



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Vol. 26 Issue 3
March 2005

Huntsville Center

Bulletin



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From the cover: Arnecia Bradley shares a poem written by Maya Angelou at the kick off event for the Center's Black History Month celebrations. See more photos on pages 4 and 5.

Commander's column

This month I'd like to tell you about those who serve our nation in support of the Global War on Terror. Some are members of our Armed Forces and many are USACE civilians.

They all selflessly go about the business of their business – working diligently to make our world a better place to live.

Our Coalition Munitions Clearance mission in Iraq continues to reduce the amount of ammunition available to insurgents and terrorists in making Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's).

Project managers, safety specialists and security experts provide leadership, oversight and fiscal responsibility while working side-by-side with our contractors.

We have also been afforded the additional capability Soldiers and Marines bring to the fight by providing convoy security, depot security transportation and logistics to assist in the execution of our work.

We recognized the efforts of these outstanding men and women by sending a Huntsville Center plaque honoring the



Col. John D. Rivenburgh

3rd Battalion, 18th Field Artillery and Ft. Sill, Okla.; 3rd Platoon, B Company, 1140th Engineer Battalion (MONG), Cape Girardeau, Miss.; 372nd Engineer Group (USAR), Des Moines, Iowa; and the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

We can't personally thank each and every member of the unit, but we've added significant mementos to their unit history.

We currently have engineers, project managers, contracting officers, contract specialists and our military deputy deployed to the Gulf Region Division and the Afghanistan Engineer District.

All are making a huge difference as we watch the infrastructure of both Iraq and Afghanistan improve – providing a better future and hope for the peoples of both nations. To you who have gone before them, to those

there now and to those who are preparing to go – THANKS.

Center folks who are members of the Reserve component have been mobilized and are deployed. Some are in CONUS, but most are serving in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

We have Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps Guards and Reservists who are serving seamlessly along side their active duty brethren.

I can not end this piece without recognizing our Blue Star families. Huntsville Center folks have sons and daughters, husbands and wives, grandchildren and extended family members engaged in the War on Terror.

They have fear and anxiety while they anxiously await the return of their loved one.

Once again, to each of you we say thanks. The Blue Star flag that proudly hangs in our lobby recognizes your collective sacrifice.

Remember each and every one of our heroes in your thoughts and prayers. Our Nation exists because of those who serve.



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The Huntsville Center Bulletin is printed by digital copier as an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the U.S. Army. Inquiries can be addressed to Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, Attn: CEHNC-PA, P.O. Box 1600, Huntsville, AL 35807-4301. Phone: DSN 760-1694 or commercial (256)895-1694. Web address: www.hnd.usace.army.mil. Circulation: 1,000.

BULLETIN

Commander.....Col. John D. Rivenburgh
Chief, Public Affairs.....Dan Coberly
Editor.....Beth E. Musselman
Editorial AssistantJoan Burns

News Notes

New POV rates announced

New mileage reimbursement rates for Federal employees who use privately owned vehicles while on official travel are as follows:

- Automobile increased from \$0.375 to \$0.405 per mile.
- Airplane increased from \$0.955 to \$1.07 per mile
- Motorcycle increased from \$0.285 to \$0.305 per mile

Additionally the current reimbursement rate of \$0.270 per mile increased to \$0.285 per mile.

The current reimbursement rate of \$0.105 per mile (when a GFV is assigned directly to an employee) will remain the same.

The new rates became effective on Feb. 4, and apply to official travel performed on or after that date. The new rates will be posted at www.gsa.gov/travelpolicy.

Pentagon announces new personnel system

DoD and OPM have submitted proposed regulations for the National Security Personnel System for publication in the Federal Register. The proposal offers rules and processes for a new human resources system for DoD civilian employees regarding pay and classification, performance management, hiring, workforce shaping, disciplinary matters, appeals procedures, and labor-management relations.

NSPS was signed into law on Nov. 24, 2003, and for the past year DoD and OPM officials have been working to design a modernized, performance-based civilian personnel system. NSPS will improve the way DoD hires, assigns, compensates and rewards its employees, while preserving the core merit principles, veterans' preference and important employee protections and benefits of the current system. The

proposed regulations are the result of a broad-based effort that included input from DoD employees, supervisors, managers, senior leaders, union representatives and public interest groups.

