

KANSAS CITY DISTRICT'S NEWS MAGAZINE

# HEARTLAND ENGINEER



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OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2013



SHUT DOWN

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Photo by Jennie Wilson

## Employee Spotlight

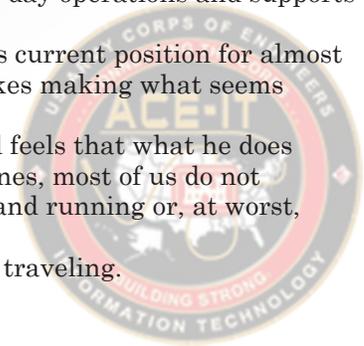
### Donald Thomas Information Technology Operations Officer

Donald Thomas is the information technology operations officer for the Kansas City District working as a liaison between ACE-IT and the district. He is responsible for the day-to-day operations and supports the district IT chief, Steve Burns.

He has served the district as a contractor for 8 ½ years and has been in his current position for almost three years. He enjoys taking care of the district's staff and customers and likes making what seems impossible, possible.

Thomas just completed 15 years of combined military and civil service and feels that what he does is important because, "when it comes to your computer, printers and cell phones, most of us do not remember how to conduct business without them. So keeping everything up and running or, at worst, restoring service in a timely manner is kind of important to my customers."

In his off time, Thomas enjoys spending time with his family, reading and traveling.



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### ON THE COVER:

A sign is placed in the road at Harry S. Truman Lake to indicate the road closure during the federal government shutdown that closed all Corps operated parks from Oct. 1 through Oct. 16. Photo by Rich Chiles.

# Thanks for a great year

It is that time of year again. The weather is turning colder, the winds are biting and the winter holiday season is upon us. This is the time of year that we can all look forward to some well-deserved down-time as we arrange our holiday schedules to maximize the amount of time we're able to spend with our family and friends. My family and I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of our Kansas City District team a joyful, restful, and safe holiday season.

The second half of 2013 brought some unique challenges to the district. We navigated through an exceptionally taxing and frustrating period of fiscal uncertainty and the government shutdown. We faced the unthinkable challenges of sequestration and a second round of furloughs associated with the shutdown. I'm keenly aware of the sacrifices you and your families have endured during this very tumultuous and chaotic year.

Despite these challenges, we, "The Heartland Engineers," kept our focus and not only achieved, but surpassed the district goals set forth in the FY13 OPLAN. Well done! In November we rose to the occasion and did a fantastic job in supporting the SAME annual Small Business Conference and the USACE District Commander's course. We supported both of these highly visible events during the same week. As the Chief of Engineers and many others from USACE Headquarters departed at the end of that week, they had nothing but praise for our team. What is equally impressive is that we accomplished this while not skipping a beat in delivering our programs. What a great effort by all who were involved.

Another testament to the character of our district is the personal generosity shown through the 2013 Heartland Combined Federal Campaign. This year's theme is "Serving our Country Supporting our Community." This year's district goal was to achieve a higher percentage of donors than in the past. I'd like to thank all those who assisted in the campaign and those who supported this year's CFC effort, making it a success.

During a recent visit to one of our projects, a member of our district pulled me aside and thanked me for my service. I was honestly taken aback by this gesture. I was surprised because I feel that the service provided by all the members of our district is equally important to the Army, the nation and the people of the Heartland. I ask that you please join me in thanking the members of our team who are deployed this holiday season and keep them in your thoughts and prayers. They are supporting the warfighter and our nation in a difficult and challenging environment.

I can't stress enough the importance and relevance of safety among our employees. This year's Army Winter Safety campaign is designed to heighten awareness of seasonal risk factors and provide leaders, Army civilians and Soldiers the tools they need to address safety issues. This year's initiative, the "Know the Signs" campaign, includes excellent tools and resources and is available at the Army Safety Center website

I hope the holiday season brings warmth and joy to each and every one of you and your family. Enjoy your well-deserved time off and relaxation. I look forward to your safe return.

Happy Holidays




COL Andrew Sexton

# DTF brings world to installation's door

By Melissa Buckley, Guidon staff

The building is so new that the sign is still blank — but more than 17,000 troops have already been through the facility.

The Maneuver Support Center of Excellence Digital Training Facility, Bldg. 3205, is located in the northeast corner of the MSCOE complex parking lot at Fort Leonard Wood, and is designed to provide state of the art instruction focused on the Army's common digital communication systems, gaming platforms and constructive simulation exercises.

The more than \$12 million facility was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Kansas City District and received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design silver certification in October 2012.

