



CONSTELLATION

A publication of the
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District
Volume 26, Number 3
March 2000



A computer-generated image of the proposed Wilson Bridge, looking northeast from a park in Virginia.
(Courtesy <http://www.wilsonbridge.com>)

Wilson Bridge project moves forward

by Cori Brown

Truckers know this bridge well. They carry more than 1.3 percent of the nation's gross domestic product over it to include food, energy commodities and paper prod-

ucts. It is a vital East Coast link they can't live with out. Congress knows it well. One can imagine how much of the nation's business is conducted on this bridge while waiting for traffic to move. And for the everyday commuters, who live and work in the region, they, too, know it well. They can only dream of a stress-free daily trip across this aging icon of the nation's capital.

Beginning as early as this fall, the dream may become reality with the construction of a new Woodrow Wilson Bridge. To put things in perspective, here are a few important facts about the current condition of the bridge:

- Studies to address safety and operational concerns have been ongoing since the late 1980s.

- It is one of the worst bottlenecks in the nation. During rush hour, the average backup approaching the bridge is one to four miles.

- The bridge carries almost three times the traffic it was designed for—more than 190,000 vehicles a day.

- By 2020, traffic projections indicate a volume of 300,000 vehicles a day.

- It has twice the accident rate of the American Legion Bridge, another major Potomac River crossing.

- Structurally, it is nearing the end of its serviceability. To make it sound again, it must be replaced, significantly modified, or severely restricted in terms of weight loads.

Add a few more ingredients to the mix, like an estimated cost of \$2.1 billion dollars and a fast track

(Continued on p. 3)



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District

[http://
www.nab.usace.army.mil](http://www.nab.usace.army.mil)

Constellation is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81 and published monthly by the Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, Md. 21203-1715. Telephone: (410) 962-2809; fax: (410) 962-3660. It is printed on recyclable paper; press run 2,200. All manuscripts submitted are subject to editing and rewriting. Material from this publication may be reproduced without permission. Views/opinions are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

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From the commander

Melting pot yields to cultural diversity

by Col. Bruce Berwick
Commander & District Engineer

The U.S. Army's well known recruiting theme, "Be all you can be," challenges us to take what we are and make the most of it. Implied in the message is that we all have our own unique abilities, character and cultural background on which to build the structure of our lives. In other words, *who we are* is the foundation for *what we are*.

Naturally, the foundation is laid first. Each of us comes with differences and similarities. For example, some Baltimore District employees were born, educated and have worked exclusively in the Mid-Atlantic region all their lives. Others were reared in other parts of the globe. Still others have lived in several places and absorbed other cultures. Many of us identify with ethnic origins; others do not.

I could go on listing our similarities and differences, but you get the idea: we are a diverse group tied together by our common workplace.

In the past, America downplayed diversity. Immigrants came from all around the globe and were expected to assimilate into their new culture. The United States was called a melting pot, and everyone was expected to blend in.

We now recognize that assimilation worked only up to a point; we do have a shared American heritage. But assimilation also discouraged acknowledgment

and understanding of the richness of our various cultural legacies.

Over the last few years, Americans have come to see that our diversity is an advantage, not a disadvantage. What other country can boast a people with so many varied cultural backgrounds? We enjoy the enviable position of being able to benefit from virtually all of the world's accumulated wisdom. All we need do is recognize, tolerate and learn from our diversity.

Being open to our differences increases understanding and sparks creativity. It opens pathways of communication and avenues for overcoming problems. It teaches us new and effective techniques for working together and achieving goals.

You may have heard the term "diversity" used in talk of minority and non-minority relations or in male-female discussions. But, diversity includes more than race and gender. It embraces economic background, education, ethnicity, age, religion, physical and mental ability, military experience and lifestyle choices. Diversity calls us to accept and respect everyone's foundation.

As a District, we will look more closely at diversity. A training plan is being developed and will be implemented in the coming months.

Don't think of this as just another separate program or new initiative. Like safety and security, diversity will become an integral part of the way we operate.

Essays.

Wilson Bridge project moves forward, *continued from cover*

completion date of 2008, and one realizes quickly that this project will take an extraordinary team effort, of which the Corps will play a major role.

Operations Division employee Jennifer Moyer will breathe, eat, and sleep the Woodrow Wilson Bridge through the next fiscal year. As the Corps' project manager, she will be responsible for issuance of all Corps regulatory permits. She will work hand-in-hand with seven major agencies, including several from Maryland and Virginia, the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Coast Guard, and Washington D.C. Department of Public Works.

"The project's biggest impacts are to aquatic resources," said Moyer. "There are intensive mitigation measures planned for the project."

Moyer will assess the merits of issuing three Corps permits to the FHWA for Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act.

She will base her decision on an evaluation of the probable impacts to nontidal and tidal wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation, and disposal of dredged materials as they affect the public interest.

Other considerations include the provisions of the Endangered Species Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, according to Moyer.

"This is the most complex project I've worked on," said Moyer. "I'll be working on it exclusively until it's completed."

