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Huntsville Center

Bulletin

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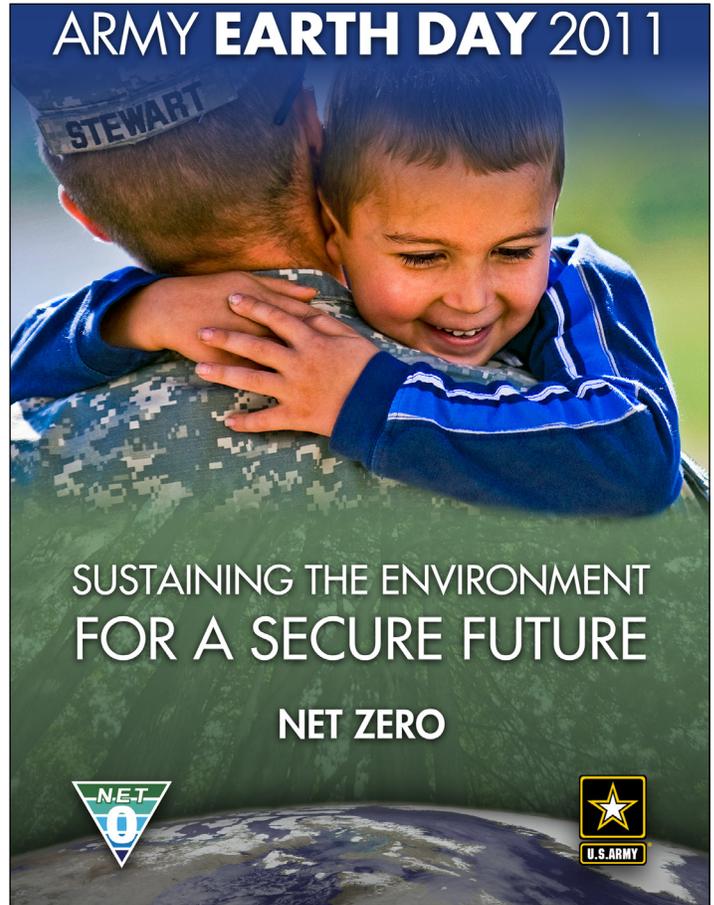
By Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp,
Chief of Engineers
and Commanding
General of the U.S.
Army Corps of
Engineers

Another April,
another
opportunity for
those of us fortunate
enough to be part of
the U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers to once again
pause and reflect on our
environmental work.

It's an arena where I
am proud to say we have
made strides during my
tenure as the 52nd Chief
of Engineers.

We are becoming
greener and truly
beginning to reflect our
seven Environmental
Operating Principles in all
aspects of our work, but
much work still remains.

We've linked our
environmental work with
both sustainability and
energy reduction – three
legs of the same stool.
All of us are familiar with
the Army's Triple Bottom
Line of sustainability:



The U.S. Army Earth Day poster introduces the concept of net zero installations, a strategy to identify and work with five installations to be net zero by 2020 with the goal to have 25 installations achieve net zero by 2030. (Illustration by U.S. Army Environmental Command)

mission, environment
and community with the
fourth tenet or the "Plus"
factor – economic benefit.

While we strive to build
our sustainability program
in step with the Triple
Bottom Line Plus, I would
argue that within the

Corps, we have been going
a bit beyond.

Our environmental
programs have evolved
quite a bit throughout the
years, just as the Nation's
attention to environmental
and sustainability issues

See *EARTH* on page 5

Commander's thoughts

Team,
Welcome to the third quarter of fiscal year 2011. This year has been challenging as we await budget decisions and work with continuing resolutions.

This delay in funding has ramifications for our projects. Our customers may not get money for projects until later in the fiscal year, which means we need to be ready to award contracts when the money arrives. I know you're up to the task, and I appreciate your patience.

March was a restful month for many of us. Some of the Huntsville area schools enjoyed Spring Break the week of March 14, which provided a time for us to spend time with our families. Other school districts will have Spring Break in April.

