



INSIDE:

Commander's column pg. 2

Flower's holiday message pg. 2

USACE 2012: Change is imperative pg. 3

Holiday Wishes to our deployed Corps' family pg. 3

A year in review pg. 4

District scores high on safety pg. 4

DE signs new fishing policy pg. 6

LDP Corner: Reading on leading; Quick and Fun pg. 6

A life priority pg. 6

Safety first during the holiday season pg. 7

Construction complete at the Brio site pg. 7

Wallisville turns "classroom" with help from WBEC pg. 7

Holiday stress relief tips pg. 8

Castle Comments pg. 8

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 25
HOLIDAY

January 1
HOLIDAY

January 14
PRB

January 15
Freeport Harbor
Public Meeting

January 19
HOLIDAY



A photo project

Lights, camera...GOTCHA!! Ever find yourself reading "The Sand Castle" in a very strange place??

Well, if you answered yes to that question, please have someone, possibly a fellow employee, snap your photo and turn it in to the public affairs office. We, then in turn, will publish the funniest in the newsletter.

Thanks,
Michele Castelline-Thomas
Editor, *The Sand Castle*

District gives update on Bayport permit

Pending water quality certification and Coastal Zone Consistency by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District's decision will be to issue Department of Army Permit 21520 for the construction of the Bayport Ship Channel Container/Cruise Terminal.

The Record of Decision was sent to TCEQ, Dec. 5 and a certification decision is expected within 10 working days. The document remains in draft format until signed and finalized by the district engineer.

"We have carefully conducted a fair and impartial process in reaching our decision, following NEPA guidelines and Corps regulations. It is an extremely complicated issue that has taken five years to conclude. We have worked to find answers to lessen the impacts of the proposed project," said Col. Leonard Waterworth, District Engineer and Commander. "Any large public infrastructure project will affect some local residents, however, the Corps is charged with making difficult decisions based upon the overall public interest."

Construction of the project will impact approximately 20 acres of jurisdictional wetlands. An additional 126 acres of wetlands exist on this property but fall outside the jurisdiction of the Corps.

One hundred and twenty-seven acres of open bay will be dredged for berthing areas, an access area from the ship channel to the berths, and a new turning basin.

In addition, up to 200 acres of open water in Galveston Bay would be converted into an intertidal marsh as a beneficial **Bayport continued on page 8.**



A Corps Christmas

It's beginning to look alot like Christmas - at least at the Jadwin Building. Kim McLaughlin, Regulatory, brought this little tree in for the Corps' to enjoy during the holiday season. Her daughter Rowan, who is four and a half decorated it. Photo taken by Terri Stinnett-Herczeg, Regulatory.

Upper Bay barge lanes approved for Houston-Galveston navigation

Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Southwestern Division Commander, approved the post authorization change report (PACR) for the addition of the upper bay barge lanes on the Houston-Galveston navigation channels (HGNC). The PACR gives the Corps the authority to proceed with the barge lanes. "The barge lanes are an environmentally sound component of the overall navigation project," Crear said.

"Looks like we can really get started now," said Dalton Krueger, project manager.

The PACR assesses the authorized plan to determine the environmental effects of constructing barge lanes adjacent to the proposed channel in the upper bay reach of the project.

The barge lanes traverse upper Galveston Bay immediately adjacent to the HSC between Redfish Island and Morgan's Point. Each barge lane will be 15 miles long and 125 feet wide.

The barge lanes along the HGNC will provide new channels to separate ship traffic from barge traffic, thus reducing the possibility of collisions from ship-to-barge and barge-to-barge. Along with reducing the delays to deep-draft vessels associated with shallow-draft barges sharing the use of the deep-draft channel.

Construction of the barge lanes will cost approximately \$14,874,633. The total project cost for the authorized plan is \$705,230,000.

Key flood control projects to receive federal funding

Harris County Judge Robert Eckels announced that Congress has approved funding for several critical county flood control projects.

"This was truly a team effort by all of our federal representatives," said Judge Eckels.

"Obviously the timing could not be better after the flooding we saw November 17. Our U.S. Senators and Congressional delegation worked very hard to give us these high levels of funding. I want to thank them for their dedication to the flood control challenges facing our community."

