

# HEARTLAND ENGINEER



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OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2008

## Congratulations to the class of 2008



Leadership Development Program  
celebrates its **10<sup>th</sup>** class!

**10<sup>th</sup>**

# INSIDE THE HEARTLAND

COMMANDER'S CORNER	3
ASA (CW) VISITS THE KCD	4
MEET THE 2009 LDP CLASS	6
STOCKTON LAKE CLEANUP	8
NWD COMMANDER VISITS KCD	9
LDP QUICK FACTS	9
OARS	10
IT'S COMING - DISTRICT MOVE	11
WE ASKED. . . & YOU ANSWERED	11



## LETTER from the Editor

Dear Readers,

After a long break, I have returned to the Kansas City District and am determined to get this publication back on track.

We've made a few changes. Instead of a monthly magazine, we're going bi-monthly! We're changing the format, and I hope you like what we have in store for you.

This issue's focus is on the Leadership Development Program, which is in its 10<sup>th</sup> year! If you are a graduate of the course, you can wish this class's participants good luck and fondly remember your experiences. If you are thinking about applying for the next class, stay tuned because we'll feature their activities throughout the year.

I sincerely hope you enjoy this magazine. If you have suggestions or comments for improvement, I'd be happy to hear them (please email me at [diana.mccoy@usace.army.mil](mailto:diana.mccoy@usace.army.mil)).

Happy Reading!

Diana McCoy

p.s. My favorite CFC charity is the United Service Organizations, Inc. (USO). They do wonderful things for members of the military and their families. Please, don't forget to give to CFC!!!



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COMMANDER Col. Roger A. Wilson / [roger.a.wilson.col@usace.army.mil](mailto:roger.a.wilson.col@usace.army.mil)  
 DEPUTY COMMANDER Lt. Col. Michael F. Fitzgerald / [michael.f.fitzgerald@usace.army.mil](mailto:michael.f.fitzgerald@usace.army.mil)  
 ACTING P.A. CHIEF David Kolarik / [david.s.kolarik@usace.army.mil](mailto:david.s.kolarik@usace.army.mil)  
 EDITOR Diana McCoy / [diana.mccoy@usace.army.mil](mailto:diana.mccoy@usace.army.mil)  
 DESIGNER Rusty Thomas / [rusty.thomas@usace.army.mil](mailto:rusty.thomas@usace.army.mil)

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**Richard Bolling Federal Building**  
 601 East 12th Street  
 Kansas City, MO 64106  
 Phone (816) 389-3486  
 Fax (816) 389-2021

### ON THE COVER:

Top Row Left to Right: Jason Hurley, Chance Bitner, Dan Wilson, James Dietz, Josh Marx, Steve Fischer, Matt Jeppson, Eric Lynn, Ben Davis. Bottom Row Left to Right: Heather Collins-Allen, Kathy Baker, Cindy Moses, Lauren Hensley, Melissa Corkill. The 2008 LDP Class poses for their graduation photo. Congratulations for a successful year! (Photo by Scott Robben)



## *Looking ahead to 2009*

At the time of this writing we are literally putting Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 in the books. And, what a year it has been. By all accounts FY 2008 will break records in terms of contract dollars obligated, contract actions conducted and construction placement. Congratulations to the district team who this year performed at a level unlike any previous year. I'm proud to have witnessed it.

As we look to the New Year it becomes apparent that we'll experience a similar situation in 2009: a near-record Military program, difficult economic conditions, unpredictable weather and a Nation at war. As a result, we must continue to attract, develop and retain a world class work force that is highly competent, agile, expeditionary and able to deliver safe, efficient and effective projects and services.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has captured these elements in its revised mission statement: to provide vital public engineering services in peace and war to strengthen our Nation's security, energize the economy and reduce risks from disasters. Derived from a host of strategic and policy documents, the USACE Campaign Plan provides the strategic framework for the District to implement its multiple missions.

Under this framework, the Chief of Engineers intends for us to align and synchronize our work, and for us to become a GREAT organization that delivers superior performance, sets the standard for our profession, makes a positive impact on our Nation and other nations, and is built to last as evidenced by our strong "bench" at all levels—educated, trained, competent, experienced and certified.

The Kansas City District is now in the process of creating its subordinate Operational Plans centered on the four goals contained in the USACE Campaign Plan. These four goals are: to deliver USACE support to combat, stability, and disaster operations through forward deployed and reach back capabilities; to deliver enduring and essential water resource solutions through collaboration with partners and stakeholders; to deliver innovative, strong, sustainable solutions to the armed forces and the Nation; and to build and cultivate a competent, disciplined and resilient team equipped to deliver high quality solutions.