But along with that time off, we continued to work hard at the Center. I want to thank everyone for their efforts to keep our BRAC initiatives on track. BRAC is a no fail mission. The highest profile BRAC mission we have is to provide furniture and furnishings for the new BRAC facilities. I want to thank the furniture PDT, made up of

Installation Support, Engineering, Contracting and Resource Management, for doing a great job. We need to stay focused in meeting troop ready dates.

I toured the Pentagon March 4, to see our many utility monitoring and controls system improvements we have made there. Our UMCS and Electric Security Systems teams are helping the Pentagon save energy and increase security. I also visited our chemical demilitarization project site at Pueblo, Colo., for an update on activities. Our team is doing great work and I saw the incredible amount of progress they've made. When it's finished, this facility will destroy 750,000 rounds of mustard gas.

Charles Ford and I visited Southwestern Division March 29 to provide an overview of our capabilities to leaders, and to continue to emphasize our partnerships and mission execution across the Corps.

We are also continuing to refine our lines of effort that will help us shape our FY12 Implementation



Col. Nello L. Tortora

Plan. Jerry Lucas visited from USACE HQ to lead our teams through the development of logic models for each of the LOEs. Much progress was made and direction was provided for the way ahead. I want to thank those team members for their hard work. The end result will be a strategic plan that will help us navigate future uncertain environments.

Center employees celebrated the Center's first-ever Pi Day with a pie baking contest March 14. The event, planned by the Activities Association, brought in \$115 for future use. Congratulations to Rebecca Harmon. Her S'more Pie was voted the best of the 15 pies entered. She won \$30 and a goodie bag of Huntsville Center merchandise. The association is planning an Easter basket give away and an administrative professional breakfast April. More information

See **COMMANDER** on page 8

Hails and farewells

Welcome: Faeh Reese, Sara Cook, Stephanie Woods, Engineering Directorate; **Jose Cruz-Crespo, Tammy Moore**, Center Contracting Directorate.

Farewell: Bill Noel, Resource Management; **John Corcetti**, ED; **Terri Rollins**, CT.

Deploying to Iraq: John Lewis, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate.

Deploying to Afghanistan: Omar Ching, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate; **Brett Frazier**, ED; **Pam Draper**, OE; **Jerry Barnhart**, CT.



US Army Corps of Engineers

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BULLETIN

Commander..... Col. Nello Tortora
Chief, Public Affairs..... Debra Valine
Editor..... William S. Farrow



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The Bulletin asks:

What does your program do to save Army energy?"



"To save energy, our program performs energy studies on standard designs; including Child Development Centers, fire stations and range buildings. We also work with energy programs to share information. We have five Leadership in Energy and Environment Design accredited professionals working in our branch. Also, we follow regulations and shut off our monitors and lights when not in use."

Diana Gregory
Engineering Directorate

"We provide technical support for several programs that focus on saving the Army energy. Having said that, there are many other programs we support here at HNC that save the Army energy. We replace standard efficiency electric motors with premium efficiency type motors, upgrade air-conditioning control systems to perform enhanced control strategies, provide solar thermal systems to pre-heat domestic hot water, replace standard efficiency air-conditioning chillers with high efficiency chillers, replace standard efficiency gas-fired domestic water heaters with high efficiency condensing water heaters, convert constant volume pumping and air-conditioning air moving systems to variable flow systems, replace steam traps, convert steam heating systems to hot water systems, install wind turbines, and burn waste to generate energy. An economic analysis is performed before any of these measures are implemented to insure they are cost effective for that specific location. After implementation, many installations have their energy consumption measured to verify savings."



