



CONSTELLATION

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A recently completed concrete floodwall will protect residents living on the east side of the Susquehanna River in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. (Photo by Tex Jobe)

Wyoming Valley Levee Raising Project

District in home stretch

by Doug Garman
Public Affairs Office

Since March 1997, District staff and private contractors have been busy improving a flood control system built by the Corps in the 1940s and '50s to protect the City of Wilkes-Barre and the surrounding communities that comprise the Wyoming Valley region of northeastern Pennsylvania.

Because the region is historically known as prone to the sudden rising waters of the Susquehanna River, local and federal officials joined forces to design and build a project that would protect these communities against flood waters equal to that of the region's worst flooding—Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972. This was a storm with devastating consequences resulting in four existing levees being overtopped,

damages to more than 25,000 homes and apartments and 80,000 people left homeless.

To accomplish the \$175 million levee raising effort, which is cost-shared with Luzerne County Flood Control Authority, the Corps has been systematically improving the existing flood protection measures beginning in the community of Exeter and

(Continued on p. 6)



U.S. Army Corps
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Baltimore District

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Commander's Comment

Injustice threatens way of life

by Col. Charles J. Fiala, Jr.
Commander & District Engineer

In 1963, police arrested Martin Luther King, Jr. when he was leading a mass protest in favor of fair hiring practices and the desegregation of department stores in Alabama. In a letter written from his jail cell in Birmingham, King wrote:

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial 'outside agitator' idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere in this country."

These words ring as true today as they did 40 years ago. With our country waging a similar struggle against injustice—still reeling from the tragedies that terrorism unleashed more than a year ago—we must collectively fight those enemies who are trying to rip the unified fabric of this nation.

Like King's battle against racism, the war on terrorism will not be fought only on distant battlefields, but

also here, in our own backyards. Symbolically, we must apply the principles of racial equality to effectively counterbalance the intolerance and hatred preached by our enemies.

Our efforts have a direct impact on the success of our nation's ability to fight evil. "Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

During this unsettling time, some of our own District civilians might be called to offer their services. If so, the rest of us must maintain our commitment to our mission at home, and show support for those deployed.

A few years ago, Baltimore District sent two groups of civilians to Kosovo to build two basecamps. Yes, we had to make some sacrifices here at home to keep our projects on track, but we did it, and if the call comes again, we will find a way.

I'm afraid that in these uncertain times this will be the way we do business, and we must always stand ready to help, remain flexible and do whatever is necessary. I know I can count on each of you to do that.

The great civil rights leaders of the past were ahead of their time. The principles and wisdom espoused by

Martin Luther King, Jr., Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and George Washington Carver are the same principles that we as citizens, and members of the Corps, also must defend today.

As this war on terrorism continues, we must remember that what we fight for and what we stand for are what unifies the people of this country.

However, it would be wrong to simply say that the battles of those leaders of the past are the same battles we are fighting today. As we take this time to acknowledge America's past, we must remember the lessons that King taught us—lessons that were not just for blacks or whites. These were lessons for Americans.

King said, "Let us stand with great determination. And let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge to make America what it ought to be."

The lessons of these leaders who fought against racism—their strength and determination—are examples we can use in our struggle against terrorism. We can make America what it ought to be.

Essays.

Into the unknown:

The incredible journey of Lewis and Clark

It was an adventure so sweeping and singular that each time it is remembered, people again marvel at its scope: Going into the unknown.

About 300 years after the first white man set foot on the continent, the lands of the northwest were still an unmapped pristine wilderness.

The ancient peoples of the area and a few traders knew the trails but these had not been mapped. What existed north of the mouth of the Missouri was known only from stories—outlandish tales of woolly mammoths.

So in January 1803 President Thomas Jefferson, who since childhood had yearned to know about the

northwest, persuaded Congress to approve a \$2,500 budget for a remarkable expedition.