In the weeks ahead, after the FY 2008 dust settles, I will share with you our vision for the New Year. I think you will agree that 2009 will be equally as challenging and afford us extraordinary opportunities to serve, to improve and to deliver innovative and sustainable solutions to the Nation's engineering challenges. I look forward to improving the foxhole!

Essayons...Building Strong!



Col. Roger A. Wilson Jr.



# ASA (CW) visits the Kansas City District

By Diana McCoy

Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Mr. John P. Woodley, Jr., visited the Kansas City District September 8, to discuss issues surrounding the Missouri River with Missouri Governor Matt Blunt, Brig. Gen. William Rapp and Deputy Director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Mike Wells.

Between the meeting and a tour of the National World War I Museum, Mr. Woodley was able to respond to questions regarding the Corps' Civil Works mission.

## **What significant changes have you seen since your appointment in 2005 to the present in wetland resources, flood control, navigation and shore protection?**

“Certainly each one of them has seen a tremendous amount of change, but let me talk about the things that have changed all of them. We have transitioned to budgeting for our projects with a very strong performance-based budgeting concept. This means that we are seeking to concentrate our very limited construction dollars on the highest performing projects in terms of their cost-benefit ratio and in their capacity to protect and safeguard human life and property. So, instead of trying to do a little bit on all projects authorized, we have really tried to focus our budget on the ones that provide the biggest bang for each and every buck.

“The other thing we have tried to do is foster a watershed approach to the civil works planning. It seemed that our projects upstream and downstream from one another were not being planned and operated together or even operated as a watershed system. It's made us look across district boundaries and get people working together that otherwise hadn't coordinated their efforts. This has been very successful.

“The third thing really relates just to the area of our flood damage. When I started five years ago, we were still talking in terms of flood control being our watchword, and it's made some people kind of nervous because that's a pretty definitive statement, but what we've realized is that at the end of the day, there's no such thing as flood control. Nature is going to surprise us and going to present us with circumstances that are beyond our control. So we've tried to migrate that thinking in terms of flood damage reduction. We're now using a more sophisticated concept which attempts to speak in terms of flood risk mitigation. So there's always a risk of flood, and there's always going to be a remaining or residual risk of flood, but when we work with our partners—with FEMA, the states and the flood control districts, or levee boards, we can reduce the risk of flood to what we hope are manageable levels.”



**Left to right: Larry Myers, Mike Wells (deputy director of Missouri Department of Natural Resources), Brig. Gen. William Rapp, the Honorable John Paul Woodley, Missouri Governor Matt Blunt, Col. Roger Wilson Jr. and Steve Iverson meet at the Hilton President Hotel in Kansas City, Mo., to discuss issues regarding the Missouri River Sept. 8. (CENWK-PA Photo)**

## **With the significant changes in each of these areas, what innovative solutions has the Corps developed to answer these challenges?**

“A lot of the work that we're doing has been developed in response to the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina, which was a real wakeup call for the Corps. The leadership

developed what we call the 12 Actions for Change that are spoken of in terms of systematic planning and the use of risk communication. I think looking at watersheds in terms of systems and using risk communication are the most innovative things that the Corps has done. We have a tremendous amount of research ongoing at all of our laboratories, but from a management perspective, those are the two most significant things.”

**In your opinion, did and will these innovative solutions help to mitigate potential devastation caused by hurricanes and other natural disasters?**

“Absolutely! In fact, we saw the first fruit of that during Hurricane Gustav with our systematic planning and system-wide execution. We were able to avoid large-scale, catastrophic inundation of New Orleans. Although the system we’re putting in place in New Orleans is far from complete, and we have a long way to go, the portions that are in place were designed to operate as a system and were much more successful in their operation in Gustav than they were in Katrina.”