"We train through the use of computer simulations. It's cost effective and safer for the Soldiers to train this way," said David Pape, Operations Training Instruction Branch Modeling and Simulations Integration chief.

The 64,619-square-foot DTF provides the MSCOE Operations Training Directorate with a stand-alone facility that focuses entirely on the use of digital systems designed to educate and train the force for the current operational environment with the capability of adapting new technologies as they arise.

"This is a college environment to some extent. It's a higher level of learning. We train on more than just tactics and equipment. We prepare the troops for mission analysis and course of action development," Pape said.

The facility was a Design-Bid-Build contract awarded to SM Wilson General Contractor of St. Louis, Mo. The facility is designed to support Fort Leonard Wood's institutional training requirements, as well as support the U.S. Army Forces Command operational requirements.

The DTF fully supports the Army's decision to use digital platforms for the training and education of both its Institutional (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command) and Operational (FORSCOM) forces.

"All centers of excellence have some type of simulation and digital instruction, but in my opinion, this is the nicest facility I have seen throughout TRADOC," Pape said.

The MSCoE DTF provides mission command instruction on common digital communication systems.

"The Tactical Operations Center is like the brain-center of the battlefield. The Tactical Operations Center controls all of the information flow to and from individuals in the field," Pape said. "These are complicated pieces of equipment. The more hands on experience they receive here, the more proficient they are going to be when they return to the operational force."

The DTF will also support and integrate unique applications such as the Joint Warning and Reporting Network to support the education of students attending the U. S. Army Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear School.

The gaming instruction is designed to achieve a learning objective based on the needs of the Soldier student. The game selected is either designed for the individual learner or the collective group and in some instances may progress from the individual learner to a group activity.

"We imbed gaming and simulations within the DTF to facilitate the learning that occurs in the TOC. You have to have units in the field. We can portray, through gaming, troops in the field — Soldiers, platoons or even company level units," Pape said.

Constructive simulation exercises use current and future simulation capabilities with varying degrees of support requirements depending on the type of simulation used to facilitate the required training.

"When they go to their units they will see this equipment in the vehicles and in the Tactical Operations Centers that they will be a part of," said Bob McFarland, Operations Training Instruction, Training and Education supervisor.

The MSCOE DTF is able to communicate with other DTFs across the country.

According to McFarland, about two weeks ago the Combined Arms Center School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics held a multi-branch staff exercise across TRADOC. Participating were Fort Benning, Ga., Fort Sill, Okla., Fort Rucker, Ala., Fort Leonard Wood, and other organizations across TRADOC.

"They had subject matter experts from each of the schools conduct problem solving and mission analysis while communicating via several platforms for the eight-day exercise. Fort Leavenworth, Kan., was the main TOC. They would push information down to the centers of excellence and each of those installations were able to provide analysis and feedback. That was the first time it has been done," McFarland said.

Planning for the facility began in 2001. The funding for the project was received in 2008, and a design team of Gossen Livingston Associates, Inc., the Corps of Engineers and Fort Leonard Wood designed the facility to meet the users training requirements. The facility was completed May 29, 2012 and in November 2012, the DTF was operating at full capability.

Pape said the new facility is available for all military units on post.

"We are more than willing to support anybody that wants support," Pape said.

*(Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the Oct. 17, 2013, edition of the Guidon. Information was added to the article.)*

Soldiers conduct an exercise using the new Digital Training Facility. The facility allows troops to interact with other DTF operations around the country.



# RILEY HOSPITAL COMPLETION IN SIGHT

*By Amy Phillips*

The Kansas City District's construction of the Irwin Army Hospital replacement at Fort Riley, Kan. nears the projected contract completion date of June 2014.

The hospital replacement has been under construction since May of 2010 and is the largest state of the art facility in the district's history. It is now 85 percent complete.

"Current construction covers a wide spectrum of finishes to include tile, drywall, carpet and terrazzo as well as paint and additional interior finishes," said Capt. Ross May, deputy resident engineer.

They are also working on some of the exterior items such as stone, glass and precast concrete. The green roof construction is almost complete on the fourth floor.

These roof top gardens will assist the team in attaining the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification.

Christine Hendzlik, project manager, said one of her favorite things about the project was the healing garden and labyrinth. "The labyrinth will be a contemplative walk with uplifting sayings and benches, a maze without walls. By doing this, it will aid the healing process and reduce stress. You don't normally have the ability to put in something that's not utilitarian. The purpose of this project is so different from our standard military projects."

Also in varying degrees of completion is the site work which includes planting trees and sod, paving roads and entrances, and improving the roundabout on Huebner Road.