Rod Bridgeman
Engineering Directorate



Tammy Learned
Installation Support and Programs
Management Directorate

"We have several energy programs managed through Huntsville Center and serving more than just the Army. We also serve organizations throughout the Department of Defense. We do everything from finding energy conservation measures or projects needing execution, helping an organization develop a plan to pay for and execute the projects and execute the project and track the energy saving results through measurement and verification of the project. Another important aspect of what we do is developing strong relationships with the organizations we work with. In turn, these organizations have learned to lean on Huntsville Center's energy experts when making energy decisions at their location. Although we have not been formally designated as such, many refer to us as the 'Center for Energy.' That's a great compliment."

Employee Spotlight: Ryan Black

By Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office

Where do you work?

I work in the Office of Counsel

How long have you worked for the Corps?

I have worked for the Corps for more than five years.

What is your job title?

My job title is “attorney (general)”.

In your own words, what is your job? What do you do?

Most of what I do is listen to government employees as they notify me of issues in the contracts arena, or in the labor and employment law arena, and help the individuals find legally defensible solutions to those issues. I also review contract actions to ensure they are legally sufficient, and I represent the Army in Government Accountability Office protests, in front of the Merit Systems Protections Board, and in Equal Employment Opportunity hearings.

Review the Campaign Plan goals and objectives. Which one(s) apply to you?

Most of my involvement in the Campaign plan falls under Goal 4. Under 4a, I have helped develop technical competencies by creating training on the proper way to conduct source selection evaluations. I would hope I continue to develop my own technical competency as



Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Attorneys Ryan Black (right) and Steven Feldman and paralegal Lisa Gayman review case law books in the Huntsville Center Office of Counsel's law library.

well as those with whom I work.

Under 4c, I have helped standardize business processes through Lean Six Sigma studies of our IGE process, our task order process, and our source selection evaluation process.

Under 4d, I have worked with management to help employees improve their performance/conduct in order to develop and retain a highly skilled workforce.

How do you see your job making a difference and contributing to the Corps' success?

The obvious answer is that I help keep people out of trouble by rendering sound legal advice. However, if that was all I did, then I wouldn't be a very good attorney.

Any half- decent attorney can tell what you are not allowed to do. My hope is that I also am a value-added

member of the Project Delivery Team in finding solutions to problems as they arise that helps us meet the mission of our clients and supports the war fighter. I guess you would have to ask those I work with to see if I am making a difference.

What do you love about your job?

I love that my job pays me, provides great benefits for my family, and allows me to have a great work/life balance. I also love that my job has a lot of variety.

That is probably the major reason that I chose to work as a government attorney straight out of law school, rather than trying to get hired by a large law firm. Instead of being pigeon-holed into one area of law, I get to practice in several areas.

I also really enjoy working with people, understanding their viewpoints, and helping them communicate those viewpoints with others so that all to come to a resolution. I'm not sure what else you could ask for in a job.

The **Employee Spotlight** is intended to let our Center employees shine for positively impacting our organization through mission achievements. Employees are nominated on a monthly basis, and are also featured on the Huntsville Center web site monthly, and the Headquarters, Corps of Engineers web site on a rotating basis. If you'd like to nominate someone within your office for this recognition, please contact Jo Anita Miley, Public Affairs Office, at 256-895-1585, or e-mail JoAnita.Miley@usace.army.mil.

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has. When I look at the dictionary on my desk, granted I've had it for awhile, I can't find the word "sustainability".

It reflects a new way of thinking, just as our programs and the world have changed.

We know that being a good steward of the environment is vital to the planet's survival.

With 37,000 Corps of Engineers employees spread among more than 90 countries throughout the world, our extremely diverse and global mission has given us an incredibly valuable and unique opportunity to make a significant impact on the environment and the sustainability of our global resources and the security of our nation.

We have been using the talents and innovation within the Corps of Engineers and engineering communities to help preserve our planet and build our Army strong for years to come. I call it "building to last."

As not only the Nation's engineers, but the Nation's environmental engineers, we are evaluating how the Corps of Engineers will function today and deep into the 21st Century.