"It's being very closely watched," said Moyer. "There is



A computer-generated image looking east from a fishing pier on the south side of the bridge.

very little disagreement that something needs to be done, and done quickly. The team has developed a reasonably high level of trust due to the partnering efforts that have been built over the years. We can make it happen, but it must happen in an environmentally sound way."

The proposed replacement bridge was the subject of an international design competition in 1998. Features of the new bridge include two new parallel, double leaf, counterbalanced drawbridges, each with a 366-foot span and a clearance of 70 feet above the navigation channel. A bridge operator's house will be incorporated into the project.

The number of lanes will double from six to 12 (six lanes in each direction), with designated lanes for local and express traffic. Each arched span will be approximately 6,075 feet long. The west-bound span will also include a bike path. Four interchanges will also be significantly upgraded to improve traffic flow.

A project of this magnitude is not without its share of controversy. In 1998, a complaint was filed against FHWA on behalf of the City of Alexandria. A citizen's

group later joined the suit. The ultimate outcome resulted in a settlement with Alexandria and an appeal from the citizens' group overturned in favor of FHWA in December 1999.

According to Moyer, there is still opposition to the current proposal.

"The appeal is being reviewed again and there are some very outspoken groups who would like to see a different alternative built."

In a recent public hearing, opponents of the project spoke in favor of a tunnel as opposed to the current 12-lane bridge.

They cited concerns about noise, mitigation for aquatic resources, the need for regional transportation involving rail transit, and impacts to historic structures.

For Moyer, this is all part of a process that has been streamlined to provide maximum information to the public. It includes public meetings and hearings, a pamphlet with extensive information about the project and a web site at <http://www.wilsonbridge.com>.

"It's an exciting project, it's fast paced, it's happening, it's now," said Moyer.

District proposes monitored natural attenuation

by Mary Beth Thompson

The Baltimore District released a proposed plan this month that identifies monitored natural attenuation as the preferred alternative to correct groundwater contamination at the former Nike missile site in Tolchester Beach, Md.

Testing shows that groundwater under the former launch area of the Nike missile site, Battery BA-30/31 near Tolchester contains Trichloroethylene, usually referred to as TCE. The contamination resulted from past Defense activities there, and the site is included in the Defense Environmental Restoration Program - Formerly Used Defense Sites.

Five alternatives suggested

The District conducted a remedial investigation and focused feasibility study for this site. During the study, five alternatives were analyzed. Natural attenuation was identified as the preferred alternative.

Instead of installing wells to treat the water or adding microbes to break down the TCE, natural attenuation would allow normal physical processes to degrade the TCE, or in other words, let mother nature do the work. The District would monitor the concentration of TCE using existing monitoring wells to ensure that it continues to decrease.

"This project lends itself to natural attenuation because testing data shows a natural decrease in the concentration of TCE has already occurred," said Jack Butler, project manager. "Also, there are no immediate health risks associated with the

contamination, because the TCE levels are relatively low and there are no current or anticipated plans to use the groundwater at the site."

Butler will lead a public meeting March 14 in nearby Chestertown at the Kent County Library to describe the project, explain natural attenuation and seek public comment. A copy of the proposed plan is available in an information repository at the library. The

project team will take public input during a 30-day comment period and then decide whether natural attenuation will be used.

TCE is used on military installations as a solvent to remove grease from metal parts. The Corps study looked for but was unable to determine the source of the contamination. The study concluded that the likely reason was poor housekeeping practices.

Part of Defense system

The Tolchester Nike site was part of the Baltimore-Washington Defense Area System. It was constructed, operated and deactivated between 1954 and 1967. Kent County now owns the site and uses it for storing road construction equipment and maintenance materials.

The contaminated groundwater extends off the former Nike launch site onto privately owned land. That land is agricultural. Tests of the soil in the area show no contamination.

Tolchester project team

Jack Butler,

project manager

Debra Ford,

team leader

Phyllis Della Camera,

geologist

Maurice Wooden,

risk assessor, health & safety officer

Bob Miller, chemist

Gloria Markovci,

environmental engineer



Nike Hercules missiles on display.

(Photo courtesy of Mike Cantrell)

MDW commander offers advice to District leaders

At St. Michaels, Md., last month, the commanding general of the Military District of Washington spoke to Baltimore District leaders about how the Corps of Engineers could be more useful to its military customers.

Maj. Gen. Robert R. Ivany challenged the District leadership to focus more on customer service. Calling communication paramount, he said that he expects the District to engage and educate its customers, himself included.

“Nothing is worse than to sign a detailed design agreement and not be informed on the hidden potential costs such as asbestos and lead paint,” he said.

Ivany recommended the District consider three improvements in their dealings with military commanders:

- Establish a matrix tracking system of projects, which would be sent to commanders on a monthly basis.
- Establish a District professional construction advisor for military commanders.
- Develop a toolbox useful to commanders that supports their revitalization efforts and offers guidance in accomplishing their

goals within the Army’s Operation and Maintenance, or OMA, structure.

Most commanders are faced with installations awash with buildings and infrastructure that are deteriorating, Ivany said. Many such buildings are historic, beautiful or both but in serious need of repair and modernization.

“We need Corps expertise to guide us as to what needs to be done first,” he said.