The new \$343 million hospital will replace the current, 50-year-old hospital and will serve Soldiers, their families and retirees in the area.

The Kansas City District is scheduled to hand the hospital over to the installation in June of 2014, and the move from the old to the new hospital is planned for October and November.

May says that, although the day-to-day work on the project can be frustrating at times, he feels blessed to be a part of such a great purpose.

"This project is very significant to me since I am a Soldier. We are building a state of the art medical facility that will provide treatment and care for Soldiers and their families," said May.

It is scheduled to be open to the public in November of 2014.

# Maintaining and improving Corps parks through partnership



Greg Miller, Kansas City District employee for 30 years, now chairs The Corps Foundation.

By *Diana McCoy*

Some may remember him as natural resource specialist in the Operations Division who moved to the South Atlantic Division a few years ago. Now he is back in the Kansas City area enjoying his retirement—as a director for The Corps Foundation.

Greg Miller spent 30 years in the Kansas City District as a natural resource specialist. He spent a little over a year as a board member for The Corps Foundation and was recently elected chair of the organization whose goal is to maintain and improve programs and facilities at Corps projects across the nation.

The relatively new website explains the mission of the foundation which began in 2007. “In a time of decreasing federal funding, America’s lakes and waterways are at risk of reduced access, eliminated programs, even closures. With your financial support we can help maintain and improve programs and facilities and keep these treasured resources vibrant.” It is the only nationwide nonprofit organization dedicated to exclusively supporting the nation’s lakes, rivers and their many resources.

“It’s about using nonprofit organizations to help the lakes,” said Miller. “One of the ways we do that is by establishing a ‘friends network’ and help them improve on how they can partner with the Corps.”

The idea for the foundation was started by retired Corps employee Ken Wilk and several other Corps employees. Wilk was instrumental in recruiting some of the first board members.

“At the time, he was working as one of the main coordinators for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial,” said Miller. “Shortly after that they applied and got accepted for nonprofit status.”

Miller said The Corps Foundation is modeled off of other foundations. The National Park Service and the National Forest Service have similar foundations.

The Corps Foundation tries to partner with nonprofit organizations because in today’s tight financial environment, partnering helps to pool scarce resources, resolve common problems, and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort. They aim to leverage limited funds and human resources.

An example of one project they have assisted with is at Barren River Lake in Kentucky. They partnered with Friends of Barren River Lake for the development of a website to support the volunteer program and all of the Friends activities at the lake.

“We have also partnered on a national scale with Oh, Ranger! to produce water safety signs,” said Miller. Oh, Ranger! is home of American Park Network, a comprehensive source of information on America’s favorite national parks and public lands.

Visitors to The Corps Foundation website can find useful information such as a comprehensive map of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes and waterways across the United States.

Miller said the foundation is open to everyone. Their members include current Corps employees as well as retired employees, nonprofit groups and corporate members.

*For more information about The Corps Foundation, visit [www.corpsfoundation.org](http://www.corpsfoundation.org).*

# Fort Leonard Wood breaks ground on new dental facility

By Dawn Arden

The corner of Kansas Avenue and Utah Street will soon be home to a new dental facility as Fort Leonard Wood officials broke ground Aug. 29 allowing construction to begin.

The new \$10.6 million, 18,600-square-foot facility is expected to take 18 months to complete and will support more than 20,000 Soldiers annually from Advanced Individual Training and One Station Unit Training.

The facility will be constructed by the MACNAC-KORTE Joint Venture Corporation, a service-disabled, veteran-owned, small business, with oversight from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Kansas City District.

Having 30 dental chairs, this clinic will be able to support 210 dental visits per day.

"It's exciting as we usher in the new dental facility to benefit our Soldiers. This is the groundbreaking ceremony for 30 chairs, not five, not 10, but 30 dental chairs. That's a throughput that's pretty high," said Col. William Pfeffer, garrison commander.

"This clinic will ensure that we have the best capabilities and capacity to treat and ensure the dental health and readiness of our Soldiers," he added.

Pfeffer said everyone should be thankful that all of this military construction is taking place on the fort and not at some other installation.

"It (construction) demonstrates our nations' commitment to a ready-and-resilient Army and indicates a substantial investment in our service members, and especially in Fort Leonard Wood," Pfeffer said.

Col. David Kryszak, Dental Activity commander said that the location couldn't be better.

"It's going to be perfect for the Soldiers because of the location next to the starships (barracks) and the T-Bub barracks. Whereas now they've got a bus to roll or truck, they'll be within walking distance," Kryszak said.