That means we must be part of the Nation's solutions through smart leadership and ground-breaking engineering, and introduce sustainable building designs that minimize energy, water and petroleum consumption requirements.

One example can be found at a Corps of Engineers-owned building, the new Environmental Laboratory at the U.S. Army Engineering Research and Development Center in Vicksburg (See story on page 11).

The new lab building is on track to achieve the U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and



“We know that being a good steward of the environment is vital to the planet’s survival.”

Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp

Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification, the first Corps-owned building to do so. That type of achievement should be the norm, with achieving Platinum certification the ideal.

We're trying to not only be good to the environment, but seeking to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by testing the use of biodiesel (B100), an almost 100 percent non-petroleum fuel,

in five selected vessels within our floating plant.

Working with our partners at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, we have already begun testing the fuel on the Raccoon, one of San Francisco District's debris vessels.

We expect the testing to run through May. At that time we will evaluate its use in a wide range of our vessels, from debris ones to towboats and everything in between, to see if this more sustainable option works for the Corps.

Again, an initiative that hits on all three legs of that stool – good for the environment, promotes sustainability and reduces energy consumption.

Our environmental initiatives and projects will have lasting impacts. We're becoming a Corps of "solutioneers" – doing what's needed to provide solutions to the Nation's environmental problems by working in concert with others sharing the same goals and philosophies whether they be in the military, the federal government, private industry, academia, with non-governmental agencies or the public at large.

It's a job we don't take lightly – it requires commitment, perseverance and vision. But it's one we heartily embrace.

I would like to recognize all of you this month while we celebrate the 31st anniversary of Earth Day for the work you do every day to make the Corps of Engineers "greener" and sustainable.

All of you are working hard to do your part to build our environmental programs, the Corps, the Army, and our Nation strong. BUILDING STRONG®

Taking it to the classroom

Center outreach touches more than 1,000 students

By Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office

In just two outreach events in March, Huntsville Center professionals reached more than 1,000 local students with the message that careers in science, technology, engineering and math are exciting.

Center employees visited two schools to provide career information to students and support the National Science Technology, Engineering and Math awareness program, which creates a climate for improving educational opportunities for all students, and encourages an increased awareness and interest in science, technology, engineering and math.

The Huntsville Center sent speakers to the schools to inspire students toward STEM careers.

Eight Huntsville Center professionals participated in a Career Day hosted by Sparkman Middle School March 10 in Toney, Ala.

Speakers led classroom discussions focused on career exploration, education and training. They also explained their roles on various programs at the Center for the 850 sixth through eighth grade students who attended.

Speakers at the event were Atidya Williams, Business Management Office; Lillian Fox and Melody Hinkle, Center Contracting Directorate; Patrick Haas, chief of Chemical Demilitarization Directorate; Neil “Todd” DuVernay and Jelani Ingram, Engineering Directorate; Darrell “Audwin” Davis, Resource Management Office



Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Michael Lanier, a civil engineer with the Huntsville Center Engineering Directorate, mentors a student during the First Missionary Baptist Church Child Development Center and Academy science fair March 17.

and William Eggleston, Safety Office.

Shana Winter, school counselor at Sparkman Middle School, who also organized the event, said the event was a huge success.

Career Day is designed to help students open their minds to making career choices.

“We are very pleased with Huntsville Centers’ participation in

today’s event. We are grateful that your organization filled eight of the 30 slots available to speakers - this was definitely a plus for our school,” Winter said.

“The speakers did an excellent job showcasing the various careers at the Corps, and the students learned about jobs that are available at the Huntsville Center location.”

In another event, nine

See **OUTREACH** on page 7



Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Margaret Herford, a pre-school teacher with the First Missionary Baptist Church Child Development Center and Academy, provides John Nevil, a structural engineer with Huntsville Center's Engineering Directorate, background information on a science fair project her class entered. More than 15 Huntsville Center employees participated as science fair judges at the academy and as speakers during a career day at Sparkman Middle School.