The proposed regulations were published in the Federal Register on Feb. 14 initiating a 30-day formal public comment period, providing all interested parties the opportunity to submit comments and recommendations on the content of the proposal.

Implementation of the system will begin as early as July 2005, with full implementation in the July 2007/Jan. 2008 timeframe.

Visit www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps to view and comment on the proposed regulations.

Further information regarding new Army Resume Builder

On Jan. 26 the Army deployed a new Resume Builder tool to assist applicants in the preparation of their resumes and job application process. Since deployment, resumes are being received at the rate of over 7,000 a day.

The volume of incoming resumes is unprecedented and as such, has resulted in a much longer than usual lag time before a confirmation receipt notice appears in the notification system - ANSWER.

To ensure the processing of incoming resumes at the fastest rate possible, applicants are being asked for help in the following manner:

- If you have already submitted your resume and supplemental data from the new Army Resume Builder to Resumix and have not received a confirmation notice of receipt in ANSWER yet, please do not submit your resume again. Your resume and supplemental data are being processed.
- If you already have a current resume in our Resumix database, please do not resubmit another resume unless you have made significant changes. With a current resume in Resumix, you may continue to self-nominate (apply) for Army vacancies.

Army rights wrong for 19th century African-American chaplain

More than 100 years after the court-martial of Chaplain (Capt.) Henry Vinton Plummer, the Army redressed a wrong and issued an honorable discharge to one of the first African-Americans to be commissioned a chaplain in the Army.

In 1894, Plummer, who was serving as the chaplain for the 9th Cavalry Regiment, joined the regiment's sergeant major and two other noncommissioned officers to celebrate a sergeant's promotion.

There was general agreement that Plummer and the noncommissioned officers toasted the promotion with alcohol and that Plummer had an altercation with a noncommissioned officer.

In the resulting court-martial, all witnesses agreed that Plummer had consumed alcohol with enlisted troopers and had provided enlisted troopers with alcohol, both activities considered offenses as conduct unbecoming an officer under the Articles of War in use at the time. President Grover Cleveland approved Plummer's dismissal in November of 1894.

In 2004, Plummer's great-grand nephew requested that the Army review the case, asking that the records be corrected to show the court-martial was overturned and expunged and that Plummer be issued an honorable discharge.

The Army Board for the Correction of Military Records reviewed the case. While it did not overturn the court martial, it concluded that racism extant at the time contributed to Plummer's treatment and the characterization of his service that led to the dismissal.

The board determined Plummer deserved an honorable discharge to restore equity.

Plummer's descendants will receive his honorable discharge certificate.

People Page



Sherene Opichka, Engineering Directorate, was selected to represent the Corps in the “New Faces in Engineering” program.



Congratulations to Courtney Ford, daughter of **Charles Ford**, Chemical Demilitarization, for winning the Best Student Paper award, and \$50, at the Annual Alabama Fisheries Association Conference.

During Feb.’s ED Awards Ceremony the following temporary promotions were announced: **Raul Alonso**, acting supervisory electrical engineer; **Ron Brown**, acting supervisory civil engineer and **Valerie Clinkenbeard**, acting supervisory civil engineer.



Terry Patton has been promoted to chief of Automated Facilities Construction Systems.

Angela Loftis has been selected as the new chief, Program & Budget Division. In an e-mail announcing the promotion, **Diane Mims**, Resource Management, said “Angela brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her new leadership role.”



The Engineering Directorate welcomed in: **Steven Talley**, civil engineer; **Carolyn Steuart**, electrical engineer; **Barbara Pate**, secretary; **Norris Hudnall**, secretary; **Aaron Scott**, student trainee; **Derek Beck**, structural engineer; **Joseph Pen-**

Welcome **John Corcetti**, physical security specialist; **John Wrona**, physical security specialist and **Theresa McFarland**, electrical engineer, to the Engineering Directorate.



tecost Jr., industrial engineer and **Dustin Ray**, physical scientist.