He said the new clinic ties into the first term dental readiness plan where the goal is for 95 percent or better of the Soldiers to graduate AIT or OSUT "dental ready-to-go," to their next duty assignment.

"It's a big plus for Fort Leonard Wood, and it's a big plus for the dental readiness of the new Soldiers," Kryszak said.

*(Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the Sept. 5 edition of the Guidon.)*

From left, Eric Arndt, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Bobby Rakes, Directorate of Public Works director; Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry Faulk, garrison command sergeant major; Col. William Pfeffer, garrison commander; Col. David Kryszak, Dental Activity commander, and Todd Korte, president and CEO of MACNAC-KORTE Joint Venture Corporation, break ground for Fort Leonard Wood's new dental facility. The new \$10.6 million, 18,600-square-foot Dental Clinic will provide 30 dental chairs and support 210 dental visits a day and is scheduled to be completed April 2015.

Photo by Bill Steininger



# District survives GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

By David S. Kolarik

The Kansas City District survived the recent federal government shutdown that occurred October 1 through 16, 2013 affecting a significant share of district employees and the services they provide to the public they serve.

The 16-day shutdown, the third longest in U.S. history, occurred when Congress failed to pass legislation required to appropriate the funds needed to allow most routine government operations to continue.

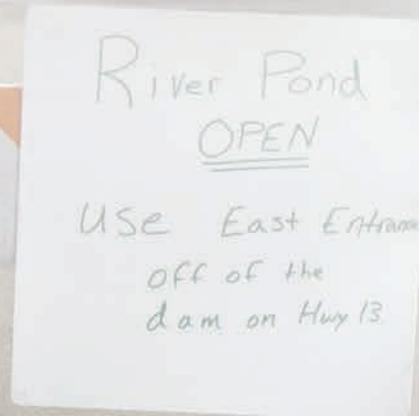
As a result of the impasse, approximately 2.1 million federal employees were either indefinitely furloughed or required to report to work with unknown payment dates.

Prior to the shutdown, with guidance from the Department of Defense, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, while hopeful that a budget and or a continuing resolution would be achieved was proactively preparing for an orderly shutdown in the event a deal wasn't reached.

A press release was generated and distributed to the media and all USACE offices in preparation of a shutdown to ensure clear and consistent USACE messaging. The release was disseminated as they anticipated that the recreating public would be the most impacted due to the closure of all USACE-operated campgrounds and day-use parks nationwide beginning October 1.

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers understands and sincerely regrets the impacts that these actions will have on the American recreating public if we are required to close our recreation areas,” said James R. Hannon, USACE Chief of Operations in Washington, D.C. “We know that this is a time of year when many vacationing families are using or planning to use USACE recreation facilities, and we will reopen them for public use and enjoyment as quickly as possible once the government shutdown is lifted.”

The district lakes had to close down operations and block entrances into Corps operated areas during the shutdown beginning on Oct. 1. Photo by Mark Krause





All Corps operated parks were closed during the government shutdown that occurred on Oct. 1 through Oct. 16.

Photo by Mark Krause

At the district level, the command and senior leaders worked tirelessly to interpret numerous operational and fragmentary orders as they cascaded down from Headquarters USACE.

“Our number one priority is to ensure we do everything we can at this level to protect any and all of the workforce impacted by a shutdown,” said Col. Andrew Sexton, Kansas City District commander. “The shutdown is a major blow to our workforce. It is the second time this calendar year our employees have been furloughed.”

All DOD commands, staffs and agencies were directed to begin executing their respective shutdown plans on Oct. 1 to include the furlough of non-expected DOD civilians, while the Pay Our Military Act was under legal review by the Department of Justice.

The POMA would allow nearly all civilian defense personnel to return to work as well, on the basis that their duties support service members.

On Oct. 1, the district began its mandate to begin the process of furloughing approximately 25 percent of its workforce. Fortunately, that percentage was smaller than anticipated and many offices were able to continue operations due to available multi-year, non-expiring funds.

After the DOJ review of POMA, the department expressed its view that POMA does not permit a blanket recall of all civilians. However, DOD and DOJ attorneys concluded that the law did allow DOD to eliminate furloughs for employees whose responsibilities contribute to the morale, well-being, capabilities and readiness of service members.

Unfortunately the POMA only affected a small percentage of district employees while the vast majority would not benefit from the act.

Many divisions within the Kansas City District felt the impact of the government shutdown through furloughs, but none were hit as severe as those working in the Operations Division.

