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Workers watch as the last section of a gantry crane is removed from Powerhouse One at Bonneville Lock and Dam Aug. 15. For more information see page 3.



Corps of Engineers Photo



In the 1800s and early 1900s, many people believed that the government could take care of its citizens without anything more than the taxes it levied. Private funding took care of private projects and the government took care of the public needs. As time went by, public requirements increased as the number of citizens grew, but the proportion of taxes collected remained the same.



Col. Thomas O'Donovan

We now live at a time of decreased budgets and cost-sharing; thinking outside the box for solutions is an important change in how we do business. Partnerships are forming between public agencies and private organizations. One of our most enduring and successful partnerships is that between the lower Columbia River ports and the Corps to complete the Columbia River Channel Deepening Project. By the 1980s it was clear that ships were getting bigger and would soon be too large to navigate the river. The six ports of Portland, Vancouver, St. Helens, Longview, Kalama and Woodland designed an agreement to deepen the Columbia River so larger ships could still use their port facilities. For more than 15 years this agreement has remained through litigation, floods, leadership changes and funding constraints. The agreement's strength centers on commitment to a goal that benefits the group as a whole. As an example of that commitment, the executive directors from each port have met with the Corps' representative every six weeks since the agreement's inception. Communication has been key to its stability and now it's paying off: the Columbia River Channel Improvement Project is 40 percent complete, and we should see it accomplished within the next few years.

Mitigation banks are another excellent example of how we are working together with private organizations to help accomplish our missions. The Regulatory Branch approves permits for work that may impact waters of the United States or neighboring wetlands. Whenever work removes or disturbs the waters or wetlands, the permit holder must mitigate for those losses. Whenever possible we have tried to mitigate the impacts at the work site, but often that is difficult and mitigation banks have become a useful tool. These banks are privately held land that historically was a wetland, but has

been modified into farmland or other use. The owners restore the land to its original wetland condition and sell credits to permit holders who need to provide mitigation for their work. The number of mitigation banks has increased significantly in the past 10 years. We have approved 15 mitigation banks and are reviewing 11 more potential banking sites across the state. It would be nice if construction didn't impact the environment; the reality is that it often does and mitigation banks can help us balance the needs of society with environmental health.

It's not a perfect solution, but it works well for all involved: the permit applicant who can responsibly build, the bank owner, who can recoup the cost of improving wetlands and the flora and fauna that lives in the restored areas. We benefit because it allows our Regulatory specialists to approve permits while maintaining our stewardship role.

Partnerships are more important to our mission success than ever. The dialog between the Corps and our stakeholders helps us focus on meeting the needs of the public while accomplishing our tasks. The different points of view held by members of the public or private businesses help us see a project from a new perspective. It's also important because reaching out to our stakeholders can help minimize misunderstandings. You've heard me say it before, but it bears repeating: We are stewards of the nation's resources and are accountable to the public for our actions. Partnerships are vital to our success.

Essays!

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PROJECT NEWS

Corps of Engineers Photos



For nearly 60 years, this 130-ton capacity crane did the heavy lifting at Bonneville Lock and Dam since it opened in 1938. Crews took three days to remove the crane, which was loaded in pieces from the top down on to a waiting barge. The operator's cab will become a permanent exhibit at the Bradford Island Visitor Center; the remaining pieces of the crane were barged to a local metal recycler, where they weighed in at more than 350 tons of scrap metal.



Long-term deployee recommends the experience

By Jennifer Sowell, Public Affairs Office

On a normal day, Linda Tompkins is a budget technician in the Hydroelectric Design Center. But Tompkins hasn't had a normal day for more than a year. She deployed to the Gulf Region Division in Baghdad, Iraq in March 2006 and hasn't returned to the District since.

She began her original six-month tour as an administrative assistant with Program Management. Then Tompkins took another assignment with Resource Management, which now extends through May 2008.

"I decided to extend my deployment because I feel the mission in the Directorate of Resource Management is critical to the successful completion of the Corps' mission in Iraq and I am contributing to that cause," said Tompkins.

Tompkins works in the budget cell of Resource Management for GRD, where she prepares the budget and monitors the execution of funds for the Global War on Terror. These funds cover costs associated with overhead, which include items budget technicians working in their home districts never see, such as life support, light and heavy armored vehicles and personal security details.

"All of us take pride in our work and this environment has a spotlight shining on it," said Tompkins. "Any errors in judgment are critical."

GRD formulates a budget based on requirements from the division and the three districts, along with project funding from other appropriations. Tompkins helps formulate and present the proposed budget for the commander's approval and then monitors the execution of funds to see how closely GRD sticks to that original spending plan.