The funding comes from the recently approved Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2004, which now awaits the President's signature.

Key projects that received funding in Harris County include:

- \$12 million for Sims Bayou
- \$6 million for Brays Bayou
- \$1.2 million for Clear Creek
- \$774,000 for Greens Bayou
- \$750,000 for the Hunting Bayou Watershed
- \$575,000 for White Oak Bayou
- \$100,000 Buffalo Bayou

Flood funding continued on page 3 . . .

Commander's Column



Col. Leonard Waterworth



The Sand Castle

www.swg.usace.army.mil

*A newsletter for and by
the employees of the Galveston
District*

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Tis the Season,

Team Galveston, you never fail to amaze me with your professionalism and your compassion for others. As I sit here, looking out the window, I think back over the past year with amazement at your accomplishments.

There are too many to list them all, but here are just a few: The completion and dedication of the J.J. Mayes Wildlife Trace at Wallisville, a recreational facility which will provide and protect a pristine wild life habitat for future generations of creatures and people: Completion and dedication of the Neches River Saltwater Barrier which will protect the water supply for Texas' ever growing population: Completing the Chiefs Report for the Corpus Christi Ship Channel deepening project in an ALMOST impossible time line: Starting construction of Packery Channel: Completing two massive Environmental Impact Statements for container facilities: Coordinating and completing a study plan for the third largest archaeological site in North America: Reacting to hurricanes and tropical storms and the emergency dredging situations they caused.

The list could go on to fill this entire Sand Castle. Many of these issues, if they were not properly handled by you, could have developed into national issues — but did not.

As I think back, I take pride in your accomplishments. What makes this even more spectacular is that you executed all this and more under a Continuing Resolution Authority (CRA). For almost three months, funding for the District was delayed. Then if that was not enough for me to ask of you, I turned around and asked you to execute our entire program in ten months as we prepared to bring on a new automation system of our business process, Program Management Business Process (PMBP). AND YOU DID IT! Great Job.

Your accomplishments are many, but as you know we don't achieve success by ourselves. We are a small district with big civil works contracts. Some would say we look like a model Corps district in the future. Our team extends to our great contractors. We have asked much of our contractors this year and each and every one has stepped up and responded to the challenge. Whether it was to shift assets to meet emergency dredging or working under a continuing contract with delayed CRA funding, our contractors stood by our side, giving great value for the tax-payer dollar as we meet the needs of local and national infrastructure along the Texas coastline.

My thoughts turn to the compassion you show. Blood drives, food drives, Salvation Army Angel Tree, leave donation — we have exceeded our CFC goal and reached 111% of what we reached last year. My philosophy is that the only way for you to become truly successful is by first making those around you successful. I believe we have a successful District because of your professionalism in meeting the infrastructure needs along the Texas coast.

As the holidays quickly approach, please do not forget all those who have deployed in support of the war on terrorism. We are in the midst of setting the conditions of what our world will look like for our children and grandchildren. We are on the verge of giving an entire country a chance of freedom and self-rule.

So as you and your family enjoy the holidays, please keep in mind those who have volunteered to go to Middle East to establish a new beginning for oppressed people. Their deployment may be the ultimate display of compassion.

Enjoy the holidays, enjoy your family and enjoy the blessing we have as Americans.

Chief of Engineers' Holiday Message

The holidays are a time for remembering others, and for giving to others.

This year, I want us to remember that there are many in our Corps of Engineers family who are serving in harm's way in Afghanistan and Iraq. They are giving an expensive gift...willingly sacrificing their holiday with their families so that others who lived for decades under tyrannical rule might have a future of safety and freedom. I'm enormously proud of them.

Please take a few moments during these holidays to remember those in the Corps family who are serving overseas. If you are acquainted with some of them, please mail them a card or send them an e-mail letting them know that you're thinking about them, and that their service is appreciated.

I have also served overseas during the holidays under difficult conditions, and you can trust me on this...in the situations that our people face in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere, simple gifts like those will be treasured.

As in years past, the Corps has taken part in events that made headlines, and made a difference.

When the space shuttle *Columbia* burned up during re-entry, Corps people took part in the search in Texas and other states to find debris that helped piece together what happened to the spacecraft.