OUTREACH

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Engineering Directorate employees at the Center helped more than 173 students at the First Missionary Baptist Church Child Development Center and Academy celebrate Science Week. March 14-18.

Tony Torres, chief of Systems Cost Division, was the keynote speaker for the kick-off event March 14. Torres spoke to students about why we need more scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians, challenging the students to take more math and science courses to prepare for STEM careers.

“How many of you have heard

of astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson? I like to think of him as one of the great heroes of our time – scientists should be our heroes too,” Torres said.

“If you want to be a scientist like him, you have to know how to understand our physical world. You’ll have to take many science and math classes as you prepare for your career. If you choose a STEM career, you can work hard to provide a better way of living for everyone.”

Week long activities at the school ended with a Science Fair March 17, where Center employees judged more than 65 individual and group science projects.

April Rafael-Adams, Ryan Bower, Dr. Michelle Crull, Lynn Helms, Eldric Jefferson, Michael Lanier, John Nevels, Marilyn Scott and Jacqueline White, all of Engineering Directorate judged the projects.

In April, Center employees will participate in two educational outreach opportunities at Moore County High School April 15 in Lynchburg, Tenn., and University Place Elementary School in Huntsville, April 20.

Huntsville Center employees interested in participating in future outreach events can call 256-895-1585 to register.

Award winning newsletter



US Army Corps
of Engineers ®

The Corps Environment

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Workers install solar panels to help power a dining facility at Fort Bliss, Texas. (Courtesy photo)

Desert sun powers Army dining facility

By James Campbell
U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville

Alternative energy programs are well under way at Fort Bliss, Texas, and the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center Utility Monitoring and Control Systems program is managing some of the innovative work.

One phase Soldiers are sure to notice is complete. Their Brigade Combat Team Dining Facility is now powered with 574 polycrystalline solar panels, 214 on the roof and 360 mounted on a carport structure, said Matthew Morelan, a project manager with UMCS.

The solar photovoltaic system is rated at 120 kilowatts DC, and 100 kilowatts AC, and is the most visible component of the multi-phase project, said Lawrence Andrews, senior project manager of Johnson Controls, Inc., the company awarded the work by Huntsville Center.

"Another unique attribute of the system Soldiers will appreciate is knowing it is synced to an emergency generator

complementing power to the building in the event of a power outage," Andrews said.

Phase one of the project may not have been as easy to spot, but the company installed 54 advanced electric, gas and water meters, he said. Meters reporting data to the installation central monitoring facility will help identify consumption trends making it easier to fine-tune energy management plans.

Phase three is a survey of photovoltaic energy panel installation at 54 buildings on Fort Bliss and nearby McGregor Base Camp, a desert training area. The final phase will be the installation of photovoltaic units at five buildings on Fort Bliss and four at McGregor, Andrews said.

The sprawling installation covers about 1,700 square miles in Texas and New Mexico and is developing plans and partnerships with tenants and local officials to meet net-zero energy goals with wind, solar, biomass and geothermal resources.

Huntsville Center Public Affairs specialist James Campbell captured two first-place awards in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 2010 Herbert A. Kassner Journalism Competition. Campbell is editor of *The Corps Environment* which won first – place in the competition's newsletter category. Campbell also penned the first – place story in the news category. In a message to Corps employees Feb. 24, Lt. Gen. Robert L. "Van" Van Antwerp, U.S. Army chief of engineers and commanding general of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, announced the contest results and praised public affairs professionals for "raising the bar as we go from 'good to great' in communication." During the annual contest, judges scored 212 entries in 30 categories, including print journalism, photography and broadcast products, for technical quality and value to Corps and U.S. Army communications. Huntsville Center's first-place entries, along with other Kassner contest winners, will now compete alongside first – place winners of other major Army commands in the Department of the Army's 2009 Major Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Communication Competition. *The Corps Environment* is available online at https://environment.usace.army.mil/corps_environment/

COMMANDER

continued from page 2
will follow via e-mail.