The professional construction advisor would, in Ivany’s view, be able to propose projects that make sense and can be

accomplished within funding levels, and recommend the best sequence in which to do



Maj. Gen. Robert R. Ivany, commanding general, Military District of Washington

projects. He also predicted that another round of Base Realignment and Closure activity could result in a total personnel increase of up to 20,000 at Forts Belvoir and Meade.

“We need Corps expertise to guide us to what needs to be done first.”

Maj. Gen. Robert R. Ivany

That increase would correspond to about \$1 billion in new construction for the Baltimore District. On the other hand, he said, utility privatization initiatives and an increased need for family housing overseas would result in less work for the Corps in the continental United States.

Ivany’s command, the Military District of Washington, known as MDW, is a true partner with the Baltimore District, he pointed out. Baltimore District provides project and construction management along with contracting, real estate and environmental services to MDW. In turn, MDW provides facilities to the Corps at Forts Belvoir, Meade, McNair and Myer.

MDW, an Army major command, comprises certain installations in Virginia; Washington, D.C.; Maryland and New York.

Six thousand military members and 61,000 civilian employees work for MDW. Its mission includes contingency planning and base operations for the national capital region.



Courtesy employee exhibits quiet, respectful manner

For Tom Sandberg, procurement specialist at Arlington National Cemetery, the solemn setting of this national shrine reflects his values of respect for and courtesy toward others. It has earned him the Courtesy Employee of the Month award for March.

Sandberg has been a federal employee for 16 years, but he's been with Baltimore District only since November 1998. He is responsible for buying services and products to support the needs of over 100 staff members at the cemetery.

He comes in daily contact with five to 10 vendors, procuring anything from flags to vehicle equipment. With a broad customer base such as this, Sandberg relies on his good communication skills and quiet demeanor to get the job done.

"I have to consider others' feelings, provide frequent status reports and focus on the end results," he said.

His efforts have not gone unnoticed. When contracting re-

sponsibilities for the cemetery recently changed from Fort Myer to Baltimore District, customers and co-workers took note of Sandberg's "willingness to pitch in and go the extra mile," according to Contracting Division Chief Jerry Rifkin.

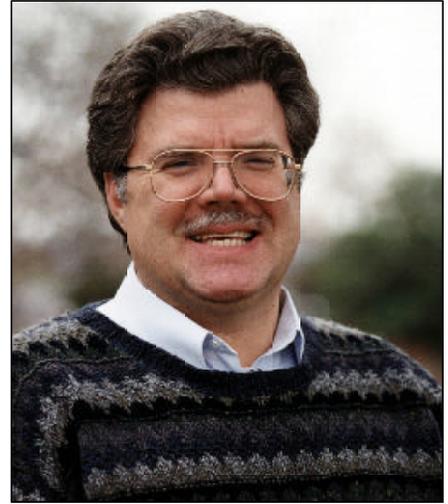
Sandberg believes courtesy is an active choice to treat others with dignity and respect.

"I feel that I learned courtesy from my upbringing at home and my personal Christian beliefs," said Sandberg. "Mom and Dad were there for me, providing a good example and cultivating that belief."

Sandberg's behind-the-scenes support to the staff at Arlington belies a strong belief in patience, understanding and consideration of others. When challenging situations do arise, Sandberg gives his customers the opportunity to express their concerns.

"I let them know I'm on top of things so I can reduce their frustrations," said Sandberg.

Sandberg lives with his wife,



Thomas Sandberg

Kristi, only a few miles from the cemetery. He enjoys reading biographies and autobiographies and is currently reading *When Pride Still Mattered—A Life of Vince Lombardi*.

"Tom Sandberg is always courteous, polite and professional," said Rifkin. "His quiet and respectful telephone manner contributes to his ability to uphold the refined atmosphere of Arlington National Cemetery."

Caught on the Web

- Download application forms for scholarships available from the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund at their website: www.feea.org. FEEA awards scholarships from \$300 to \$1,500 to federal civilian employees and their dependents. This year's application deadline is March 31.

- Learn how to identify scammers who offer scholarship services that promise much and deliver little at the Federal Trade Commission's website:

www.ftc.gov. Click on **consumer protection**, then **scholarship and employment services** and **scholarship scams**.



- For information about planning and paying for college, key in www.salliemae.com to reach the website of the Student Loan Marketing Association. It contains sections on scholarships as well as student loans.

- The website of the U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov, gives information about grants, financial aid and direct loans. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, the FAFSA, is there for application on-line or to download.

The 'Mad Hatter' or just a collector?

by Mike Pollis

While some people like to gather stamps, coins, or other small objects, Don Holland of Engineering Division prefers to wear his hat collection.

Perhaps you've seen Holland coming to work wearing a hat with a feather or other oddity that looks as though it belongs in years or even centuries past.

Well, in many cases, Holland's headwear does indeed reflect styles of a different time and culture. In all, Holland's collection totals about 320 hats ranging from the 16th century renaissance period to the present. All hats before 1950 are reproductions; all after that date are originals. Amazingly, this immense compilation of hats contains no baseball caps.

"I know I get occasional stares for some of my unusual hats," said Holland. "However, I never buy a hat if I don't intend to wear it."