Tompkins meets newly appointed Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp.

Sometimes sticking to an original plan is challenging. "This year we had to move estimated funds from one category to another due to hostile losses," said Tompkins. "Hostile losses can be damage to vehicles or buildings."

There are many challenges to working in Iraq, no matter what the job is. Tompkins wears her "battle rattle," or individual protective gear, on her quarter-mile route to and from work.

"I work in a war zone with small arms fire, improvised explosive devices, mortars, rockets and car bombs," said Tompkins. "I also work with a lot of people who are not familiar with Corps of Engineers' procedures and business models."

Unfamiliarity with the Corps and constant personnel rotations combine with war zone conditions to create a very challenging work environment. "Most people rotate after about four or six months and a few stay for nine months or a year," Tompkins said.

The temporary nature of the assignments affects Tompkins, because as soon as she gets to know how someone works and what level of work they do, they rotate out of the position and someone new comes in to learn the job.

For Tompkins however, the job satisfaction outweighs the challenges.

"The most satisfying part of my deployed job is working with our Iraqi associates and helping them to gain a better understanding of how to help their country," said Tompkins.

"Knowing that I have helped in a small way in the rebuilding of a country is great, too," she said.

Tompkins works side-by-side with local citizens to help clear sidewalks in the International Zone, support she believes encourages them to have a better appreciation for their own neighborhoods.

"I have gained a great respect for the Iraqis that work for us," said Tompkins. "They put their lives and the lives of their families on the line and they have to make that hard choice every day."

Tompkins' deployment allows her to get to know Corps employees, military members and Iraqi citizens she otherwise would never meet. "Working with a very diverse group of people has given me a better understanding of myself and my capabilities," said Tompkins.

Tompkins recommends deployment for all employees. She understands that there is an element of danger in Iraq that may deter many from deployment, but stresses that the rewards are great for a few months away from family and friends.

During her deployment, Tompkins has learned how everything, no matter how small, is connected to the bigger picture and has a profound effect on the mission, including building relationships. "Both professional and

personal relationships require us to take an active role in cultivating and maintaining them," said Tompkins. "We need to consider all aspects of our actions and be responsible for all outcomes [stemming from] our decisions."

"This experience has already affected my professional and personal growth," said Tompkins. "I have gained a greater sense of self worth and confidence."

When that normal day comes to Tompkins again, her colleagues in HDC will find a stronger, more confident co-worker, who has a wide range of experience – and one who can leave her battle rattle at home when she commutes through the streets of Portland to Robert Duncan Plaza. 



During a period of heightened security, Tompkins wears her individual body armor as she inputs data into a computer in the Resource Management Office.



Tompkins (second row, far left) poses with members of the Gulf Region Division Resource Management office for a group photo.





Corps teams complete 131-m

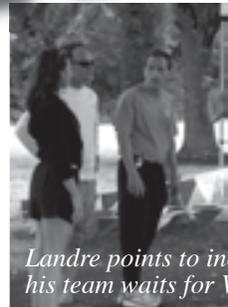
Two teams, two goals, one big surprise!

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES



Dog Gone Fast
(from left) Tracie Williams, Jim Sherman, Mindy Simmons, Doug Whiteley*, Jon Gornick, Lynn Frye*, Louis Landre, Tasha Nolin
*denotes honorary Corps member

G
TEA



Landre points to in his team waits for V

It was all Louis' fault.

Louis Landre, Real Estate Division, a race walker for three years, has participated in many events like the Portland to Coast and Willamette Valley relays. His enthusiasm was infectious when he talked to prospective teammates for this year's relay, making it sound like such fun that nearly half of the participants were new to the event.

"On my second day of work in the District, a stranger asked me if I'd like to walk across the Willamette Valley with a bunch of other people I didn't know," said Dan Mulligan, Environmental Resources Branch. "Amazingly enough, I said yes!"

Like its Portland to Coast sister relay, the Willamette Valley Relay is a two-day, non-stop race, where teams of eight or 12 members walk 131 miles from Champoeg State Park, seven miles east of Newberg, to Alton Baker Park in Eugene.

Last year, "Dog Gone Fast," the Portland District's only team in the race, walked to a

second-place finish. This year, Landre wanted not just a competitive team to cross the finish line; he wanted to field a team of recreational walkers, people who just wanted to enjoy walking along country roads and have a fun-filled, personally rewarding experience. "Sore to the Corps" was born and joined "Dog Gone Fast" on the relay registration.

