south jetties, located at the mouth of the Columbia River, were designed to ensure safe navigation. Although the Corps has repaired the jetties numerous times since their construction, they have been steadily deteriorating over the last several decades and are currently in urgent need of repair. An abnormal number and sizes of storms in the last several years have accelerated degradation of the jetties caused by wave impact.

The south jetty interim repair work is scheduled for completion in October 2007. When it is completed, about one mile of the nearly seven-mile jetty, located about two miles into the ocean from the beach, will have been repaired.

Maintaining the jetties is critical to securing the navigation channel, which annually supports more than \$14 billion in international commerce. The forces of nature have taken their toll on the structural integrity of the jetties, but the Corps is working

to restore them to acceptable levels of reliability. Interim repairs to the north jetty were completed in 2005.

Phase 1 of the repair extends about 2,200 feet just inland of the jetty's knuckle and is expected to be completed in October. Phase 2, repairing 3,200 feet of the seaward reach, is scheduled between May and October 2007. The interim repairs are designed to safeguard the jetties for 10 to 15 years, but that estimate is totally dependent on storms.

On Feb. 16, 2006, the Corps awarded the South Jetty Interim Repair contract to Kiewit Pacific, of Vancouver, Wash. "The base contract was awarded for \$11.4 million to repair the inland reach of the jetty, with options of about \$8 million that may be exercised for repairs to the seaward reach," said Lance Helwig, project manager for the south jetty repairs. "Kiewit expects to place about 130,000 tons of jetty stone over the 5,300-foot-long repair area on the south jetty." The jetty stone will average between 15 and 20 tons each, Helwig added.

The initial 4.5-mile section of the south jetty was completed in 1896; a 2.4-mile extension was completed in 1914. The Corps has repaired the jetty eight times, with the last repair in 1982. Time and tide have taken their toll: about 0.8 mile of the outer tip of the jetty has eroded since initial construction and is no longer functional.

"Flat federal budgets meant the Corps had to de-

The Corps of Engineers has been involved in improving navigation at the MCR since the 1870s.



fer maintenance, leading to interim repairs that allowed us to minimally meet our mission,” Helwig said. “That at least bought us some time until we could fully fund an investment in the aging infrastructure. The first step toward full investment is the Mouth of the Columbia River jetties major rehabilitation report we are currently working on.”

There is much to work on. The sand spits on which the jetties are founded have been receding, undermining the outer portions of the jetties. Beaches on the ocean side of the jetties, formed initially as a direct result of jetty construction, have also been gradually receding over the years. Without those beaches, previously protected sections of the jetties at the beach line are now exposed to storm waves.

Waves caused by storms could cause serious danger to ships. “A failure in the jetty, or a breach, would allow sand to be transported and deposited directly into the navigation channel,” Helwig said. “We have seen more and stronger storms in recent years.” A breach would impact commercial and recreational navigation at the mouth of the river and require emergency measures to repair the jetty and restore the channel depth, Helwig said.

The Corps is planning a long-term rehabilitation of the jetty system, which will likely take several years to complete, considering environmental and other required approvals. Once a long-term jetty repair plan is approved, funding will also need to be secured from Congress.

The Corps of Engineers has been involved in improving navigation at the MCR since the 1870s. Early work at the mouth included detailed surveys of the Columbia River bar and the construction of jetties. Eventually the work included dredging a navigation channel from the ocean to the estuary.

The Corps maintains three rubble-mound jetties at the mouth of the Columbia

River. Their design, boulders stacked one on top of another and extending out into the ocean, is simple. Their purpose, on the other hand, is critical. These structures accelerate the flow of the river and help maintain the depth and orientation of the navigation channel. They also provide protection for ships of all sizes, both commercial and recreational, entering and leaving the estuary by limiting the number and size of waves ships must face when leaving the river for the open ocean.

Historically, the Columbia River bar is one of the most dangerous in the world. Because of the Corps’ involvement, crossing the bar is safer, but there is still work to do. Today, people – both inside and outside the Corps – are concerned about the reliability of the jetties. The forces of nature continue to erode every effort to maintain their structural integrity. Helwig is prepared to do what he can to keep the mouth of the Columbia River safe, helping ships evade any tricks Poseidon tries where the river meets the sea. 