The first day of the shutdown the Chief of Engineers sent a note to all USACE employees describing the situation and its impacts to USACE employees. An excerpt of the Chief’s communication to the workforce:

“These furloughs are in no way a reflection of the

importance of your work or the hard heroic effort you put forth every day. This has been a trying period for our USACE teammates across the globe. I want to thank all of you – military, civilian and contractors – for your patience and your professionalism, as well as your continued service to the Corps and the Nation.”

The Operations Division had more than 200 employees who were furloughed from their positions due to the shutdown, said Kelly Ryan, chief of the Technical Support Branch. “This affected morale in operations as a whole and added to the frustration of fiscal constraints.”

Ryan added that the good news is that we’re back on our feet, back to work and happy to be back serving the public.

Brian Thompson, a natural resource specialist from the Pomme De Terre project office was furloughed the duration of the government shutdown.

“My sense was worrying and apprehension about not being able to meet my agricultural lease holders in an appropriate timetable to discuss the 10 percent they leave on their fields. They all were slowed down due to my inability to meet and discuss the 10 percent of the crop they’re supposed to leave.”

Upon Thompson’s return to duty the workload of two-plus weeks now needed to be compacted into three days.

Thompson added that no matter the circumstances or reason, it’s important to remember that our primary mission is to support the customers we serve, in this case farmers having a crucial deadline for harvesting their crop.

USACE leadership and support personnel continuously communicated the state of the shutdown both internally and externally via command e-mail updates, press releases, website updates and through district social media sites.

Late in the evening of Oct. 16, Congress passed a continuing resolution funding the government through mid-January, thus ending the federal government shutdown.

Furloughed employees were alerted by their supervisors that the shutdown was over and they immediately returned to their respective workplaces and resumed their assigned duties.

Upon returning back to the workplace, all employees were sent a message from the district commander thanking them for their patience and professionalism during this tumultuous event.

“The last two weeks have been frustrating and tough for all of us affected by the federal government shutdown. We endured 16 days too many of hardship and disruption to our lives, both professional and personal. I appreciate your professionalism and demeanor during the last two weeks,” Col. Sexton wrote.

# CBITEC

## comes to Fort Leonard Wood

*By Amy Phillips*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers combined with the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center and Fort Leonard Wood are taking amazing steps to protect the Soldiers deployed to forward operating bases.

The Contingency Basing Integration Technology Evaluation Center at Fort Leonard Wood is a test bed to erect structures and conduct tests to evaluate energy consumption at forward operating bases.

"This is not like any other training facility. Temporary structures are built to look at energy consumption and ways to not only save money but for life safety as well," said Doug Plachy, project manager. "The primary purpose of CBITEC is to look at energy consumption."

With statistics showing that 20 percent of Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom U.S. casualties are related to ground water resupply, the Army wanted to focus on a way to keep the Soldiers safe and reduce energy consumption on the base camps.

The Army set three significant goals for reaching a more sustainable base camp. These are to reduce fuel use by 25 percent, reduce solid waste backhaul by 50 percent and to reduce the amount of water brought into a base camp by 75 percent.

"Because what they have learned is the biggest danger

in Iraq and Afghanistan is the convoys and the majority of the convoys were fuel convoys. So, if we can reduce the amount of fuel convoys going to these distant forward operating bases, that will reduce the risk to the Soldiers," said Plachy.

"The Army is striving to design, build, and maintain base camps that are as close to self sustaining as possible. CBITEC is integrating their need for demonstration sites with our suitable infrastructure and available Soldier loads," said Dr. Robert Tucker, program manager for the Contingency Basing Integration Technology and Evaluation Center at Fort Leonard Wood.

"These goals then touch everything from sitting a base camp to construction technologies to personal use of these resources and management of the base camp. Currently, the science and research and development communities are examining technologies to help achieve these goals. CBITEC will be a venue where base line capabilities and current practices are quantified and then compared to other technologies and Soldier training practices," said Tucker.

At Fort Leonard Wood, eight B-Huts were constructed using different types of thermal material on six of the B-Huts to test the materials to see what type of reduction of energy use we get and then determine if any of those could be used in a forward

deployed environment," said Plachy.

The other two B-Huts are used as a control to see what kind of differences there are with the different types of materials. Soldiers will live and work out of these facilities as part of training and important information will be gathered during the training using energy monitoring equipment.

"We will find out if there is any energy savings by using the various thermal materials," said Plachy.