Holland's fascination with hats had its roots in the mid-1980s at a Greek ethnic festival where he purchased a Greek



Don Holland displays a few of the hats in his collection that numbers into the hundreds.

fisherman's hat. Since then, Holland has added everything from Sherlock Holmes-type hats to various military hats fancy French berets and 19th century derbies.

Among the most unique hats in the collection are those worn during wars, including World War II German military hats, Civil War caps and the tricorne hats popular during the Revolutionary War in America.

Though at first Holland just picked up hats that appeared neat or unusual, he has since put a lot of time and research into his cap selection. "I now

use the Internet for research and I go to ethnic festivals, military gun shows and surplus stores," said Holland, who strives to make sure that each of his hats is historically accurate, though some reflect artistic license when matching a badge or pin to a hat.

Holland has remained a loyal customer to the hatmakers from whom he buys his custom-made hats, particularly a shop in Gettysburg that specializes in making hats from every time period, and another one in Arizona that specializes in more formal period dress type hats.

"The enjoyment of going to places and looking at many hats is very fulfilling," said Holland. "However, due to the size of my collection, I've had to become more selective, but I can always find a reason to buy a new hat."

So, how serious is Holland about his hobby?

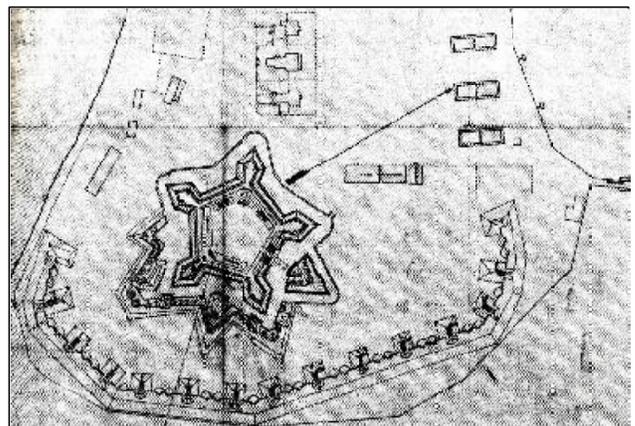
"If someone broke into my house, I would rather have them steal my CD collection than my hat collection," said Holland.

Baltimore District history quiz

Select the caption that correctly describes this drawing.

- Lunar landing module footprint.
- Proposed military family housing at Fort Ritchie, Md., circa 1929.
- Petroglyph of a sea turtle discovered in a cave on Micronesian island.
- Alien design found in Iowa cornfield.
- Outline of Fort McHenry Military Reservation as proposed by the Board of Engineers for fortifications in 1871.

Need a lifeline? Call PAO, 2-2809. (Drawing from the National Archives)



It's tax time again!



Sharpen those pencils! Rev up the calculators! It's tax time again!

Don't let fear or trepidation keep you from where millions have gone before. With some thoughtful planning, good organization and a little patience, tax preparation can be a less stressful experience.

A great place to start is the IRS web site at <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov>.

There one can find *Frequently Asked Tax Questions and Answers*. Typical questions include:

- ❖ Does the IRS provide free tax information and services?
- ❖ Do you have assistance for taxpayers with disabilities?
- ❖ Are copies of tax forms available at local libraries?
- ❖ I am having trouble downloading forms and publications from your web site. What can I do?
- ❖ How can I participate as an electronic filing originator?
- ❖ Will the IRS recommend a reputable preparer?

The IRS answers the questions through its tax topics program and also provides specific references, including publications available for download.

Frequently Asked Tax Questions is part of a larger program called *Taxpayer Help and Education*. It's taxpayer school on line with numerous topics to help one

understand all the changes and regulations. Topics range from where to file to understanding an IRS notice.

It's important to keep up with IRS tax law changes. They could prove advantageous in providing additional deductions.

For instance, the child tax credit increased from \$400 in 1998 to \$500 in 1999 for each qualifying child under the age of 17.

The law also provides deductions of up to \$1,500 for qualified student loan interest.

Medical expenses for smoking cessation programs are now deductible, too. All of this information is available online in easy to understand plain language.

If you choose to pay someone to prepare your tax return, here are some tips to follow:

- ❖ That person should have a good understanding of all tax matters.
- ❖ Check with friends, co-workers or employers for help in selecting a reputable preparer.
- ❖ Choose a preparer who can be contacted later in case the IRS has questions about the return.
- ❖ Beware of anyone who **guarantees** a refund before getting the financial information required or who claims to have a "special" relationship with the IRS.
- ❖ Never sign a blank return and never sign in pencil.
- ❖ Remember that even if

someone else prepares a return, the taxpayer is ultimately responsible for the accuracy of all information on the return.

This year, both federal and state officials will encourage taxpayers to file their taxes electronically.

Taxpayers sign the form using a personal identification number. It's easy, quick, and a refund can be directly deposited in a bank account within 48 hours of processing.

For people who owe federal taxes, including estimated taxes and those requesting file extensions, payment can be made with one of the major credit cards.

For more information on federal taxes, call 1-800-829-1040. If a notice does come in the mail, there is a national toll-free Taxpayer Advocate Program in place 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That number is 1-877-777-4778.