Jefferson appointed Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to organize the 33-soldier “Corps of Discovery,” on a 4,000-mile trek west to map and, he hoped, find a water route to the Pacific. Their route took them from St. Louis up the Missouri River northwest to Montana, then due west to Oregon.

During the 3-year odyssey, they were guided by a young Shoshone mother, Sacajawea, whose son was born along the trail. In one of history’s most fantastic coincidences, Sacajawea,



Outbound route above; inbound route below

who was stolen from her home by another Indian tribe, met her own brother in the wilderness.

Unlike Marco Polo and other ancient explorers, Lewis and Clark’s mission was largely scientific.

They drew maps, described animals, and

kept journals you can still read today. They sent samples east out of the wilderness to Virginia where trees grow still from their cuttings.

And, for better or worse, they made that vast land known and part of the territory and heritage of the United States of America.

Lewis and Clark facts

- Their trek went through the territory of what is now 11 states: Illinois (start), Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

- 28 states claim a connection to the expedition in some way.

- The main journey there and back again covered about 8,000 miles, from May 14, 1804, to September 23, 1806.

- Seaman, a smart New-

foundland dog, purchased by Lewis for \$20 before the trip started, is mentioned frequently in the diaries, but his ultimate fate is unknown.

- The youngest member of the expedition was Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, nicknamed “Pomp,” who was born to a 14-year-old Shoshone mother, Sacajawea, at the beginning of the expedition.

- The expedition identified an animal they had never seen.

- Trees at the University of Virginia are grown from cuttings made by Lewis and Clark and sent to Thomas Jefferson.

- The expedition met 50 different peoples who spoke a variety of languages. Sacajawea herself spoke at least two and maybe more native American languages.

- At one point, Lewis and Clark employed a five-language translation chain to communicate with a chief.

Raystown hosts disabled hunters' deer harvest

by Dwight Beall
Raystown Lake and
Cori Brown
Operations Division

Despite the rain and the cold, smiles dominated the scene at Raystown's Seven Point Recreation Area as successful hunters showed off their harvest on the last day of deer season.

Most would say, "what's the big deal." For those hunters confined to wheelchairs, it was a rare and special moment that made all the difference in the world.

A partnership between Terrace Mountain Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation and the Corps of Engineers at Raystown Lake made the event possible.

The Federation's "Wheelin' Sportsman" initiative is de-

signed to provide hunting opportunities to disabled hunters.

Chris Bowser, a member of the Federation, was instrumental in getting the program off the ground. He worked on a deer management program for Raystown as a biological aid under the Students with Disabilities Program with the Corps in the summer of 2002.

At the end of the summer, he found that the density of deer on the Raystown project was nearly twice what it should be. Additionally, many of the deer tended to congregate in the large recreation areas that were historically off limits to hunting.

Bowser, along with Jeff Krause, the Corps' biologist at Raystown, put together a plan to open up selected "shooting zones" within the Seven Points area. They would position disabled hunters in areas that were

both accessible and likely to provide them with a good opportunity to harvest a deer.

Since the hunt was part of a management objective to bring the deer population under control, only antlerless deer would be harvested. Hunters had to qualify under Pennsylvania Game Commission disabled hunter guidelines and possess an antlerless tag.

About 30 volunteers assisted the four hunters who signed up. Some accompanied the disabled hunters to their blinds (screens where the hunters would hide) and remained with them throughout the hunt. Others put on drives, which involved a group walking through the woods and driving the deer out. Some retrieved downed deer, and helped field-dress the animals. More volunteers put together a lunch for the hunters and the volunteer force.

Everyone said the event was a huge success, and all filled their tags for the season and said they appreciated the opportunity to share the camaraderie of a hunt with their fellow sportsmen.

Richard Joyce, a participating Wildlife Conservation Officer with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, noted how energized he felt by such a positive event. Norrice King, park ranger at Raystown, summed up the day's events saying, "I have never seen a group of participants unanimously express such delight in the outcome of a program."

Plans are under way for another hunt next year.



A hunter waits for a deer to appear at Seven Points Recreation area.