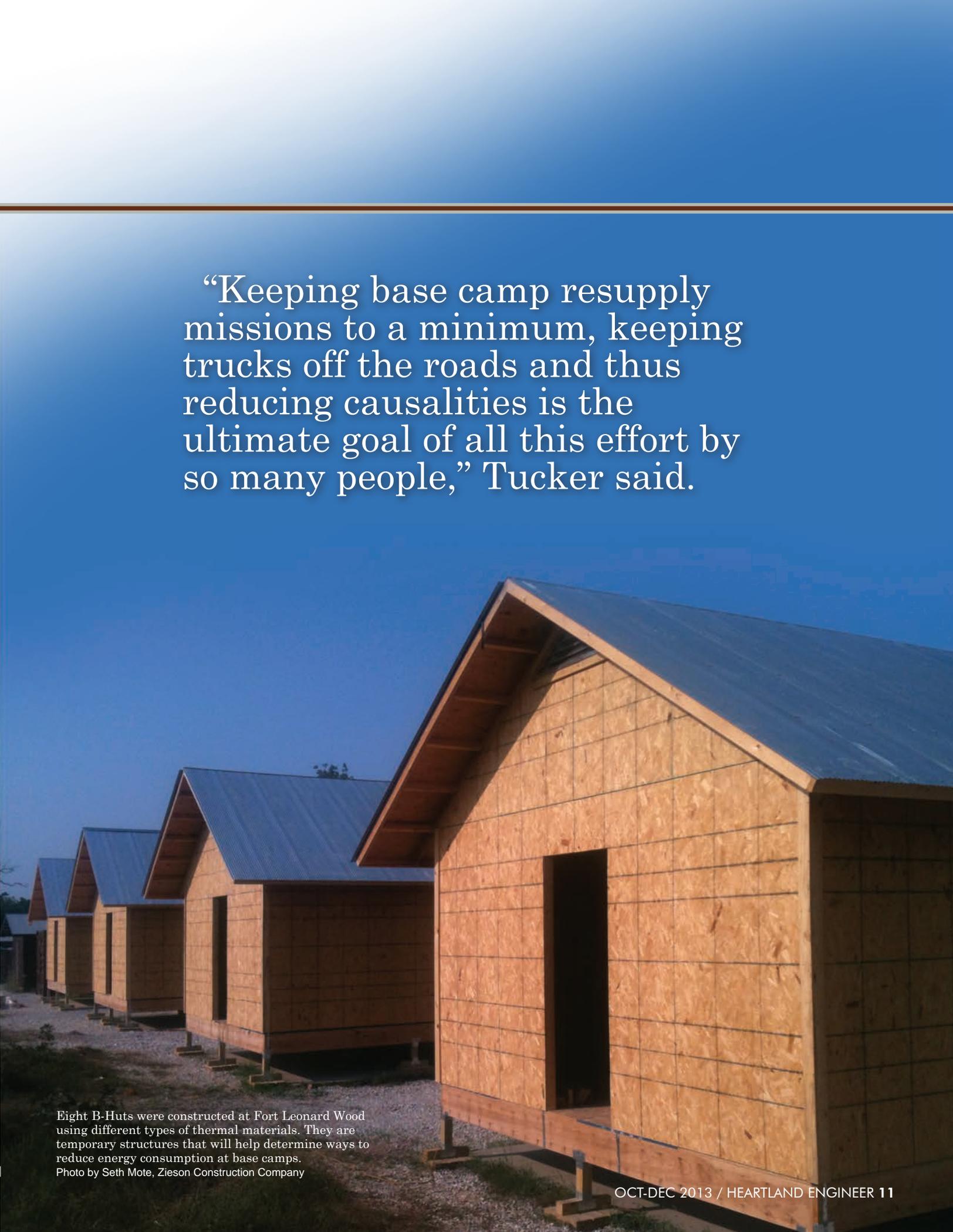
The test bed also looks at what can be done with refuge and water reuse.

According to the Fort Leonard Wood brochure, "CBITEC is the premier integration center for environmental protection, construction, water, waste, energy, and force protection capabilities."

The program allows for industry to assess the process or technology through an operational application in a military environment all while allowing the joint forces the ability to gain knowledge on new technologies and how they can apply to base camp challenges, according to the brochure.

With all the final inspections complete, training at the CBITEC at Fort Leonard Wood will begin in November. The goal is to complete the testing and tear down the temporary facilities by September 2015.

“Keeping base camp resupply missions to a minimum, keeping trucks off the roads and thus reducing casualties is the ultimate goal of all this effort by so many people,” Tucker said.