The relay is broken into 24 sections that average about 5 miles each; eight-member teams each walk three legs, while 12-member teams walk two each. "Dog Gone Fast" maintained its strategy from past years: a lean, mean, eight-person team to blaze the way, hopefully into first place in their category. "Sore to the Corps," with 12 team members, could challenge themselves yet share the burden of miles walked.

"During the planning meetings, 'Sore to the Corps' members were ready to enjoy the overall experience without the craziness of competition," said Patti Williams, team co-captain and a relay veteran. "I told them that the adrenaline rush might change your mind when you get to the actual race."

10 Mile Willamette Valley Relay



By Diana Fredlund, Public Affairs Office

10
MILES!



Sore to the Corps

Patti Williams, Leslie Nyquist-Acosta, Estoban Acosta*, Pam Michalowski*, Edda Sigurdar*, Rick Benoit, Leah Ann Skov*, Tre' Santos, Melissa Rinehart, Diana Fredlund, Steve Schlenker, Dan Mulligan

*Denotes honorary Corps member

Corps of Engineers Photos

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

“Sore to the Corps” started its first race leg at 7:30 a.m. July 20 and “Dog Gone Fast” left the starting line at 10:30 a.m. “We planned to average about 11 minutes per mile,” Landre said. “With ‘Sore to the Corps’ projecting an average of 15 or 16 minutes per mile, we expected to pass our sister team sometime around 5 a.m. Saturday.”

Apparently “Sore to the Corps” wasn’t consulted. By the time the third team member began her walk, the talk had turned. “Where’s Louis?” “Has anybody heard? Are they gaining on us?”

“Everyone knew ‘Dog Gone Fast’ would beat our time,” said co-captain Rick Benoit, Operations Division. “But before long, our team’s goal was not just to walk our best; it was to prevent Louis’ team from passing us up.”

The team looking only for personal challenge was on fire. Averaging less than a 13-minute mile, “Sore to the Corps” rallied behind a new battle cry, “Beat Louis! Beat Louis!”

“We didn’t think we were walking fast, but our teammates had to run to keep up with us when giving us water during the walk,” said Melissa Rinehart, Operations Division. As the sun went down and the race marched into night, “Dog Gone Fast” updates were offered with bottles of water. By 6 a.m., Louis hadn’t passed the “Sore to the Corps” racer, and “Sore to the Corps” began to think maybe, just maybe, they really could beat Louis.

The last “Sore to the Corps” walker in the race felt the pressure ... could she hold off Louis’ team? Word came as she started off that “Dog Gone Fast” was still a couple miles behind. With nearly five miles to walk, they could still overtake a footsore first-time walker dog-gone-fast. One foot in front of the other ... water from a teammate walking with her ... two miles left and still no Louis.

The finish line loomed, where both teams waited to cheer on the final steps. “Sore to the Corps” crossed the finish line as a team; Louis and the “Dog Gone Fast” members were there to congratulate them



DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

as they waited for their last racer to finish. Less than eight minutes later, “Dog Gone Fast” crossed the finish line.

When the all the teams had crossed the finish line, the news was out: “Sore to the Corps” placed first in their category, walking 131 miles in 28 hours and 17 minutes. “Dog Gone Fast” placed second in their category with a race time of 25 hours and 25 minutes – beating last year’s time by 4.5 hours.

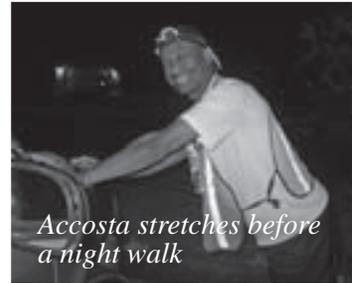
Each member of “Sore to the Corps” extends their heartiest congratulations to “Dog Gone Fast” for walking an excellent race.

It was all Louis’ fault that we had so much fun walking, encouraging and supporting each other on this trek through the Willamette Valley. Thank you for recruiting us, Louis, we loved it. But....

“We Beat Louis!” 