For publications and information on Maryland State taxes, visit the comptroller's web site at <http://www.marylandtaxes.com>.

E-mail questions can be sent to taxhelp@comp.state.md.us. Taxpayers can also call 410-260-7980 in Central Maryland or 1-800-MD-Taxes elsewhere in the state.

(Courtesy, IRS website)



Baltimore District retiree Margaret Friedenwald enjoys a cruise on her son's jet ski last November in her adopted home state of Texas. (Photo courtesy of Angie Blizzard, Real Estate Division)

85-year-old retiree still kicking high

by Mary Beth Thompson

Margaret Friedenwald took lots of time with her decision to retire, she said. Friedenwald, a long-time budget analyst in the District's real estate division, loved Baltimore and the people she worked with, and she enjoyed her job.

"It wasn't easy, but the work was challenging," Friedenwald said, as she described her responsibilities for developing and executing the real estate budget and for keeping land records.

She moved to Maryland in the late 1950s with her second husband, a Baltimore

native she had met at Camp Polk, La., in 1952. Friedenwald worked at Fort Holabird before coming to the District's real estate division. The family lived in a 10-room apartment at the Marlborough.

"We had to get rid of furniture when we moved to a four-bedroom house," she said. Later, tired of the commute, they moved again to a home near Camden Yards.

Finally in 1981 at age 65, after a long time mulling it over, Friedenwald decided it was time to turn the real estate budget over to someone else. Her husband had passed away, and she had no

other family remaining in the Baltimore area. So she made up her mind to retire and move to Irving, Texas, where one of her sons lives.

"It was difficult at first," Friedenwald said via telephone from her home in Irving. "I missed everybody, and missed my carpool companionship. Then I moved here and felt even more separated."

But, Friedenwald had several hobbies and interests that kept her busy. She worked with silver, and she cut gemstones. She painted, sewed, made stained glass and worked in her yard. It

was a considerable adjustment, but gradually, she became acquainted with the area and the people and settled into a comfortable retirement life.

Later, cataracts forced her to give up many of her hobbies. However, Friedenwald still keeps up her yard, cleans her house, cooks, does needlework and sews clothing and curtains.

"I have a sewing machine that's a lot smarter than I am," said the feisty 83-year-old.

She also mentioned that she likes to fish and has been known to take a ride on one of the jet skis that belong to her son.

"I'm still kicking pretty high," she said, to sum up her active life.

"I'm waiting for the day that I've read about where retired people sit around with nothing to do," Friedenwald said. "There aren't enough hours of the day to do everything I'm supposed to do."

The decision to retire may have taken some time, and the adjustment to it may have taken more, but the result is days packed with activities and no leftover time at all.

Remember the leprechauns on St. Pat's Day

Sure and it's St. Patrick's Day. On such an auspicious date your thoughts might turn to all things Irish, and what else could be more Irish than the little people?

The Irish are famous for their little friends, the unpredictable and mischievous leprechauns. In case you aren't up on your Irish folklore, leprechauns are the little people who inhabit the barns, wine cellars and minds of the Irish. As far as mythical creatures go, leprechauns are exceptionally well-suited to modern life.

In the words of pop psychology you might say they are good role models with high self-esteem and fully realized potential.

For one thing, leprechauns are industrious and charitable. According to legend, if you leave some leather lying about, the leprechauns will work the leather.

Now this is great if you are an Irish cobbler. Leprechauns are forever helping Irish cobblers who must have a great number of shoes completed by a certain date and, because of circumstances beyond their control, cannot do so.

Just when the cobbler thinks he will lose his shop or have no food, leprechauns show up at night and work the leather into lovely shoes.

But leprechaun skills have also been employed for political purposes. It is said that when the Romans came sniffing around the Emerald Isle, it was the leprechauns who saved the lads and lassies

from becoming part of the empire.

Seems when the soldiers were asleep, leprechauns worked all the leather of their uniforms into tiny shoes, bow ties and overcoats, perfect for little people but too small for Roman soldiers. The soldiers woke up to find they had nothing much to wear and left the island wiser, though less well clad than before.

In addition, leprechauns are thrifty. They are apparently serious savers and always have a pot of gold hidden somewhere or other. You can find it too, if

you happen to see a leprechaun because while they are thrifty they are also a bit nervous about their cache of wealth. If you keep your eye on the leprechaun, never blinking or looking away, he might betray the location of his gold. But if once you take your eye off the wily guy, he will disappear.

And one more thing. If you have not won the lottery yet, you might take up pot-of-gold hunting. Just look for the nearest rainbow and track it to the end. You'll find that's where the little people store their gold.



Why not e-file?

Today's technology is making tax filing increasingly easier. Now there are three ways to file electronically. Here is a brief summary of each one.

Tax professional

There are two ways to use this service. Both involve the use of a tax professional. One can prepare his or her own forms, then have the tax professional transmit them electronically, or the tax professional can prepare the return and file it electronically. The tax professional will charge a fee based on what services are rendered. Look for a sign that says "Authorized IRS e-file provider."