Eight B-Huts were constructed at Fort Leonard Wood using different types of thermal materials. They are temporary structures that will help determine ways to reduce energy consumption at base camps.  
Photo by Seth Mote, Zieson Construction Company

# Winning the battle against zebra mussels



Missouri Department of Conservation employees treat the Sky Village Cove of Harry S. Truman Lake with copper sulfate. Photo by William "Rusty" Callister

By Diana McCoy

The discovery of zebra mussels usually spells out disaster for any body of water; however, with the help of the Missouri Department of Conservation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was able to swiftly address the concern at Harry S. Truman Lake in Warsaw, Mo.

Cole Kriesel who is on the maintenance staff at the lake found a large amount of dried zebra mussels near the Sky Village boat ramp in early September. Kriesel recognized the zebra mussels from posters he had observed at Corps facilities.

"It appears someone cleaned their boat while it was still loaded on the trailer, possibly over the Labor Day weekend," said Tammy Gilmore, park manager. "The find was reported to Missouri Department of Conservation Fisheries Biologist Mike Bayless."

Bayless and his counterpart, Clark Foster, completed a snorkel survey at the boat ramp and found live adult zebra mussels in the water, which led to a discussion of different treatment options available between the MDC and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff.

"It is unusual to discover adult zebra mussels in a body of water that were recently introduced," said Gilmore. "This circumstance provided a good opportunity to eradicate the zebra mussels before they became established."

Gilmore said that most of the time zebra mussels are already established when they are discovered in a body of water.

It was decided the best option was to treat the affected cove with copper sulfate. Copper sulfate is a safe treatment that is often used for algae control and was used to eradicate zebra mussels in Offutt Lake, Neb. The Missouri Department of Agriculture was consulted prior to the application to ensure that the necessary pesticide clearances were obtained.

The Corps purchased the copper sulfate and treatment was applied to the lake on Sept. 30 by MDC staff. The cove reopened for public use on Oct. 3.

"We tested the water a few weeks later to check if the treatment of copper sulfate was successful, and the tests came back negative, so we believe the treatment was a success," said Gilmore.

Marvin Boyer, the Kansas City District's lake water quality coordinator, along with Bayless, tested the water for veligers—zebra mussel larvae. The tests showed that no veligers existed.

For now, the fight to keep zebra mussels out of Truman Lake has been successful, but the need to stay vigilant remains.

*For information on how to stop the spread of zebra mussels visit [www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net).*

Cole Kriesel, part of the maintenance staff for Harry S. Truman Lake, found thousands of zebra mussels in the middle of the road leading to the Sky Village Boat Ramp. The mussels appeared to have been scraped off a boat still on its trailer sometime over the Labor Day weekend. Photo by Larry Smith

# Civilian Education System

By Beverly Hogle

Are you looking for an affordable way to improve your leadership skills? If the answer is yes, consider adding a Civilian Education System course to your five-year Individual Development Plan.

The Civilian Education System can provide an avenue to expand your knowledge and skills in communication, vision and problem solving skills, organization efficiency, and leadership.

Targeted to your civilian grade level, CES Courses are completed through a combination of 40+ hours distance learning and residential classes. You may also be able to receive credit for professional military education and Legacy Civilian courses considered equivalent to specific CES Courses.

How do you register for a CES course? To determine eligibility and register for courses visit the Civilian Human Resource Training Application System (CHRTAS) website at: <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/chrtas/student/logon.aspx?caller=1>. Once logged in go to the right hand side and click on CES Eligibility and Completion Status. This will bring up a chart similar to the one below and provide additional guidance if updates to your information are required.

 Foundation Course (FC)	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A Not Required	Our records indicate you were hired prior to September 2006, therefore the Foundation Course (FC) is not required.	N/A
 Basic Course (BC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible	You have met the pay plan requirement for this course.	GS 1-9
 Intermediate Course (IC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible	You have met the pay plan requirement for this course.	GS 10-12 
 Advanced Course (AC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible	You have met the pay plan requirement for this course.	GS 13-15
 Continuing Education for Senior Leaders (CESL)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible	You have either not met the pay plan requirement or not met the course requirement (AC) for this course.	GS 14-15

Be proactive in your personal and professional development. Join the cadre of the Kansas City District employees that are completing the Army's Civilian Education System courses. It is not only an investment in the Army's future, it's an investment in **YOUR FUTURE!** To find out more about CES visit the MSO/ Training page at: <https://intranet.usace.army.mil/nwd/nwk/ms/Pages/training.aspx>.