District employees celebrate MLK anniversary

On Jan. 14, District employees gathered to celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., one day before what would have been his 74th birthday. The occasion was a reflection on his life and his cause for civil equality.

After a welcome by Jim Turkel, Real Estate chief, Helene Braver, assistant to Sen. Barbara Mikulski, read a letter from the senator and delivered the news that plans are under way for the construction of a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial on the National Mall. It will be the first site on the Mall commemorating an individual African-American. Braver also announced that Mikulski is co-sponsoring the creation of the

National Museum of African American History and Culture within the Smithsonian Institution.

The CCB Voices of Harmony followed with a medley of freedom songs. Their music was a “tough act to follow,” according to guest speaker Carroll R. Armstrong, president and CEO of the Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association. A musician himself, he sat down behind the keyboard and played a few jazz tunes from his past.

Armstrong grew up in Baltimore as a child of a single mother who stressed, “a well rounded education.” This mantra would prove to be very prophetic in years to come.

He attended St. Edwards

Catholic School and Forest Park High School before his affinity for music led him to pursue his musical gifts at the Peabody Conservatory. After high school, Armstrong enrolled at Juilliard in the heart of New York City, which, he said, was like living a dream—playing his trumpet with the very people whom he admired as a boy.

Armstrong said he never let encounters with racism derail him from his pursuit of success. His well

rounded education took him from Baltimore to Boston to New Orleans, then to San Diego and back to Baltimore.

Because of his drive, determination and will, many credit him for helping improve the tourism industry and overall economy of the various cities where he worked.

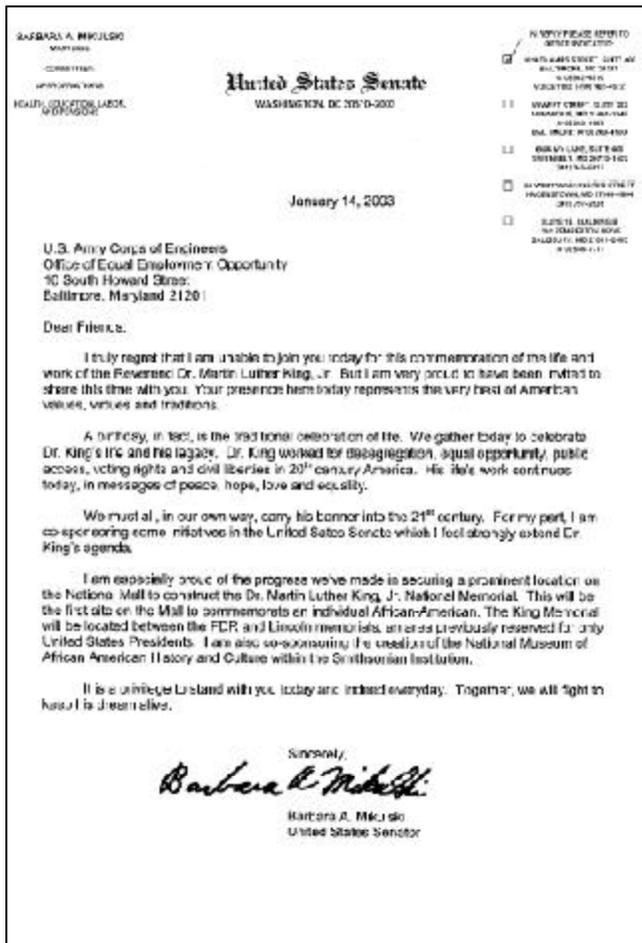
Armstrong mentioned only a few racial experiences he had encountered while growing up—like being asked to leave a southern restaurant, and a childhood experience with a friend when he was a young boy.

What he emphasized most was the idea of finding your inner “magic, and cultivating it.” He said that in life, he had to focus on what can be done rather than what can’t be done.