Personal Computer

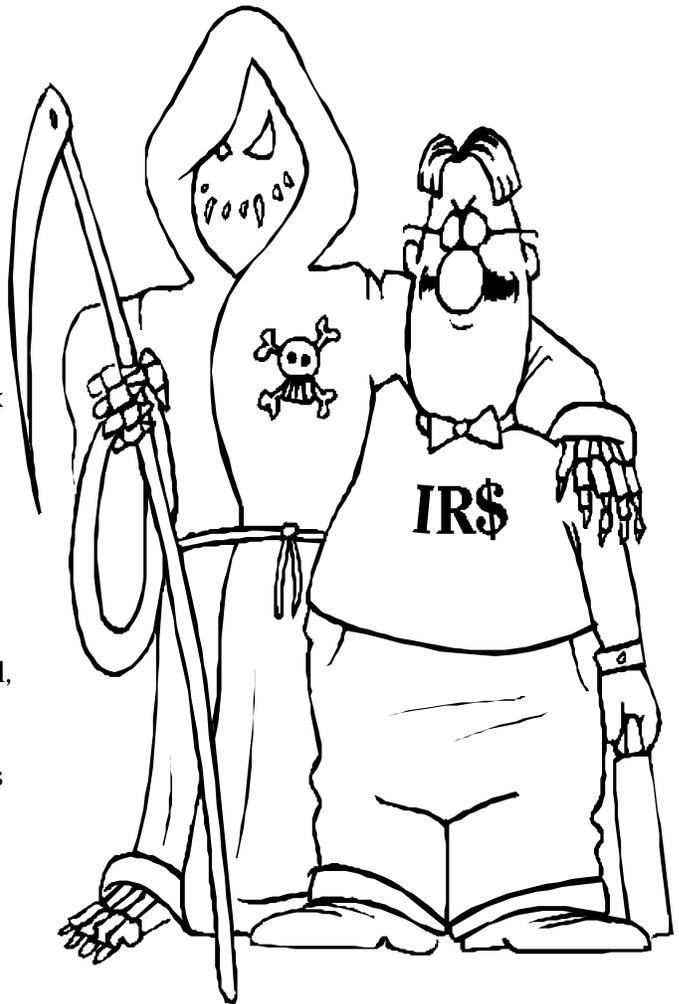
Use of a personal computer with a modem or Internet access and special software (some free or low-cost) make this choice a snap. This special IRS program involves partnerships with a number of software companies that have tax preparation packages.

To obtain a list of these companies, visit the IRS website. This option is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week!

Telephone

Those individuals with simple federal tax returns who receive a Telefile tax booklet from the IRS can use the phone to file their taxes.

Just fill out the Telefile tax record, call the toll-free number any time, and in 10 minutes the tax return is filed. With this option, there are no papers to mail and it's totally free!



Tax stress brings out personalities

Counselors at the University of Maryland have identified personality types they say emerge as the income tax deadline nears.

Millions of people, they say, begin to feel stress, anxiety, fatigue, anger and frustration.

The procrastinator: Avoids filing until the last minute but worries the whole time.

The denier: Doesn't admit forms really have to be filed,

which has a calming effect until last-minute stress takes over.

The compulsive: Spends weeks worrying and preparing in ways that create needless work and anxiety. Repeatedly reviews the completed form to check for errors.

The competitor: Is eager to beat the system but creates stress and tension in trying to do it.

The risk-taker: Takes excessive risks and has underlying fears of getting caught.

The catastrophizer: Worries constantly about making errors, being audited and paying too much.

Counselors suggest reducing stress by breaking the process into small manageable sections, making clear who is responsible for what part of the form and developing a system for record-keeping during the coming year.

(Courtesy, Pages)

Corps vision to change way of doing business

by Mary Beth Thompson

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commander Lt. Gen. Joe N. Ballard's strategic vision lays a challenge before the Corps to revolutionize effectiveness, seek growth opportunities and invest in people.

Baltimore District's Planning and Engineering divisions have taken up the challenge by forming a special team called the Ecopod.

The Ecopod's goal is to work through the planning and design phases of projects more quickly and economically, explained Amy Guise, Ecopod manager and ecologist.

Achieving the goal

To accomplish that goal, the team will use methods, processes and technologies not used before in Corps studies.

For example, the team may pursue design-build projects, which compress the normal four-phase process into three phases, Guise said.

They may encourage a sponsor to obtain real estate through a

conservation easement, or initiate designs and make decisions in the field. The Ecopod could also employ other creative ways to save time and money in planning, designing, funding and constructing projects.

"We will emphasize customer involvement and satisfaction," Guise said.

Varying the solutions

"The process will not work the same for each project," she said. "We now have three projects, and they are all going to be handled a bit differently, because they involve different environmental problems, different sponsors and various landowners."

Planning Chief Bob Lindner and Engineering Chief Stan Gembicki formed the team in the fall and empowered it to use new methods to speed the planning and design process. Since December, the core members of the team have been co-located on the 9th floor of the headquarters offices in the City Crescent Building.

The Ecopod will focus on environmental-restoration-for-

habitat projects, which are part of the civil works program, Guise said.