**What do you see as the priorities for the Corps of Engineers in regards to its Civil Works mission, and do you see these priorities changing? If so, how?**

“I think the priorities of the Corps of Engineers continue to shift toward the watershed-based planning approach. We’re doing this on the Columbia, the Upper Mississippi and the Missouri River and all the watersheds we operate. We’re trying to look at the needs of the watershed as a whole. The Corps of Engineers is a unique institution for two reasons. One, it is organized on a watershed scale. Our boundaries generally follow (with some significant exceptions) the watersheds and our political boundaries, of course, do not. So the Corps has the unique ability to span those political boundaries. Secondly, of all the water resource agencies of the federal government, the Corps has the broadest mission. The Corps’ civil works authority, or civil works program, has a much broader and varied mission scope, which means the Corps is uniquely suited to perform balancing and convening functions of many disparate interests and stakeholders on a watershed scale. There will always be conflicts between recreation, water use, supply, irrigation, navigation, species and natural resource uses. Varied interests will inevitably come in conflict, and some balance will have to be struck. The Corps is uniquely

*“...but what we’ve realized is that at the end of the day, there’s no such thing as flood control.”*



**Diana McCoy of the Public Affairs Office interviews the Honorable John Paul Woodley, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Sept. 8 at the Hilton President Hotel in Kansas City, Mo. (Photo by Larry Myers)**

qualified as a federal institution in America to convene all those stakeholders and help them arrive at an appropriate balance all can live with. Therefore the Corps’ priorities should be to strengthen that capacity and to fulfill that role. It’s a role this country desperately needs.”

**In your opinion, what is the most significant issue or challenge the Corps will face in the future?**

“I think in the short term future the most significant issue for the Corps is that the demands of water resource development are outstripping our budgetary capacity to meet them. I was able to increase our budget every year, until this last year, but never

to the point where we could say we were doing all the things that we ought to be doing. Looking ahead, you can see the need for navigation improvements on the Upper Mississippi, the continued increasing need for investment in dam safety, stability issues for some of our aging reservoirs, an increasing call for work in ecosystem restoration and an increased maintenance budget to cope with our aging infrastructure. Our challenge will be trying to make the case within the federal government. In comparison to all the other needs we have and the fiscal responsibility that we certainly want the government to exhibit, those requirements ought to be given an even higher priority than they are being given today.”



# Meet this year's



Susan Abbott has been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for five years. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering and serves as the annual dam safety inspection coordinator, dam safety trainer and permanent member of the Environmental Review Guide for Operations team. Abbott wanted to participate in the LDP to gain a better understanding of the Corps' processes and to make a positive difference within the organization. Abbott is from Blue Springs, Mo., and is married and has four children. She enjoys traveling, kayaking, hiking and reading.



Eric Brandt, a native of Minnesota, is a project manager for military programs at Fort Riley, Kan. Currently, his biggest project is the brigade transformation. He has spent more than 13 years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from Washington University in St. Louis. Brandt wanted to participate in the LDP for the unique opportunities available through the program for both personal and career development.



Travida Dionne Byas is from Omaha, Neb. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Midland Lutheran College and a Master of Arts in Management from Bellevue University. Byas is a senior contract specialist and has been with the Corps of Engineers since 2001. She signed up for the LDP because she believes it will help her to be an even greater asset to the Corps and continue to shape her growth as she endeavors to be the greatest inspiration she can be. Byas serves as a mentor and motivational speaker in various religious organizations. She and her husband, Tony, reside in the Kansas City Metro area.



Annette Cedarholm is from St. Louis and applied to take part in the LDP to improve her leadership abilities, learn more about herself through the program and learn more about the Corps of Engineers. She's been with the Corps for a year and a half and feels like she only has a glimpse of what the organization is really about. Cedarholm is a structural engineer and enjoys playing soccer.



Derek Dorsey is a natural resource specialist at Smithville Lake and has been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers since 1999. He is from Clarksdale, Mo., and met his wife, Trisha, while working the Corps booth at the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia. Dorsey is excited to get started in the 2009 LDP class so he can get a better understanding of the "big picture" of what the Corps is involved in and to strengthen his overall leadership skills. In his free time, Dorsey enjoys waterfowl and upland game hunting and fishing.



Timothy Meade was born and raised in Iowa City, Iowa. He is an archeologist/cultural resource manager and has been with the Corps for five years. He manages the cultural resource sites at the district's 18 lake projects and also coordinates cultural resource compliance for the district's civil works projects. Meade signed up for the LDP so he could improve his skills to better do his job, increase his visibility to the cultural resource program and better prepare himself for increase leadership roles. His hobbies include disc golf, brewing beer, fishing and history.

# LDP class



Thomas McCabe is from Mississippi and has been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers since 1994. He works at the Kansas State Regulatory Office in El Dorado, Kan., and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in forestry/wildlife management from Mississippi State University. McCabe has a strong desire to be a participant of the LDP to further develop his leadership proficiency and qualities and learn more about the district's activities, missions and responsibilities. He loves spending time with his wife and three daughters and enjoys hunting, fishing and sports.