During Supertyphoon Pongsona on Guam, Hurricane Isabel on the East Coast, and the wildfires in California, Corps emergency teams were on the scene to fight the disaster, and to clean up afterwards.

Whether it is helping clear landmines in Afghanistan, or advising the Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources in re-routing water to preserve the Marsh Arabs' way of life, this year Corps' people have continued making a difference in America, and in the world.

The holidays are also a time to look to the future, and the Corps of Engineers' future is bright. The plans for USACE 2012 have been released and are now being implemented. People throughout the Corps are learning the basics of the Project Management Business Process, cornerstone of the Corps' new way of doing business. And Corps people are learning the concepts of competitive sourcing, which will be our part in the President's Management Agenda.

As always, I encourage all of you to take time off during this holiday season. My family and I wish you all a safe and joyous holiday season, and a happy, prosperous New Year.

Essayons!

Lt. Gen. Bob Flowers



Lt. Gen. Flowers

USACE 2012: Change is imperative

Lt. Gen. Flower's message

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has reached another turning point in its 228-year history. Since it was first established, the Corps has responded to the nation's call in peace and war, adapting whenever necessary to meet the nation's changing needs. Now, the early years of a new century, it is time for the Corps to change again. USACE 2012 is the path we will take to the future. Why change? Why now? Simply put, we have heard a clear and convincing case for change. We have heard many messages, with these key themes:

- Change or be changed.
- We are your partners; treat us that way!
- Project delivery – on time and on budget – will show tangible evidence that the Corps is progressing.
- The Corps' internal processes take too long.

No matter how stretched we are, we must always remain at a high state of readiness in order to respond to any contingency. USACE 2012 is the vehicle we will use to enhance our readiness and to improve our responsiveness to the American people.

COMMANDER'S INTENT:

My intent is for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to improve its service to the Nation and the Armed Forces by focusing on each district's ability to better serve its customers. We will become a Team of Teams. Washington headquarters will maintain a strategic focus, and the Regional Business Center will leverage talent across the region and integrate teams to enable districts to provide effective and efficient service.

Essays!

LTG Robert B. Flowers
Chief of Engineers

In my view...



I was honored to have been the Emerging Leader selected to represent SWG at this Project Delivery Team Conference in San Diego. The conference theme was "USACE 2012, Aligning USACE for success in the 21st Century."

The Chief's Message is that he wants all of our support for the changes that are coming, and to remind us that the difference between an Ordeal and an Adventure is your Attitude.

My take away message was that great things are coming that will allow us all to tap into the expertise that resides in the Corps. The way that this will materialize is through the Communities of Practice (CoP) and Knowledge Management (KM). The CoPs will be organized by areas of specialty that can share information related to their discipline. KM will be the way we identify, capture, evaluate, retrieve, and share information assets (database, documents, policies, procedures, expertise, and experience). We hope to develop a user-friendly, web-based search engine (like Google or Ask Jeeves) where you could ask a question and get background information to help you with your job.

We heard from Flour Inc., a world-renowned engineering firm, who is already using KM to share experience throughout their company. When they have a problem they solicit technical input from their offices and have a response within 2 weeks. We all know that knowledge is power, so if we share the knowledge the whole organization will be stronger. The Chief admits that 2012 is "heavy on vision, light on details", but that it's not the plan as much as the planning.

John Machol
Environmental Scientist

A holiday greeting

With a number of Corps' employees overseas during the Christmas season, we ask you to think of them. . .

Please take a few moments during these holidays to remember those in the Corps family who are serving overseas - the Galveston District currently has six employees serving.

If you are acquainted with them, please mail them a card and let them know that you're thinking about them, and that their service is appreciated.

For **Shakar Misir**, please write:

USACE, Employee's Name
APO, AE 09889

For **Maj. Erik Nelson** and **Terry Bautista**, please write:

CPA-OIL,
USACE, TF-RIO,
Employee's name
APO, AE 09335

For **Joshua Adekanbi**, **Ralph Bledsoe**, and **Cliff Dominey**, please write:

Employee's full name
USACE, TEAM RIO, NPO
APO, AE 09347

For **Steve Ireland**, please write:

FULL NAME
AMC – LSE Anaconda
APO, AE 09391



Erik Nelson



Debby Jones with Brig. Gen. Crear



Ralph Bledsoe

Flood funding continued from page 1 . . .