Working the projects

Its initial projects will test the innovative methods of doing business the group will be using. All are Continuing Authority Program Section 206 projects: Dents Run Acid Mine Drainage Reclamation, Elk County, Pa.; Nanticoke Creek Acid Mine Drainage Reclamation, Luzerne County, Pa.; and Seeley Creek Stream Restoration, Bradford County, Pa.

Ecopod core members are:

Dave Capka, civil engineer

John Fripp, hydraulic engineer

Amy Guise, stream restoration manager

Mike Martyn, civil engineer

Larry Mathena, civil engineer

Greg Nielson, acid mine drainage manager

Mark Perry, civil engineer

Other team members are:

Carla Wall, real estate

Bill Ryals, contracting

Representative to be named, construction

Kristin Budzinski, counsel

Cedric Bland, cost estimating

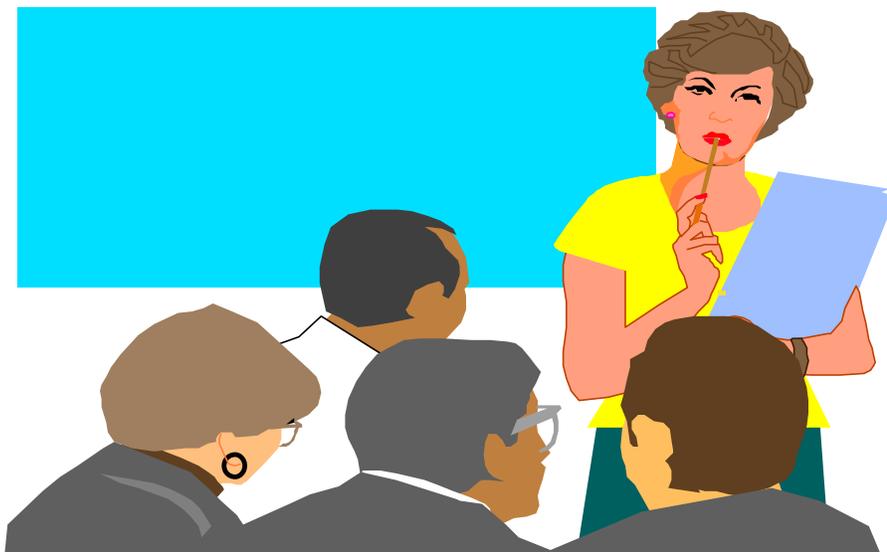
Stacey Brown, continuing authority program

Wes Coleman, continuing authority program

Mark Colosimo, environmental policy

Marianne Matheny, economist

Ken Baumgardt, archaeologist



Tips for safe spring, summer water activities

by Lazon Allen
Safety Office

With winter nearly gone, and the snow and ice with it, spring and summer are not far away.

While this may be true and the cold weather problems may have passed until next season, a new set of problems will soon take their place.

Water safety—boating, personal watercraft, swimming—is primarily associated with the warmer months. However, no matter how long you have been doing things near or in the water, safety must be your first concern.

Boating rules

Boating safety must be part of your plan to guarantee a good day on the water. Waterways are second only to highways as scenes of accidental deaths in the country.

The major contributing factor, which is the same for boats and automobiles, is speed.

It has been statistically proven that the number of collisions between vehicles (watercraft or wheeled) can be reduced as speed is reduced.

The U.S. Coast Guard's navigation rules are specifically designed to help prevent watercraft collisions. All mariners are required to know and responsibly apply these rules when operating watercraft. A few of the most important are listed below:

- It is the mariner's responsibility to take the necessary actions to avoid a collision.

- Every vessel shall maintain a proper lookout using sight and hearing at all times.

- Every vessel will proceed at a safe speed that allows the mariner to be able to take proper and effective action to avoid collision and to be able to stop within a distance appropriate to the circumstances and conditions.



- Vessels that are approaching head-on shall alter course to starboard (right) so each will pass port (left) to port.

Tips for boating safety

Listed below are a few *Do's* and *Don'ts* of Boating Safety:

- DO wear a life jacket. They float, you don't.
- DO know the water and environment you will be boating on.
- DO keep a good lookout while under way.
- DO shut the engines off when people are in the water near your boat.
- DO check the weather fore-

cast before getting under way.

- DON'T overload your boat.
- DON'T stand up in a small boat.
- DON'T ride in the bow, on seat backs or anyplace that is not designated for sitting.
- DON'T drink alcohol and boat.

Remember...**Be smart from the start! Wear your life jacket.**

For more information and to access an on-line boating certification course, go to: <http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org>

Swimming Tips

Drowning is the leading cause of fatalities involving water and boating sports.

Here are a few basic rules to follow before jumping into the water:

- Always swim with a buddy. Even the most experienced swimmer can be struck by a muscle cramp and need assistance.
 - Swim close to shore and avoid areas where boating is heavy.
 - Swim only in designated swimming areas.
 - Check the area for stumps and debris before swimming or diving.
 - Know the depth of the water.
 - Avoid alcohol when swimming or boating.
 - Swim near a lifeguard.
 - Supervise children closely, even when the lifeguards are present.
- Have a great summer and remember that safety should be your top priority.