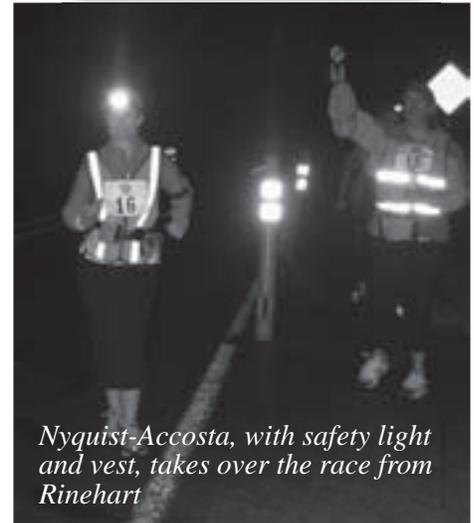
Gornick hands off the race to Simmons



Accosta stretches before a night walk



Whiteley crosses the finish line, eight minutes after “Sore to the Corps”



Nyquist-Accosta, with safety light and vest, takes over the race from Rinehart



Landre watches as “Sore to the Corps” walks Fredlund across the finish line.... the winners in their category!





The race begins!

By Patti Williams, co-captain of the relay team "Sore to the Corps."

July 20, 2007

The wind was cool that day as six sleepy souls creaked out of a van at Champoege State Park, kinda ready for the start of the Willamette Valley Relay. The longest walkers' relay in the state, er, United States, no THE WORLD, (unless you count Aboriginal walkabouts, but they don't wear shoes and that's really not fair). It was Friday, 6:45 a.m., too early by weekend standards, but it was OK, we were using annual leave.



As Captain of van #1, I knew it was important to show my authority and control my team early on. I ordered my sleepwalkers to commence coloring on the van. Once I placed grease pencils in their hands the effect became much more obvious. The "Sore to the Corps" van was born! As we were draping just the right touch of multi-hued tinsel over the front window, I spotted him ... Louis! He was bouncing back and forth, one foot, then the other, over and over in some sick, twisted cadence only he could understand ... his team mates left to the humiliating task of plastering dog photos all over the van – and they call that decorating?

With Louis, it's all about the win. Oh, he can get cosmic about it, but it is still about the win. It became clear to me when he came over and gave me a hearty greeting that Louis had things other than "cheering us on" on his mind. I soon came to know these things. It was a full 37 seconds before he got to the point (I know, because I was holding the two stopwatches we'd need for the race). "The Dawgs" were expecting to pass us around 5 a.m. on Saturday morning. Well, that's what all these months of planning and talking about getting in shape had come to! Just because they've got Jon 'Slingshot' Gornick on their team, and every one of them can do a nine-minute mile, doesn't mean we don't have a prayer. I ordered my team to pray.

I could see Louis leading his team in a round of calisthenics, ala Jack LaLaine. They were not happy, I thought smugly, riding in my van to the next exchange site.

Louis speaks!

"This WVR experience was really special for me, because you guys took on the challenge and then rose to occasion to exceed expectations. That made me feel proud and honored to have helped put the teams together.

"Everyone seemed to have had a 'great time.' The camaraderie, the hard work, the fun of being competitive, and the inspiration resulting from giving one's all truly came together during this event.

"How could I not be inspired by seeing Diana Fredlund's smiling face cross the finish line? Or when Tasha Nolin was zooming right along in the middle of the night as she walked through Lebanon? Or when Jon Gornick broke a 10-minute mile pace? Or when Mindy Simmons kept improving throughout day and night? Or when Tracie Williams set a personal best? Or how Jim Sherman helped us beat last year's time by over 4.5 hours?

What a fun way "to be beat..." As Arnold would say... We'll be back...

Just don't look over your shoulder ... The Dawgs are after you...



Green Peter Reservoir bubbles intrigue boaters and Corps scientists

By Amy Echols, Public Affairs Office

In July, news of a bubbling mystery in Green Peter Reservoir in the Willamette Valley first reached the Corps.

A visitor to the reservoir told Corps staff that lake water started “percolating” or boiling, so much so that it startled his children on their boat. “Then this dark cloud of water and debris came up to the surface, bubbled up and spread out,” explained Chad Stuart, Natural Resource Specialist/Ranger, Willamette Valley Projects. “The following day, in the exact same area and at the same time, the lake bubble appeared again.”

A week later Stuart, while surveying water quality and wildlife, stopped his boat to check out this purported lake bubble area.

“I approached cautiously, just in case the bubbles had any noxious gasses. Smelling nothing, I moved closer,” Stuart said. “Looking down the area I could see many small clear bubbles breaking the surface. I stopped the boat in several areas and bubbles would break all around the boat. Only once did I witness a large upwelling - a bubble about the size of a volleyball - that broke the surface.”

The reservoir, on the Middle Santiam River in the Willamette Valley, forms behind the Green Peter Dam. Since several of the river basins in the area are known for hot springs and their proximity to the volcanic foundation of the Cascade mountain range, speculation grew among the local communities about the source of these bubbles and lake clouds (a term given to the large, silty bubbles).