- \$100,000 to study the Harris Gully

"Our flood control efforts have improved significantly in just the last ten years," Judge Eckels said. "This is due to Harris County Flood Control District's aggressive commitment to improving drainage, our strong partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and to our friends in Washington. Senators Hutchison and Cornyn made sure we received the maximum funding levels, and Majority Leader Tom DeLay was instrumental in securing funding for Clear Creek. We could have had great difficulties in moving Clear Creek along had he not taken such an active interest. Congressman Gene Green worked tirelessly to get funding for the Hunting Bayou Watershed, one of the worst hit areas during Tropical Storm Allison, and Congressman John Culberson, as a member of the House Appropriations Committee, made sure that the Harris Gully study was funded. This funding will keep these projects moving at the fastest possible rate."

In attendance at the press conference were Herbie Maurer, Chief of Programs and Project Management and Art Janecka, Chief of Project Management.

A Year in Review 2003



Kim Crawford, Director of the Federal Woman's Program poses with students during "Introduce a Girl to Engineering."



Raising their shovels in support of "digging" Packery Channel; citizens, local sponsors, and Corps employees were "digging in" the new project.



Lt. Gen. Flowers in Iraqi, talks to Team RIO. Pictured are Galveston District's Lt. Col Mike Flynn and Johnny Rozsypal. The Galveston District had over twelve employees deploy to the middle east during the war on terrorism.



Strong winds from Hurricane Claudette blew in heavy rain in July causing Col. Waterworth to give the order to close the district for the day. Pictured is damaged property on the west side of Galveston Island.



Mark Lumen, Office of Counsel, and Denise Sloan, Regulatory, pose with the Bayport record of decision booklets.



Volunteers at the Trinity River clean-up.

Galveston scores high on safety

Galveston District has enjoyed another outstanding safety year. The district recorded only one lost time contractor accident in FY 03 with approximately one million contractor manhours. A list of the companies, with manhours for the past 12 months, is as follows:

1. Weeks Marine, Inc.	346,984
2. King Fisher Marine Services, Inc.	189,098
3. Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel, Inc.	136,578
4. Mike Hooks, Inc.	102,215
5. Zachary Construction Company, Inc.	82,370
6. T.W. LaQuay Dredging, Inc.	74,918
7. Bean-Stuyvesant, Inc.	57,676

Other notable achievements include:

- Zachary Construction Company, 289,433 manhours with no lost time accident, Neches Saltwater Barrier Project.
- King Fisher Marine Services, no lost time accidents on Galveston District projects since January 29, 2000.
- Bean-Stuyvesant, Inc, no lost time accidents on Houston Ship Channel Lower Bayou project.



David Janda at FWP's fashion show.



J.J. Mayes Wildlife trace was dedicated in May. Pictured is the rookery off of I-10.



Tom Jackson from Jefferson County Waterway and Navigation District, takes the media on a tour of the Sabine Neches Waterway.



Nicolle Dailey, Planning, speaks on Parker's Cut during "Matagorda Days".



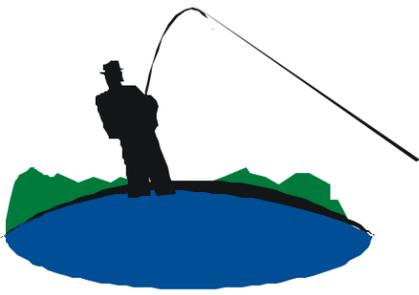
Debby Jones, Southern Area Office, was one of the district's deployed employees.



Col. Waterworth with local sponsors and elected officials at the ribbon-cutting for Hugo Point.



Neches River Saltwater Barrier was completed in October. More than 300 people attended the dedication ceremony.



DE signs new fishing policy for Ft. Point

On Nov. 10, 2003, Col. Leonard Waterworth signed a memorandum for all Corps employees and other eligible fishermen on a current fishing policy at the Fort Point reservation.

The policy came into effect on the day it was signed.

Persons who hold a current identification card issued by the Army Corps of Engineers or members of the military, active, reserve and retired, holding a current identification card are eligible to fish at Fort Point. Galveston district retirees may obtain a current identification card after contacting building security at 409-766-3899, identifying themselves a Corps of Engineers retiree and requesting an identification card for the purpose of fishing at Fort Point.