Little Falls Dam fish passage construction complete

Migratory fish should now be able to travel 10 miles further upstream since construction of a fish passage in Little Falls Dam on the Potomac River is complete.

The new notch fishway comprises three intricate winding passages. Stakes built in the passages divert water flow and allow fish to pass over the dam.

The fishway is centered 75 feet from the Virginia side of the river, where migratory fish congregate below the dam.

The passage is designed for American shad. However, Corps officials believe other migratory species will use it as well, including river herring, striped bass, white perch and resident species, such as small-mouth

and large-mouth bass, bluegill and walleye.

The construction of the fish passage did not affect the integ-

riety or safety of the dam, which the Corps built in 1959 to supply water to the District of Columbia.



Little Falls fish passage construction began in September 1999 and was completed in January 2000. (Photo courtesy, Susanne Bledsoe)

District's resident office completes Detrick's Primary Care Clinic on time, on budget

Feb. 18 marked a ribbon cutting ceremony commemorating the opening of the Richard Barquist Army Health Care Facility at Fort Detrick, Md.

The building posthumously honors Col. Barquist, who served as commander of the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Detrick from 1977 to 1983.

The new building replaces aging, smaller facilities that could not handle the influx of personnel due to base realignment and closure.

The 25,000 square-foot facility houses a medical and dental clinic that will provide services for occupational health, physical therapy, radiology, primary

care, pharmacy needs, counseling services and general dentistry care.

The medical clinic includes 10 exam rooms, several treatment rooms, an x-ray room, a pediatric care area, Tri-care offices, telemedicine and video conferencing capabilities, and an audiology test booth. The dental clinic has seven treatment rooms, a dental x-ray room and a prosthetics lab.

Peggy McBride managed the project out of Baltimore District's Fort Detrick resident office. The building was completed on time with less than 5 percent growth, despite a change in construction contractors midway through the project.

Harvest for the Hungry

There's no time like the present to donate food and other non-perishable items to the Harvest for the Hungry campaign.

Last month a Valentine's Day raffle, sponsored by the EAA, netted 467 canned goods. Upcoming events include a Corps version of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" in early March and another raffle on March 22 during the awards ceremony.

Remember that the items most needed include canned meats and fish, soups, canned or dry milk, cereals, fruit juices, baking mixes, instant potatoes, rice and rice cakes, peanut butter, dried beans and personal hygiene items for both adults and children.

Black Engineer Conference

Lt. Gen. Joe N. Ballard received the Dean's Award and William A. Brown Sr. received the Professional Achievement in Government Award at the 2000 Black Engineer of the Year Conference Feb. 19. Ballard commands the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Brown is the chief of Program Management Division, Military Programs for the Corps.

The awards ceremony was the culmination of a three-day conference at the Baltimore

Convention Center where registrants were involved in professional development seminars, workshops and networking opportunities.

The conference was sponsored by the Engineering Deans of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Lockheed Martin Corporation and U.S. Black Engineer Information Technology Magazine.

Nearly 7,000 individuals attended the conference.

Work opportunity available to government employees

For the first time, most federal employees will be allowed to work on the 2000 Census outside their normal work hours, Census Bureau officials said recently.

The bureau needs workers at 520 local census offices across the country. Each office will need

about 1,000 workers. The largest number will be required when workers visit households that do not return their Census 2000 forms by mail. The jobs pay between \$8.25 and \$18.50 an hour.

Those interested should call 1-888-325-7733.



Baltimore Convention Center
Wednesday, March 22
10am.

The District's annual awards ceremony, postponed from January because of snow, will honor the following groups of employees:

- Years of service, 30-plus years
- F.E.B. nominees
- Honorary awards
- Deployed Team members

Three retired employees will be inducted into the Gallery of Distinguished Employees:

Larry Lower
John O'Hagen
Irene Tackett

Happenings

Bond-a-Month Winners

September & October

Walt Washington – OP
Al Goldman – RE
Mary Hollobaugh – RE
Maria DeLa Torre – PL

November & December

Bill Gross – EN
Scott Johnson – PPMD
Geraldine Anderson – PPMD
Theresa Webb – HRO

You can be a winner if you are a member. Call Pete Maggitti at 2-4281 for further information.

Federal Women's Program conference set for end of month

"An Extraordinary Century for Women, Now Imagine the Future" is the theme for the annual Federal Women's Program conference to be held March 30 at Martins' West, 6817 Dogwood Road, Baltimore.

Conference topics include health and wellness, information technology, keys to success, financial planning and investment, and diversity in the workplace.

The cost is \$45. Sign-up by March 10 is required. Register through the EEO office.

Employees outside Baltimore should call 410-962-4556 for registration forms.



Department of the Army
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Baltimore District
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Baltimore, MD 21203-1715

Official Business



Red Cross Month

Red Cross Month is observed March 1 – 31 to make the public aware of American Red Cross services in their community. There are approximately 1,300 Red Cross offices nationwide. For information, contact American Red Cross National Headquarters, Public Inquiry Center, 8111 Gatehouse Road, Falls Church, VA 22042; send an email to info@usa.redcross.org or visit their website at <http://www.redcross.org>.