His message stressed overcoming challenges, rather than falling victim to them, regardless of how unfair those obstacles may appear. Even though there were many times he said he felt like a “fly in a glass of milk,” he never let it bother him.

He has lived by the lesson that you should, “treat your fellow human being the way you would like to be treated.” Armstrong’s inspiration was Martin Luther King, Jr.’s ability to overcome the challenges of racism.

On April 3, 1968, the day before his assassination, Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his last speech. Among the many inspiring messages, he said, “We have an opportunity to make America a better nation.” It is a message that Armstrong has heard, and he is proof that America continues to be a land of hope.





A concrete cellular wall under construction in 2002 at one of the 21 pump stations in the Wyoming Valley Levee System.



The top of the new levee is paved for recreational purposes.

Wyoming Valley project nears end *(continued from cover)*

gradually moving south along the Susquehanna and through the communities of Swoyerville, Forty Fort, Kingston, Edwardsville, Wilkes-Barre, Hanover Township and Plymouth.

Along the way, the existing levees and floodwalls have been raised 3 to 5 feet. New floodwalls and levees have been built in some areas. Modifications to closure drainage structures have also been completed, and the system's 21 stormwater and sanitary pump stations will be

outfitted with new mechanical and electrical systems.

Corps officials point out that fiscal year 2002 was a banner year for the project with approximately \$28 million in construction placement being completed.

"I would say we are 92 percent complete with the currently awarded construction contracts for the project," said Brad Funt, the Corps' acting resident engineer on the project. "Our toughest challenge by far has been maintaining a minimum pump-

ing capacity at each station in the event of a flood while at the same time rehabbing each of the 36 pumps that make up the system.

"By partnering with the contractor and design firm, we've been able to reduce the overall time needed to rehab the pumps," Funt added.

Although the project is not yet totally complete, Corps officials are quick to point out that the project can protect the Wyoming Valley area against a recurrence of a Tropical Storm Agnes should one happen today.

"This is a monumental milestone in the construction life of this project that has brought a sigh of relief from many local officials and residents who remember Tropical Storm Agnes," said Funt.

But there is more to this project than levees, floodwalls and pumps. The project's delivery team, comprised of members from across Baltimore District and the local sponsor, is making way for construction to begin on small flood control mitigation projects in the 53 downstream mitigation communities that span five counties.

These projects will work to minimize adverse impacts caused by the levee raising. Among these are non-structural initiatives, such as elevating structures out of harm's way, flood-proofing of structures and the construction of small-scale public works projects, such as small levees and drainage projects.

"The \$16 million allocated to this effort will go a long way toward helping the many residents and businesses in this

region,” said Jim Brozena with the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority.

“Because it is not feasible to provide all the communities flood projection, this mitigation plan offers a unique opportunity to dramatically reduce flood damages in these communities.”

“As our team continues moving forward on completing the levee raising and mitigation projects, there is an amazing opportunity on the horizon that could have a unique twist for the project,” said Patricia Coury, of Baltimore District’s

Planning Division.

According to Coury, at the request of the local sponsor and with support from the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, the Corps has been asked to conduct a feasibility study to determine if riverfront development items can be added to the project.

The study will assess the engineering, economic and environmental feasibility of the Corps’ participation in the construction of features, which would reconnect downtown Wilkes-Barre with the riverfront and its river heritage while

providing a major recreation destination for the region.

As a part of the study, the Corps will complete a supplemental environmental impact statement, coordinate public involvement and conduct an in-depth analysis of the possible construction features. Among the features being studied are the construction of two portals to improve access to the riverfront, a waterfront landing that would serve as a plaza for special events, a boat dock and fishing pier, and a 750-seat amphitheater and stage built downstream of Wilkes-Barre’s Market Street bridge. If all of these features are deemed feasible, their cost could reach the \$14 million range.

“The Corps has participated in similar riverfront development efforts as part of flood control projects in Lock Haven, Pa.; St. Paul, Minn.; Des Moines, Iowa; and Indianapolis, Ind.,” said Coury.