A fishing pass may be obtained after presenting qualifying identification and signing a liability release. Employees should call 409-766-3977 or send an e-mail message requesting a fishing pass to Sandra Morrison.

All other individuals meeting eligibility requirements should call 409-766-3977, or visit workstation 269D in the Jadwin Building between 0800 and 1130, Monday thru Thursday, Federal holidays excluded. No fishing pass will be issued, nor will fishing be allowed until a release is signed.

Each person holding a valid fishing pass may sponsor one guest per day of fishing on weekdays only, Monday thru Friday, excluding Federal Holidays.

Guests are not allowed on weekends or Federal Holidays. The sponsor must bring the guest to the Jadwin Building front guard desk for the guest to

present identification, sign into the facility, sign a liability release form and receive a one-day fishing pass. The sponsor must accompany the guest while fishing.

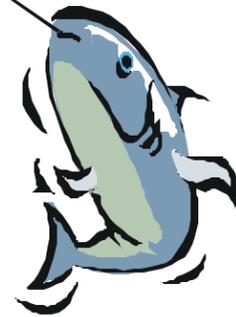
The following restrictions are necessary to minimize interference with ongoing Corps operations involving personnel, plant, and equipment and to maximize security and safe operations at this facility.

- No fishing is permitted from sunset to sunrise. Fishing is not permitted from the hopper dredge dock.
- Fishermen will park in the shell/gravel parking lot. No other parking areas are authorized.
- Fishermen are responsible for policing paper, debris, dead bait or fish, or other trash. The use of alcohol and drugs is prohibited.

- No more than 1 fishing pole per person is permitted.
- Eligible fishermen must fish in accordance with Texas State Law.

Fishing is the only recreational activity authorized at Fort Point and may only be conducted in areas designated by the District Engineer.

Individuals failing to fully comply with the above restrictions risk losing their fishing pass.



A life priority Renee Zellweger paid \$112K/pound!

by David Janda

Granted Hollywood history is full of extreme deals, news that a very fit actress (Renee Zellweger, appeared in "Bridget Jones' Diary" and was asked to recreate her overweight character for the sequel) is willing to lose her girlish figure really made this man given to extremes think.

Without boring you with my own roller coaster ride between a glorious 178 and abysmal 410 pounds. I ask some rhetorical questions hoping you will improve not only your own life, but for all those folks you care sufficiently about. Are you fit enough to go and do all you wish to be it playing with kids or grandkids, carrying groceries or climbing mountains? What other priorities are you willing to put before living a balanced healthy life? What other core values are you willing to compromise?

As a final note, please do not presume the author is being condescending to you.

I have been stuck far too long before painfully awakening at the onset of mid-life to climb out of the muddy pit constructed of my own making. I am now on a "normal" plain now intending to scale the ever steeper slopes of self-potential. I invite you to soar to your own self-defined heights, pausing only at the mesas in life without chastising yourself for wasted opportunity along the journey.

Press on because self-worth is where you make it, not find it.

LDP Corner

Reading on Leading; Quick & Fun

In today's world, complex models often represent leadership and management philosophies. Formal training on these topics can be lengthy, costly and may not be available to everyone.

Rest assured that simple, inexpensive and entertaining reading on these subjects is readily available.

If you don't have time or don't enjoy reading lengthy works on leadership and management, there is a wide selection of very short, refreshingly fun-to-read books that address many of today's pressing work issues.

Below are a few examples of brief, engaging books that I have enjoyed. They utilize simple allegories to convey very concise messages that apply to both work and home life.

Who Moved My Cheese? An Amazing Way to Deal with Change in Your Work and in Your Life, by Spencer Johnson

In this story, the "Cheese" is a metaphor for whatever it is we desire most in life may it be recognition, acceptance, money, relationships, possessions, freedom, etc.

The problem for the story's characters — two mice (Sniff and Scurry) and two little people (Hem and Haw) — is

that the Cheese changes locations unexpectedly, leading them on a fretful hunt for fulfillment and satisfaction.

The mice react to the moving Cheese, by seeking out and finding more Cheese; the little people resist the change, complaining about the misplaced Cheese and going without.