Corps of Engineers Photo

A “lake cloud” percolates to the surface of the Corps’ Green Peter Reservoir in the Willamette Valley. Photo courtesy of Dave Galvin.

In late July, Corps scientists started comparing notes and conducting field research: What was the source of the bubbles? Were the small clear bubbles from the same source as the lake clouds?

“The small clear bubbles are exactly what I saw years ago while sampling water quality on the reservoir,” said Jim Britton, Engineering and Construction Division. “In fact, the same phenomenon we’re seeing here on the Quartzville branch of the reservoir occurs in the upper arm of the Middle Santiam. We’ve observed bubbling a few hundred feet up and down the reservoir.”

A few weeks after the first report, Stuart, Britton and an environmental contractor witnessed a lake cloud event while conducting water sampling. They watched a turbid, bubbly patch containing organic

debris break the surface and disappear about a minute later. Britton estimated its size was about 15 to 20 feet in diameter.

“This big lake cloud was far different from the clear, little bubbles we observed in the same area,” Britton said. “It came up with fine-grained, mucky stuff like you would see in a boat basin where fine, organic-rich material settles.”

The team sampled the water for gases, nutrients, and other water quality parameters and compared them to samples from a non-bubbling part of the reservoir.

The following week, a remote operating vehicle was launched to explore the underwater scene. The ROV, complete with propellers, lights and an umbilical power cord, moved its reticulated arms and video camera around the area to record some visuals for analysis.

“The ROV helps us see what’s actually under the water,” explained Rick Benoit, the Corp’s district dive coordinator. “The visibility was low, with high turbidity and lots of silt, but we could make out large piles of logs and stumps down a long channel. Much of it was buried by silt and other runoff material.”

Early analysis shows that just outside the area of the lake cloud the sediment is the granular, sandy material expected at the upper end of a reservoir close to its tributary, Britton said. It also appears that the bubbles, both big and small, are the result of decaying stumps, logs, and other organic debris. The debris has collected over time, by erosion and river flows, at the center of the reservoir branch.

“Data shows that oxygen levels drop off near the bottom of the lake,” Britton said. “Typically, when oxygen levels decline, certain microorganisms from both the sediment and bottom water can thrive. These organisms use organic material in the sediment as food.” Gases such as carbon dioxide and methane are by-products of the metabolism of these microorganisms, he added.

Test results show the bubbles contain between 10 percent and 50 percent methane and traces of carbon dioxide. A sediment sample incubated in a laboratory produced methane and carbon dioxide.

Britton believes the larger lake clouds may be just larger releases of gases from this same process. The silt and debris keeps a lid on the gasses until the pressurized methane finally escapes, bringing the sediment with it to the surface.

“There remains a possibility that the bubbles have some other origin,” said Britton. “At this point, we would need to specifically study the carbon isotopes in the bubble’s methane and carbon dioxide to know with greater certainty if they are biological or geothermal in origin.”

Although questions about this phenomenon remain unanswered, visitors to Green Peter Reservoir should have few concerns about the water quality.

Visitors may continue to see these bubbles, big or small, but Corps researchers do not believe there is any danger from them. “We think it’s just Mother Nature doing her thing,” Britton said. 



A note from Col. O’Donovan:

I want to have a little fun in this month’s issue. You’ve read about my view of partnerships in this month’s column – now I want to know yours! I am so interested in hearing your views that if you are one of the first three people I receive an email from, or who calls my office with your thoughts, you’ll receive 59 minutes of administrative leave to use whenever you wish. The only caveat is that you have to give me your thoughts about partnerships and their importance to the District. We’ll use your comments in a later article. Good luck!



Splash into Fashion



Corps of Engineers Photos

Portland District staff members joined state park rangers and the Oregon State Marine Board for a fashion show with a water safety message Aug. 24 and 25 at the Oregon State Fair in Salem. Volunteers modeled the latest in life jacket fashions and everyone learned how to choose the best life jacket for them - and how to make sure it fits just right!

In Memoriam

Roberta Hendershott died Aug. 1, 2007 of heart failure at age 73. Hendershott served two years in the military at Fort Ord, Calif.; she retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1996. Survivors include a daughter, two sons, one brother and two grandchildren. No service is planned.

Glen Meloy, former director of the Hydroelectric Design Center, passed away Aug. 18. Meloy served as HDC's director from 1980 to 1993. Survivors include his wife Joan, a son and daughter, many brothers and sisters, and a beloved granddaughter Caroline.