“If these projects should go forward, their construction would not begin until fiscal year 2006 and would take several years to complete,” added Coury.



In addition to pathways, seating areas and kiosks have been installed on top of the new levee in several places.



Riprap is placed on the levee in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.



An artist's rendering of a possible new waterfront landing in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Identity Theft

A growing national problem

by Christopher Augsburger
Public Affairs Office

Today's version of pickpocketing has taken on a whole new identity. Where once thieves lived by the slogan "pick a pocket or two," they now subscribe to the new and improved version, "just a double-click or two."

Your financial health can be instantly transformed from platinum-card wealth—with credit so solid that you could mortgage Annapolis—to being six figures in debt. Even Blockbuster[®] would turn you down for a rental card.

Take a glance at some of the damage identity thieves have inflicted on their victims in just the past few years.

◆ **Sept. 4, 2001: Florida**—A man was indicted in Miami on identity theft-related charges for allegedly filing false federal tax returns in the names of 614 Florida prisoners, seeking more than \$3 million in fraudulent refunds

◆ **May 23, 2002: Washington**—A man pleaded guilty in Seattle to federal identity-theft and fraud charges after using the names and Social Security numbers of other people to open several credit card accounts and making nearly \$200,000 in fraudulent charges across the United States and in Italy.

◆ **Nov. 26, 2002: New York**—



FBI agents arrested three New Yorkers over what police say agents believe is the biggest fraud in U.S. history. It's believed that they stole the personal details of more than 30,000 Americans, using software which banks use to check credit histories.

◆ **Dec. 14, 2002: Arizona**—Over 500,000 military personnel records were stolen from the offices of TriWest, a leading military healthcare provider.

◆ **Jan. 8, 2003: New York**—An 18 year-old was arraigned on charges of stealing the identities of America Online customers.

These are just a few examples among scores of recent identity thefts around the country. Nationally, an estimated 700,000 consumers became victims of identity theft during 2001.

In the United States alone, the majority of identity theft comes from credit card fraud. As online shopping has increased, so, too, has the ability to scam, fraud, or flat out steal personal information.

Sue Jones, a realty specialist in Baltimore District, knows first-hand of the heartache and inconvenience of a lost identity.

Neither she nor her husband, Bruce, knew that they had been burglarized until they got a letter from a local department store a week before Christmas informing them they had been turned down for a credit card.

A bill on Christmas Eve for a \$5,400 watch confirmed that they were victims of identity theft. After they went through reams of paperwork, called credit agencies and filed police reports, the FBI became involved. The couple learned they were one of 35 victims who lost their identity at the same time. All 35 victims are linked to using Lendingtree.com, an online banking service that requires a user to share personal information. The FBI is pursuing a suspect.

According to the Social Security Administration's website (<http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10064.html>),

stealing valuable information is easier than you think. The SSA lists the techniques that identity thieves use to obtain personal information:

- ◆ stealing wallets and purses, your mail (bank and credit card statements, pre-approved credit offers, telephone calling cards and tax information);
- ◆ stealing personal information you provide to an unsecured site on the Internet, from business or personnel records at work and personal information in your home;
- ◆ rummaging through your trash at home and at work for personal data;
- ◆ posing as someone who legitimately and legally needs information about you, such as employers or landlords; or
- ◆ buying personal information from “inside” sources.

The news gets worse if you live in Maryland or Washington, D.C.

In a study by the Federal Trade Commission, Maryland ranks fourth in victims per 100,000 (37.3), behind the District of Columbia (76.7), California (44.6), and Nevada (40.5). Maryland also ranks above the national average in credit card fraud.

But identity theft is more than just credit cards. Stealing an identity allows the thief to literally become you, potentially able to smuggle goods or obtain official ID cards under your name.

Baltimore District, Corps headquarters and the Department of Defense have taken numerous steps to ensure the security of federal employees.

Firewalls and additional layers of security have been established to help decrease the risk of stealing information from the

various government databases around the country.