Haw, who is receptive to the possibilities of change, learns from Sniff and Scurry that "Old beliefs do not lead you to new Cheese". He adapts and discovers new Cheese.

Gung Ho! Turn On the People in Any Organization, by Ken Blanchard

Gung Ho! shows leaders how to motivate and improve performance of those they lead using three Native American lessons: "The Spirit of the Squirrel", which teaches worthwhile work; "The Way of the Beaver" which teaches achieving a goal through empowerment; and "The Gift of the Goose" which teaches the power of cheering each other on.

The story outlines simple ways to increase productivity by fostering higher morale in the workplace. Gung Ho is Chinese for "working together." Gung Ho, friend!

FISH!, by Stephen C. Lundin, Ph.D., Harry Paul, and John

by Andrea Catazanaro, LDP member

Christensen

Set down the street from Seattle's world famous Pike Place Fish market, hugely successful as a result of its fun, bustling, joyful work atmosphere and excellent customer service.

The story tells of a manager that is charged with the responsibility of turning an unenthusiastic and unhelpful department into an effective team.

By applying simple lessons picked up from befriending Pike Place fishmongers, the manager creates a climate in which people are truly connected to their work, colleagues, and customers, transforming the organization into a place where everyone brings energy, passion, and a positive attitude to work each day.

Reading these books took very little of my time, and the return has proven great.

The simple messages that I gained from them have been easy to remember and apply to my life. I'm currently reading *Raving Fans* by Ken Blanchard, and am finding it equally intriguing as *Gung Ho!*

For these and other short, fun reading on leadership and management, check out the Galveston District library leadership section.

Safety first during the holiday season

Submitted by Danny Wyatt

With the holidays rapidly approaching, here are some quick and easy tips to make your holiday season a safe one.

Home Safety

- Install a smoke detector or new batteries in the one(s) you have and TEST it.
- Use only outdoor lights outside your home.
- Examine light strings each year, discard worn ones.
- Fasten the bulbs securely and point the sockets down to avoid moisture build up.
- Connect no more than three strands together.
- Never use indoor extension cords outside.
- Avoid overloading wall outlets and extension cords.
- Keep outdoor electrical connectors above ground and out of puddles and snow.
- Unplug light string before replacing a bulb. Review the original package to verify proper wattage and voltage.
- When connecting light strands, wrap a plastic bag around connections and tie with Teflon tape.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree, use colored spotlights.
- Make sure trees hung with Christmas lights are not touching power lines.
- When using candles, place them a safe distance from combustibles.
- Place candles in sturdy containers. Remember, hot wax burns kids.
- Extinguish candles prior to going to bed.
- Dispose of fireplace ashes into a metal container until cold.
- After parties, check around and under sofa and chair cushions for smoldering cigarettes. (Provide lots of ash trays)
- Install at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home.
- Have an operable fire extinguisher readily available.

Christmas Tree Safety

- A real tree should not lose green needles when you tap it on the ground.
- Cut one inch off the trunk to help absorb water.
- Leave the tree outside until ready to decorate.
- The stand should hold at least one gallon of water.
- A 6' tree will use one gallon of water every two days.
- Mix a commercial preservative with the water.
- Check the water level every day.

- Secure the tree with wire to keep it from tipping.
- Keep tree away from floor heaters, fireplaces, or other heat sources.
- Use only UL-listed lights, and no more than 3 strands linked together.
- Use miniature lights—which have cool-burning bulbs.
- Turn off the Christmas lights when you sleep, or if you leave your home for very long.
- Never use candles, even on artificial trees.
- Clean the tree stand to improve the tree's water intake, use one capful of bleach to a cup of water.
- Dispose of the tree properly.
- **NEVER BURN A REAL TREE IN THE FIREPLACE.**

Winter Car Travel Tips

The day before you travel, stop at a full-service gas station and ensure that you have:

- A full tank of gas
- Plenty of oil
- Anti-freeze
- Windshield wiper fluid
- Inflated tires
- An ice scraper (if it will be icy or snowy)

And just in case, toss these items into the trunk:

- Several warm blankets or down sleeping bags
- Hand warmer packets
- Thermos of hot tea
- Ample drinking water
- Filling and nutritious food such as Power Bars, bagels and apples
- All-weather boots
- Rain or ski coats with hoods
- Warm, waterproof hats, gloves and extra socks
- Two flashlights with fresh batteries
- Flares (to warn other vehicles of your location in case you are stalled on a dark road at night)
- A radio (to listen to weather reports and other emergency information)
- Also be sure to carry a cell phone and the numbers for AAA or another road assistance service (don't forget to check if your car warranty includes road service).
- Also be sure to carry a cell phone and the numbers for AAA or another road assistance service (don't forget to check if your car warranty includes road service).