Our Women's History Month observance March 30 gave us an opportunity to hear from Sue Englehardt, USACE's Director of Human Resources. She presented training on generational differences.

In April we need to complete interim performance counseling.

For GS-13 and above, the cycle is Oct. 1, 2010 – Sept. 30, 2011, with the mid-point in March. For GS-09 through GS-12, the rating cycle is

Nov. 1, 2010 – Oct. 31, 2011, with the mid-point in April.

It's not too early to start thinking about Engineer Day Awards. Recognizing our outstanding teammates is important. This year, we plan to do things a little differently.

We had the call for nominations for USACE Program Manager, Project Managers and Project Delivery Team of the Year. Our nominations for those awards will be named the Huntsville Center

award recipient at our picnic June 3. By using the USACE nominees, we're hoping to streamline the process and reduce the amount of work required to complete the award nomination packets.

Also in April – the last week of the month we show our appreciation for the support provided by our administrative professionals.

As always, thank you for all you do to make Huntsville Center and the Corps great.

Center engineer named Young Engineer of the Year

A Huntsville Center mechanical engineer took the Society of Military Engineers 2011 National Engineers Week Young Engineer of the Year award.

Levi Gabre is the principal reviewer of Quality Control Plans for major programs in the Installation Support and Program Management Directorate. Gabre also provides full-scale program/project manager and support for all projects under Defense Energy Support Center Environmental and Recurring Maintenance/Minor Repair programs.

Gabre provides training and support to project delivery teams with members from Engineering, Contracting and Resource Management to effectively execute the DESC program. In addition, he led two acquisition teams in FY09 and FY10 that awarded \$35 million and \$3.5 million contracts in support of DESC programs. Gabre also performed as acting chief of the Operations Branch, Systems Engineering Division, when requested.

In FY10, Gabre personally developed and executed a new DESC Recurring Maintenance and Minor/Emergency Program. The program provides maintenance and repair services for DESC capitalized fuel facilities, systems and components in compliance with various codes, standards and regulations.

The program is highly effective with significant cost savings realized. Currently, the program is being executed at more than 55 Army and Navy installations.

His community service related to the engineering profession includes volunteering to serve as a quality



Courtesy photo

Phil Loftis (right), Society of Military Engineers Huntsville Post president, presents Levi Gabre with the SAME 2011 National Engineer's Week Young Engineer of the Year award.

assurance inspector as part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' role in support of Hurricane Wilma in 2006. He received the Armed Forces Civilian Service Medal for his efforts there. He also served as committee member for the annual Huntsville Center Engineering Day event. He has been a SAME member since 2004 and is a Certified Engineer Intern and a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

Gabre is a Huntsville, Ala., native and graduated from Buckhorn High School. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and his master's degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

Center's Marshburn recognized for volunteer spirit

The North Alabama American Society of Heating Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Engineers



Marshburn

announced winners of its Volunteer Spirit Award at the 2011 Huntsville Engineering Society banquet Feb. 24.

One of the award winners, Huntsville Center's William Bryant Marshburn, received an award for

his sacrifice of time and diligent dedication to the duties of the North Alabama ASHRAE Chapter.

Marshburn was president of the North Alabama Chapter of ASHRAE for three terms from 2007 to 2010.

During his tenure, he led efforts to revitalize the organization's membership.

During the 2009 ASHRAE Regional Awards Ceremonies in New Orleans, Bryant received two certificates of recognition:

the ASHRAE Presidential Award of Excellence for significant improvement in membership, attendance, research promotion, and educational programs during the 2009 - 2010 term of office, and the ASHRAE Presidential Award of Excellence for Sustainability Activities in appreciation of the chapter's dedication and support of ASHRAE's mission to promote a sustainable world during the 2009 -10 term of office.