But, while technological protection plays a pivotal roll in keeping vital information secure, educating an employee on how to avoid security breaches proves equally important.

According to Lynn Airey, District information assurance manager, the idea is to “make the employee aware” of certain risks accomplished through the Information Assurance program, which includes a series of videos, and at times, a one-on-one discussion.

Experts admit that no amount of security can keep up with the ever-advancing growth of technology. As Airey said, “nothing is secure.” There will always be new ways to break down certain measures of security.

For example, a common technique used in defeating passwords is called a password sniffer. This program allows an attacker to steal your password, and thus, the use of your computer account. These programs monitor activity on a network in order to record the names and passwords of users as they log onto other systems.

Last November, a sniffer program forced the University of Oslo to change the passwords of 52,000 users and reinstall software on dozens of computers after crackers managed to infiltrate the network and extract the institution’s central password file. The unknown computer vandals had access to all of the usernames and passwords at the university for several weeks without anyone knowing. The crackers also used university servers to store huge amounts of pirated software, programs and films.

Aside from increased security technology, there is another kind

of hope in the war against these new-age thieves. The greatest way to prevent identity theft is to eliminate the risk, be smart and use caution.

Among a wide variety of options that experts say can reduce your risk are:

- ◆ When you pay bills, do not leave the envelopes containing your checks at your mailbox for the postal carrier to pick up. If stolen, your checks can be altered and then cashed by the imposter. It is best to mail bills and other sensitive items at the post office rather than neighborhood drop boxes.

- ◆ Never give out your credit card number or other personal information over the phone unless you have a trusted business relationship with the company and **you** have initiated the call. Identity thieves have been known to call their victims.

- ◆ Protect your Social Security number. Release it only when absolutely necessary (like on tax forms, employment records, most banking establishments, stock and property transactions). The SSN is the key to your credit and banking accounts and is the prime target of criminals.

- ◆ Any entity that handles personal information should train all its employees, from top to bottom, on responsible information-handling practices.

Willie Sutton, a well-known bank robber in the last century, once said, “It is a rather pleasant experience to be alone in a bank at night.” The 21st century thief can also be pleasantly alone in cyberspace—while posing as you.

Courtesy: <http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft>. This is the official government website for identity.

Corps begins two PA environmental studies

At a news conference Jan. 14 in York, Pa., Col. Charles J. Fiala, Jr., Baltimore District engineer, U.S. Rep. Todd Platts, Mayor John Brenner of York, and Chris Reilly, chairman of the York County commissioners, announced the approval of two Continuing Authority Program Preliminary Restoration Plans for the Codorus Creek watershed.

The Codorus Creek watershed spans 279 square miles and is a sub-basin within the lower Susquehanna River basin.

As a part of the two restoration plans, Baltimore District will conduct two feasibility studies to identify water resource problems within the watershed and recommend potential solutions to solve them.

One feasibility study, the Section 1135 York Restoration Project, will investigate ways to restore fish and wildlife habitat and improve the water quality and aesthetics of a 4.9-mile stretch of Codorus Creek as it passes through the local flood protection channel in the City of York. The Corps built the channel in 1947.

One proposal under consideration is to modify the channel and reduce sources of pollution and sedimentation in the upper watershed that could result in environmental benefits throughout the entire sub-basin. Any channel modifications would not impact the project's overall level of flood protection. The City of York will share the

\$700,000 cost of this study. Officials estimate the study will be completed in June 2004.

Concurrent to this effort, a second feasibility study, the Section 202 Codorus Creek Watershed Study, will be undertaken and will focus on ways to improve the aquatic ecosystem in those areas of Codorus Creek that are experiencing the greatest degradation due to development within the watershed.

Among the measures being reviewed are creating wetlands, improving riparian buffers, removing fish blockages and improving stream habitat. This \$500,000 study will be cost-shared with York County. This study will take about two years to complete.