More information on the south jetty interim repair project and the Mouth of the Columbia River jetty rehabilitation study is available on Portland District’s website at <https://nwp.usace.army.mil/issues/jetty>.



CORPS OF ENGINEERS PHOTO

The south jetty has receded about 5,000 feet since completion in 1914. The rehabilitation plan will look at possibly rebuilding the jetty head.



In Memoriam



George P. Ricker, Jr., died June 29, 2006. He was 78. Ricker worked for the government for more than 30 years, including 28 years with the Corps of Engineers. He is survived by his wife, Marie, two daughters and a son, five grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.

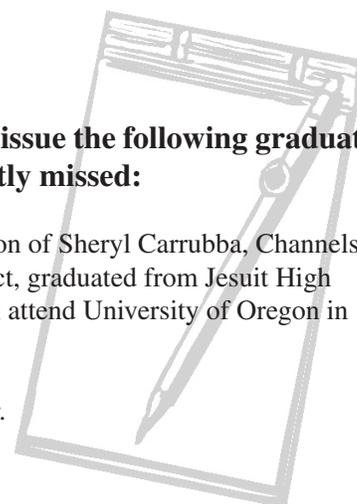
Editor's Notes

In an effort to minimize the environmental impact of the Corps' pondent, we have reduced the number of paper copies being printed by more than 50 percent. Each month, we will post the current edition on the Portland District website so our readers can find it easily while we more effectively manage our printing costs. In addition, all previous electronic editions will be maintained in an archive at the same web page for easy reference.

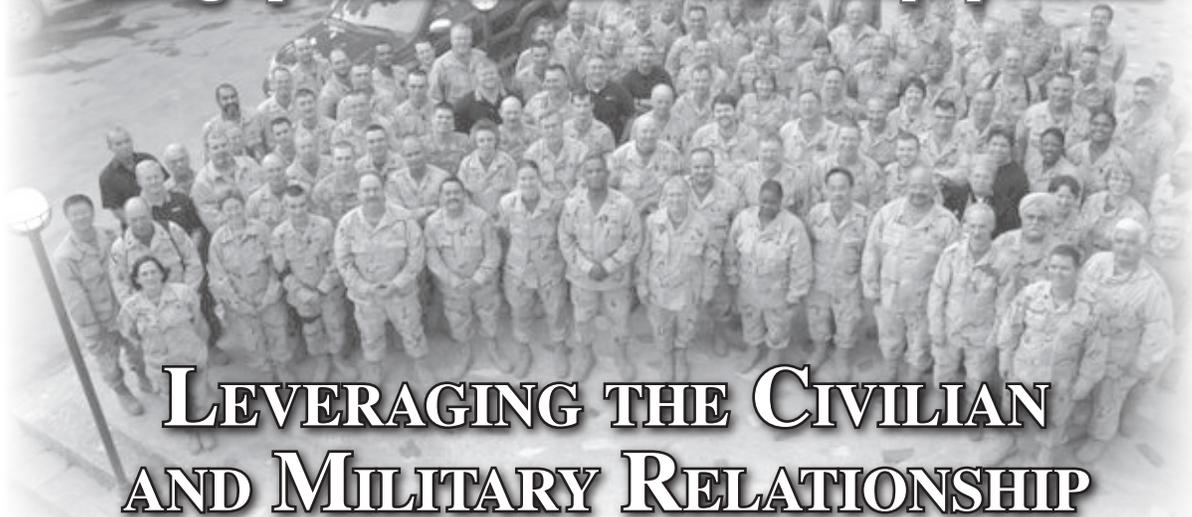
In last month's issue the following graduate was inadvertently missed:

Colin McClure, son of Sheryl Carrubba, Channels and Harbors Project, graduated from Jesuit High School. Colin will attend University of Oregon in the fall.

We regret the error.



Coming up in the next issue of the *Corps' pondent*:



**LEVERAGING THE CIVILIAN
AND MILITARY RELATIONSHIP**