Fort Sill veterinary clinic reaps MRR benefits

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

Huntsville Center's Installation Support and Program Management directorate's Medical Repair and Renewal division, known for ensuring execution of medical facility repairs and renovations to antiquated military medical facilities, has customers requesting MRR services for facilities used in the care of a different kind of patient.

The MRR division completed the Ft. Sill, Okla., Veterinary Treatment Facility project in January.

According to the veterinarians working there, they couldn't be more pleased with the upgrade.

"It's a drastic improvement," said Capt. Lacey Jones, a veterinarian at the Fort Sill VTF.

Jones said before the renovation, the staff were working in narrow, open examination rooms with limited storage.

She said the examination rooms were located in what were originally stable stalls and that the facility was in poor overall condition and in need of an overhaul, which they got through MRR.

The VTF was constructed in 1934 and originally served as a horse stable before converting into the installation veterinary clinic and receiving piecemeal renovation and addition over the years.

Design and renovations at the Fort Sill VTF were completed for more than \$1.9 million over two years.

The latest renovation was an all-encompassing project which included an improved floor plan layout and architectural finishes.



Courtesy photo

Patient examination rooms at the Fort Sill Veterinary Treatment Facility are now enclosed and feature modern amenities and equipment.

The project was also required to meet sustainable Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for "Green Building" design/construction requirements.

Although the renovation to a veterinary clinic is a small project compared to many projects MRR has managed in the past, there is still just as much attention to detail involved to complete an efficient design and project execution.

"There really isn't a big difference in the clinic renewal process from our perspective here at Huntsville Center other than these are geared for animals," said Seon Farris, MRR project manager for the Fort Sill VTF. "Of course there are different guide-plates used, different equipment installed but it all comes from the existing military design guidance for vet clinics."

Jones said she's most pleased with the new floor-plan re-designed that allowed for the location of the new surgical preparation area and the surgical suite together. She explained that before the renovation they had to prepare an animal for surgery in one area of the facility and then

move the animal to the surgery suite. She said now that process is much more efficient.

Fort Sill's VTF is staffed by Army Veterinary Corps personnel with the primary mission of providing complete veterinary care for all government owned animals.

Jones said the main mission there is caring for the health of the more than half-a-dozen Military Working Dogs assigned to Fort Sill. She said although the MWDs at Fort Sill train and operate at the Garrison, just like their Soldier counterparts they are expeditionary too and they fill a crucial role in the Army mission around the world.

"MWDs have probably saved more Soldiers than any tool in the Army through their detection capabilities," Jones said.

Jones said the 5,556 square foot Fort Sill VTF comfortably accommodates all 16 members of the veterinary team (three veterinarians, four veterinarian technicians, seven food inspectors and two administrators).

Farris said he's also working on the upcoming VTF renovation project at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Lab consolidates, seeks 'Gold' rating

By James Campbell
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers strives to meet environmental goals for customers when undertaking new construction projects by using widely recognized standards such as the U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, but it's not often that the Corps gets a chance to apply those standards for one of its own.

The U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center may have the first LEED Gold rated facility built by the Corps, for the Corps. The ERDC Environmental Laboratory Headquarters that previously occupied several aging office buildings on the 700-acre ERDC campus is moving into a new 85,000 square-foot building that is still undergoing LEED evaluation.

The 10 – year journey to a new facility started with plans to modify existing structures to consolidate the work force and meet new security requirements, said Dr. Beth Fleming, ERDC Environmental Laboratory director. Eventually the decision was made to seek funding for and build a new facility, aiming for a LEED Gold rating.

In addition to the environmentally friendly building, putting everyone under one roof will be a first for the organization.

"This physical move enhances our ability to solve problems. People knowing and understanding each other in the same location benefits our ability to address difficult environmental problems," Fleming said.