Silent auction brings many dollars to the food program

Sports items, video games, popular novels—these were all available for sale at a silent auction Jan. 15, the latest event in a series of money-raising events the District has planned for the Harvest for the Hungry campaign.

Employees brought anything and everything they could find to auction, including old salt and pepper shakers, picture frames and a vinyl Disco record.

But employees were not the only ones with items for bid. Contributions from the Baltimore Ravens, Baltimore Orioles and the

Washington Wizards were also available to the highest bidder. For the right price, you could have snagged an autographed baseball from the Oriole's Melvin Mora, gone to watch Michael Jordan and the Wizards take on the Detroit Pistons,

owned a Travis Taylor autographed Ravens' hat, or even received free tickets to the Comedy Store.

Some of the items employees brought were the entire "Lord of The Rings" trilogy, two John Madden Football '98 games for your PC, a cell phone and a box of chocolates.

According to Mark Harris, the coordinator of the Harvest for the Hungry Campaign, District employees helped raise nearly \$300 in the silent auction. He will purchase food for the program with the money collected at the auction.



Some of the items available for bid at the District's Silent Auction for the Harvest for the Hungry program.

Punxsatawney Phil predicts weather, stock market

Don't blame Phil. He wasn't responsible for all this Feb. 2 hoopla.

It all began long ago with a legend that the weather on Feb. 2, Candlemas Day, indicated an early or late spring.

Germans settling in Pennsylvania brought the legend with them, and eventually transferred the predictive power to the groundhog.

They said that if he saw his shadow, he would take it as



a bad omen and return to his burrow.

Then about 125 years ago, a local journalist declared that a Punxsatawney groundhog had all dibs on predicting. He was named Phil, and his fans formed clubs all over the world.

In February 2001, *Fortune* magazine added to the legend. The magazine wryly noted that if Phil doesn't see his shadow, the Dow tends to rise. The Dow has gone up on the no-shadow news eight out of nine times since 1970.

Countdown to tax time

Avoid some tax-time stress. Use this advice from the editors of *Money* and their eight-week timetable ending April 15.

- **Feb. 19:** Find last year's tax return and this year's W-2s and 1099s. Buy new tax software if you make your return on a computer, or make an appointment with your accountant.

- **Feb. 26:** Get a Social Security number for a child born in 2001. You need it to claim dependent or childcare credit. Call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 or go to <http://www.ssa.gov>.

- **March 5:** Gather information on your investments, including the cost and selling price. Take credit in the cost basis for dividends reinvested automatically.

- **March 12:** Know the deductions you are entitled to, such as student loan interest, Lifetime Learning and Hope education credits, adoption credits, child-

care and day camp credits.

- **March 19:** Make contributions to IRAs, Keoghs, and SEPs. Now you are ready to see your accountant.

- **March 26:** Consider any changes you want to make in your IRA and Roth retirement plans

- **April 1:** Make the return or pick it up from your accountant.

- **April 8:** Mail your return. If you file electronically, there's less chance for error. And if you get a refund, it could arrive within two weeks with electronic filing.



Speakers' Bureau

The District's Speakers' Bureau sent two judges—Gloria Markovci and Michele Bistany—to MacArthur Middle School, Fort Meade, Md., to judge Meade's annual Science and Engineering Fair Jan. 14.

The judges evaluated five areas of discipline, ranging from social sciences, chemistry, earth/space and environmental sciences, to health and medicine, physics and engineering.

"I was impressed by the level of understanding of the scientific process," said Bistany, who judged the 8th grade environmental and life sciences category. "By and large, the students understand identifying a problem, developing a hypothesis, developing a testing plan, conducting and completing the test, and writing up the conclusions."

The students created a wide array of projects, including a tornado that uses a wind tunnel, as well as evaluating the effects of worms on plant growth and studying the negative effects of drought conditions on groundwater.

Historic opening

After Ellis Island opened in January 1892, 20 million immigrants passed through its doors. It is currently a museum and can only be reached by boat.



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Official Business



Feb. 17, 2003