## Kansas City District Safety Office Holiday and Winter Safety Tips

By Jeff Stokes, district safety officer

The cool days and cold nights of fall and winter are here, and the USACE Kansas City District Safety Office wants to help keep you, your family, and fellow employees safe in all their seasonal activities. When it comes to risk, winter is in a category all its own. Extended holiday leaves and rapidly changing weather conditions will open the door for risk. Along with the fellowship, parties and good times, make sure safety is included in your holiday planning, both in the office and at home.

You can help mitigate the hazards in whatever you do. Fatal accidents are often the result of unwise split-second decisions, from choosing to drink and drive or ride unbelted to crossing the street against traffic signals. By taking just a little time to think through your actions, Soldiers, employees, and their family members can make better choices and stay safe in everything they do.

Before Winter Storms and Extreme Cold:

### **Add the following supplies to your disaster supplies kit:**

- Rock salt to melt ice on walkways
- Sand to improve traction
- Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment

### **Prepare your home and family:**

- Prepare for possible isolation in your home by having sufficient heating fuel
- Winterize your home
- Learn how to shut off water valves (in case a pipe bursts)
- Space heaters need space...they need a three-foot clearance all the way around
- Be sure not to overload electrical circuits...Connect no more than three strands to any one extension cord.

### **Prepare your car:**

- Check or have a mechanic check your car, maintain battery cables & replace old batteries
- Install good winter tires, check tire pressure, winterize your coolant and wiper fluids
- Maintain at least a half tank of gas during the winter season
- Place a winter emergency kit and shovel in each car.

### **Dress for the Weather:**

- Wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Keep clothes dry. Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs
- Wear mittens, which are warmer than gloves, wear a hat
- Know the signs of frostbite and hypothermia and seek first aid or medical attention if necessary.

The easy continuity between fall and winter ends somewhere around November to January for most of us and we must be prepared to face the unique challenges the winter months will bring.

Please let us know what else we can do to help and thank you for all you do to keep our district families safe every day. Enjoy the cooler weather, but remember to "Know the Signs" and do what's right!

### **Great Safety Gifts to Give and Get**

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| • Smoke alarm         | • Safety glasses / goggles |
| • Cooking thermometer | • Escape ladder            |
| • Car emergency kit   | • Fire extinguisher        |
| • Reaching aids       | • Carbon monoxide detector |

# FY 2014 OPERATIONS PLAN

## **ACTION 1: (MISSION)**

- Incorporate Riley Hospital lessons learned into other projects
- Implement the USACE infrastructure strategy
- Deploy capabilities to successfully support Contingency Operations
- Establish better understanding of O&M budget process
- Develop Recreation Evaluation Plan
- Implement planning modernization to deliver studies on time and on budget
- Implement AtHoc Emergency Notification System

## **ACTION 3: (RELATIONSHIPS)**

- Promote NWK levee expertise within USACE
- Create a Special Emphasis Program Committee
- FY14 District Business Development
- Improve USACE partnership and outreach with the operating force, the Engineer School and universities.

## **ACTION 2: (BUSINESS)**

- Implement USACE E&C quality imperatives
- Improve procurement planning and execution
- Improve PRB process and effectiveness
- Utilization of external devices
- Review and analyze positions UIC codes for accuracy
- Workforce Strategic Scenario Analysis
- Improve District AE Management
- Streamline correspondence process
- Improve Acquisition Process Documentation
- Achieve federal sustainability and energy goals
- Reconfigure Contracting Office to utilize SCCT
- Develop and deploy a MILCON design manual

## **ACTION 4: (WORKFORCE)**

- Develop district STEM Program
- Essential for supervisors
- Update the Human Capital Management Plan
- Establish an annual plan to train, recognize and build a toolkit for our administrative CP-51 team
- Develop planning tools for G&A staff
- Improve knowledge creation/sharing and technology transfer
- Increase STEM and Wounded Warrior Initiatives



Operations project manager for Kanopolis and Wilson lake projects, Dan Hays, briefs and discusses dam issues with District Commander Col. Andrew Sexton during a recent command visit to both Kansas projects.  
Photo by David S. Kolarik

# Around the District



Federal employees protest outside the Bolling Federal Building on Oct. 11, 2013, during the 16-day federal government shutdown.  
Photo by Amy Phillips

Volunteers help with the Annual Stockton Lake Cleanup on September 14. Several lakes within the district participated in cleanup events. Photo courtesy of the Cedar County Republican

Locust 500 E ST  
E 12<sup>TH</sup> ST

LET HOUSE  
We have Bilk  
HONK to Stop the Shutdown  
DEAR CONGRESS YOUR FURLOUGHS ARE COMING WE VOTE  
OPEN GOV. LET US WORK  
End The Shutdown  
I Would Rather Be At Work