Awards

On-the-Spot

Sarah D. Annerton, Contracting
Louis Antonacci, Office of Counsel
Emily Baine, Office of Counsel
Karen T. Gentry, Medical Center of Expertise
Anthony Hairston, Medical Center of Expertise
Brenda Hatley, Executive Office
Jennifer Lawrence, Chemical Demilitarization
Tammie Learned, Chemical Demilitarization
Neil M. McGrath, Medical Center of Expertise
Rex McLaury, Medical Center of Expertise
James E. Meade, Medical Center of Expertise
Amanda Odem, Security
Lawanda Pollard, Chemical Demilitarization
Sandra Reynolds, Ordnance and Explosives
Ashley E. Roeske, Ordnance and Explosives
Roberta K. Stoddard, Professional Development

Support Center

Kelly VanSandt, Chemical Demilitarization
William D. Veith, Ordnance and Explosives
Evelyn J. Young, Medical Center of Expertise

Special Act

Crystal Bennett-Echols, Explosives Directorate
Paul W. Hanreeder, Medical Center of Expertise
Philip J. Hoge, Medical Center of Expertise
George Murphy, Missile Defense
Audrey Nore, Explosives Directorate
John H. Phillips, Medical Center of Expertise
Charles L. Smith, Medical Center of Expertise
Russell C. Thomason, Medical Center of Expertise

Performance

Scott Deetz, Chemical Demilitarization

Medical Repair/Renewal program completes Fort Jackson clinic



Fort Jackson officially opened the doors of the renovated Moncrief Army Community Hospital Family Health Clinic and Urgent Care Clinic on Feb. 22. Huntsville Center's Medical Repair/Renewal Program completed the renovation in February. The renovation of the clinic will ultimately improve the access of safe quality care to Ft. Jackson and its community. (From left) Col. John D. Rivernburgh assists Brig. Gen. Eric B. Shoomaker (Commanding General Southeast Regional Medical Command) and the MEDDAC Family of the Year, four-year old Ryan Jimenez, Jodonna Jimenez and Lt.Col. Daniel Jimenez in the ceremonial cutting of the ribbon.

SETH team receives demo of zero-gravity machine

Greg Stutts, Engineering Directorate, asked a representative of Scaglia1838 to come to the Center and give a demonstration of their zero-gravity lift device, the PN ERGO. Stutts is exploring the applications of the device to the Simulation Equipment Test Hardware (SETH) Program.



(Left) SETH Team members take an up close look at the anti-gravity device.

(Right) Rod Bridgeman takes his turn at exploring the PN ERGO.

(Below) Tammy Learned poses with the zero gravity machine.



Chief addresses department's new personnel system

You probably know by now that the Department of Defense is converting to the National Security Personnel System, or NSPS, to streamline and improve how employees are hired, compensated and rewarded.

As a primarily civilian workforce, the implementation of NSPS will create significant cultural changes within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

That is why I'm proud to note that we have been helping to shape the NSPS. Since September 1998, our Engineer Research and Development Center has participated in a successful and popular personnel demonstration project.

Also, our Southwestern Division, South Pacific Division and Mississippi Valley Division volunteered to take part in the initial implementation, called Spiral 1.1, to begin in July 2005. Lessons learned will help refine and improve the system.

Right now every Corps employee has the opportunity to continue shaping NSPS by taking part in a formal public com-



Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock

ment period.

On Feb. 14, the NSPS enabling regulations appeared in the Federal Register and for 30 days, comments will be accepted.

I encourage you to review the proposed regulations and provide your com-

ments at the NSPS website at www.cpms.osd.mil/NSPS/contact.html. After the formal public comment period is complete, changes may be made to the proposed regulations as a result of the Federal Register process.

After Spiral 1.1 is complete and an assessment is made of the initial implementation, the remainder of the workforce will be fully transferred to the new system in the July 2007 to January 2008 timeframe.

Expect to hear more from your local commanders on this new system. Also, a DoD employee handbook and tutorial will be provided to you as soon as it is available.

Thank you for helping to lead change and for all you do. With your support, we will help create a personnel system that will improve our service to the American people.

ESSAYONS!

Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock
Chief of Engineers

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