"Walking through the halls and



Photo by Wayne Stroupe

Staff enters the new U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center Environmental Lab Headquarters building March 18. The environmentally friendly building consolidates the lab's work force from several office locations around the ERDC campus in Vicksburg, Miss.

seeing everyone coming together has been a great experience," said Dr. Jack Davis, the lab's deputy director. Part of what makes the building eligible for the LEED Gold rating are the little things the staff says they notice like automated lights and water faucets, he said.

"Knowing where the staff comes from— for people who are in environmental disciplines, the building is a real source of pride," Davis said.

The building was designed for and is in the certification process for earning a LEED Gold rating, said Brenda Proctor, project coordinator from First Construction Inc., Edwards, Miss.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Vicksburg District, the construction agent for ERDC, awarded the contract to a small business mentor-protégée team, First Construction and Yates Construction Inc., Philadelphia, Miss.

Some of the building features include water-saving low-flow fixtures, reserved parking for shared

transportation and low-emission or fuel-efficient vehicles, optimized energy performance and metering systems, energy efficient elevator systems, and increased ventilation, said Lamar Rutland, an engineer from Vicksburg District who served as a Quality Assurance Representative on the project.

Construction began Oct. 4, 2009, and ERDC accepted the building Jan. 25. True to the resource-efficient nature of the building, the staff took on additional duties and longer hours to complete the move earlier than expected.

The fiscal year 2010 and 2011 Leadership Development Program classes planned the move and scheduled mover tasks for their group projects, and Mike Channell, a staff researcher, handled management tasks from building concept to completion, Fleming said.

The building was fully staffed and operational by April 1, with an official building dedication and open house planned for later this year.

Ethics Corner

Government Travel Card Misconceptions

By Chris Paden
Office of Counsel

I want to thank Ms. Angela Rackard, Huntsville Center's Agency/Organization Program Coordinator (AOPC) for the Government Travel Card, for sitting down with me and helping me out with this article. I spent close to an hour with her going over the rules and regulations for the card's use and listening to some examples of how misuse of the card can occur.

Most of the examples of misuse Angela provided me with were mistakes that can happen if you are not paying close enough attention.

For example, she mentioned one story about an employee went to dinner and accidentally used the GTC rather than their own credit card. Technically, that is still considered misuse of the card, but in that circumstance, a quick explanation from the card owner took care of the problem.

Contrast that example of one-time accidental use with this next example.

Angela told me of a situation where the employee did not have a credit card of their own, but had the GTC in their possession when they ran out of gas. Thinking that they would just pay off the balance when the bill came, they proceeded to use their Government Card to fill up their tank.

It just so happened that they were driving their spouse's car the following day and that car too ran out of gas. The employee made two mistakes: first, using the GTC to fill up the tanks of their vehicles and second, they thought no one would find out if they paid off their balance when the bill came.

The first mistake is obvious. The GTC is for official use only. You are never allowed to use the GTC for your personal convenience. The second mistake is a common misconception. The fact is that every charge incurred on the GTC is reported to the AOPC whether or not you are on travel orders. In fact, if you do not have travel orders and you use the GTC, you are automatically placed on the "Nontravel Activity Report" and those charges will be reviewed.

Another common mistake people make is that when they return from TDY they stop by the gas station on the way home to fill up their gas tank using the GTC. Your TDY ends when you finish traveling and not at midnight of the day your TDY ends. Also, you cannot fill up your tank with the GTC since POV travel was not authorized.

Remember, you will be reimbursed for your POV mileage through the travel voucher you will file.

One of the common ways people run afoul of the GTC permitted uses is that they have a credit balance on their card so they go to the ATM and make a cash withdrawal in the amount of the credit. The proper way of retrieving a credit balance is having the credit card company issue you a check for the credit.

Misuse of the GTC can result in unpleasant personnel actions ranging anywhere from a verbal counseling to removal, depending on the facts and circumstances of the misuse. The simple way to avoid these types of action is to follow the rules of use for the GTC: Only use it for official use.

If you have any questions about your GTC, you can contact Ms. Rackard at 256-895-1430, or contact me at 256-895-1103.

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