Construction at Brio site is completed

Construction of the containment remedy is complete at the Brio Refining Superfund site in southeast Harris County.

Environmental Protection Agency, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the surrounding community, the Corps of Engineers and the Brio Site Task Force worked together to overcome unprecedented challenges during a 14-year process, at a cost of \$100 million.

"I am especially proud of the cooperation between the community and government agencies at Brio," Greene said. "The site is a true example of how government, community and the private sector can work together to provide the best possible solution."

The remedy includes an underground barrier wall, a cover system, a dense liquids recovery and treatment program.

Additionally, the Brio Site Task Force has widened Mud Gully, lined it with erosion blocks and installed a vegetative topsoil cover over the blocks.

Wallisville turns "classroom" with WBEC

Activities at the Wallisville Lake Project have received a big boost with the signing of a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District and the Upper Texas Coast Water-Borne Education Center (WBEC).

The new agreement provides for cooperation between the two and allows the environment of the Wallisville Lake to be used as a classroom, where interested persons can learn.

It is the mission of the Water-Borne Education Center to provide a mobile water-borne classroom facility that allows educational groups access to the unique environmental features found along the Texas Gulf Coast that would otherwise be inaccessible by land. As stewards of the 20,000 plus acres of the Wallisville Lake Project, the Corps of Engineers is responsible for educating the public of the value of this unique resource but lacks the manpower to fully achieve this mission. This agreement



Signing the memorandum of understanding at the Wallisville Lake project. Left to right: Cassius McAlister, administrator, WBEC; Richard Long, park manager; Joan Walker, executive director, WBEC, and Ruth Millsap, park ranger.

provides the Water-Borne Center with a readily accessible outdoor classroom, while at the same time providing the Corps of Engineers with the means to educate the public on the value of the natural and cultural resources of the area.

Joan Walker, executive director of the Water-Borne Education Center said, "This agreement will help us promote and further our efforts to complement classroom learning with hands-on science that can only be achieved in a natural setting. A real-life encounter from aboard one of our vessels will stimulate a greater understanding of what the students have learned."

"Chambers and Liberty Counties have a rich natural and cultural heritage that is tied together by the waterways of the Trinity River and the Wallisville Lake Project occupies a prominent location in this ecosystem," said Richard Long, Park Manager of the Houston Project Office. "We are pleased to be able to provide this facility to the community and to the Water-Borne Education Center."

For more information on scheduling a field learning experience for your group contact the Water-Borne Education Center at 409-267-3547.

Wellness: **Holiday Stress Relief**

Get Real, Get Involved, Stay Healthy

Do you get blue amid the red, green, and gold? If the holidays bring more harrumph than hooray, here are some tips to lighten your day.

“People need to have realistic expectations about the holidays,” says Nadine Kaslow, PhD, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Emory University and chief psychologist at the Grady Health System in Atlanta.

“There’s so much hype — people feel everything has to be great, you have to get along with your family,” she says.

Many people try to do too much, try to please too many people, says Kenneth Goodrick, PhD, associate professor of family and community medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

Entertaining at home can stretch your last nerve — especially if it brings out your perfectionist tendencies, he adds.

The holidays can also open up old wounds, if yours was a dysfunctional family, if you’re divorced, or if you have lost a spouse.

“The holidays should be about making good memories,” Goodrick said.

Some survival strategies: **Think about what’s important.** “Remember that happiness and fulfillment lie in the balance between self-care and caring for others,” he says. “Take care of yourself so you won’t burn out, so you will be of maximum help to others. That’s where you will get maximum fulfillment.”

Get involved in a religious faith based in love, and celebrate that faith.

Socialize. If you’re feeling lonely, find a church or community center where you can be with other people. Sing carols. See a play.

Gather your support group. Everyone should have someone to talk with about personal problems — whether it’s a support group or a friend, says Goodrick.

“Happiness and fulfillment comes from doing constructive work and having loving relationships. Be counselors for each other, commiserate. Don’t judge. Just try to help others

come up with solutions to problems.”

Stay away from booze. Alcohol changes your mood — and it also brings out the worst in people. You can have parties without alcohol or high-fat foods.

Exercise every day. That’s especially important when you’re eating more. “It’s hard to be sad if you’re physically fit, if you get enough sleep,” says Goodrick.

Avoid TV. “Most is not designed to make you a better person, or even feel better,” he adds.

Don’t spend so much. “You don’t have to buy electronic entertainment equipment that far exceeds the human sensory capability to detect the difference,” says Goodrick. “I like going to the mall and not buying anything. I get a charge out of that.”

Simplify your traditions. Instead of the big family gift exchange, why not exchange amusing and instructive family stories, tell each other how much we appreciated each other — or not — over the years?



“Sometimes honesty is good,” Goodrick says.

Do something useful for your community. Visit people at the nursing home. If your family is having problems, don’t try to patch them up now, says Kaslow. “Resist the temptation to patch up long-standing family problems. This is not the time of year to do that. It’s an emotionally charged time. People put a lot of importance on holiday celebrations. It’s easier to patch things up when things are less stressful.”

Castle Comments

Just Married!!

Wedding bells rang for Lisa Kendrick and Darrell Johnson, Northern Area Office, on Nov. 24. The couple was married in the beautiful hill country of Texas.

Baby on board

Congratulations to Kenneth Chambers, Colorado River Locks, who became a grandpa on Nov. 10! His daughter Stephanie Spardley of Tulsa, Okla. gave birth to a boy, Kenneth Avery Spradley. He was 8 lbs 7 oz., 22 inches long. Mom and son are doing fine.

Congrats to...

Congratulations to Ms. Gloria Appell has been selected for the position of economist, GS-13 in PER Division. Her promotion was effective on 30 November 2003.

Speechmakers

Bryan Herczeg, Regulatory, policy analysis section, spoke to the Energy Bar Association’s Houston Chapter the first week of December on the Corp’s role in researching on LNG facilities.

Recreation news



Col. Waterworth hands Richard Long, park manager of the Houston Project office a recreation committee check for \$50.00. Port Arthur, Corpus Christi, Addicks, Wallisville, Colorado River Locks, and the Brazos River Floodgates office received a check to use towards their Christmas parties.

Get well soon wishes

Please keep your thoughts and prayers with Marianne Sefcik, Equal Employment Office. She had surgery on Dec. 4.

Bayport continued from page 1 . . .

use of dredged material site.

The Port of Houston Authority will provide approximately 1,130 acres of mitigation to compensate for impacts to habitat and ecological values at the project site. This includes wetlands creation, wetlands enhancement, prairie enhancement, and uplands preservation at the 174-acre Memorial Tract adjacent to Armand Bayou, preservation of the 456-acre Banana Bend Tract on the San Jacinto River, and preservation of 500 acres of coastal prairie within the Cypress Creek watershed, San Jacinto River Basin, or within the San Jacinto-Brazos Coastal Basin.

The Port of Houston Authority proposes to determine the exact location of the 500-acre coastal prairie tract at a later date in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Seventy-eight possible alternatives were analyzed during the process; including Spilmans Island, Shoal Point, Upper San Jacinto Bay, Pelican Island and Cedar

Point. Some alternatives had several major environmental issues; the final eight were looked at extensively.

The Corps has received thousands of comments from the public regarding the controversial Bayport Container/Cruise Terminal permit action.

Comments run the gamut from impacts on air quality to noise pollution to property values losses and other issues. Therefore, special conditions have been included in the Record of Decision to further satisfy and protect the public interest.

The Compliance Section of Galveston District’s Regulatory Branch will monitor compliance with the conditions in the permit.

Once the Record of Decision is signed and finalized by Col. Waterworth, it will be posted on the Corps website and will be available to the public.

The website can be seen at: www.swg.usace.army.mil.