Erik Patterson is from Melvern, Kan., and has been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers since 2000. He has a bachelor's degree in Park Management and Conservation and is a natural resource specialist at Perry Lake. Patterson is excited to participate in the LDP because it will allow him to work with other people in the district as well as improve his teamwork and leadership skills. When Patterson is not spending time with his wife and son, he's hunting deer, turkey or pheasant or trout fishing.



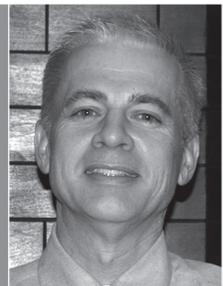
Bob Schoen is from St. Louis, Mo., and joined the Corps family in 2002. Schoen is a project engineer who works out of the Kansas City Resident Office in Independence, Mo. His current projects include the Turkey Creek Tunnel and the Richard Gebaur Commissary. He hopes the LDP will allow him to grow personally and professionally. When he isn't spending time with his wife and two sons, Schoen enjoys farming, hunting and fishing.



Kris Upson, a former Army Engineer Officer, has been with the Corps for almost three years. He is a project engineer at the Fort Riley Resident Office. Some of his past and current projects include the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Headquarters, Williston Point Road Realignment and the Battle Command Training Center. Upson signed up for the LDP because he likes a challenge and is excited about the structured approach to self development that the program provides. He and his wife, Tara, enjoy exercise and movies. Upson is also an avid woodworker.



John Wilkus grew up in Mission, Kan., and is a fire protection engineer for the Kansas City District. He has been with the Corps for 15 years and signed up for the LDP to improve his leadership and communication skills and his interpersonal relationships. Wilkus' hobbies include attending his children's soccer games, swim meets and other events. He also enjoys helping out at church, running and family vacations.



Matthew Wilson was born and raised in Davenport, Iowa. He received his bachelor's degree in Organization Leadership Skills in 2004 and was hired into the Corps family in July 2007. Wilson said he is participating in the LDP to continue to develop his leadership skills, experience and education to become a future leader/manager for the Corps. Wilson is a contract specialist and enjoys woodworking and spending time with his niece and nephews.



# Stockton Lake Cleanup

provides benefits for all

By Donna Butler

Approximate 225 people participated in the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Stockton Lake Cleanup September 13, 2008, held in conjunction with National Public Lands Day and hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Missouri Stream Team.

Participants braved the elements to participate in shoreline litter pickup and tree planting. Fourteen divers conducted underwater cleanup at the lake's beaches and boat ramps. Volunteers collected more than 200 bags of debris, along with many other items such as plastic pipe, tires and wire. By the end of the day, more than 3,000 pounds of litter had been collected.

"The efforts and dedication of the volunteers continue to make Stockton Lake a cleaner, safer environment for the public, as well as restoring our natural habitat for the native wildlife," said Tom Long, project manager for the lake.

Groups represented this year included Agape Boarding School, Girl Scouts of America, Boys Scouts of America, Stockton Schools Student Councils, Buffalo High School, Bolivar High School, East Newton High School, Missouri Department of Conservation, Our Storage, Stockton FFA, Humansville FFA, Cedar County Family Services, Stockton Lake Yacht Club, Stockton Chamber of Commerce, various dive clubs sponsored by Skin N Scuba from Kansas City, a local dive team led by Stanton Rains, individuals from the community and surrounding areas and staff from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In addition to the lake cleanup, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the grand opening of the Cedar Gap Trail. Attendees included Lt. Col. Michael Fitzgerald, deputy commander of the Kansas City District, Stockton Mayor Patti Thompson, members of the Stockton Chamber of Commerce and staff at the Corps' Stockton Lake Project Office. Long read a letter from United States Senator Christopher (Kit) Bond congratulating the community for their efforts in completing the trail. Construction for the mile-long trail began in 2003 and starts at the Cedar Gap Shelter. It connects to the Stockton Expo area and offers additional hiking opportunities.

"Stockton Lake, the environment, the recreating public and the community benefit from the combined efforts of

volunteers and sponsors who support this event," Long said. "Many of them have participated nearly every year this event has been held, and their spirit in giving of their time and efforts, especially during the years when weather has not cooperated, is to be commended. The Stockton Lake Project Office would like to extend our sincere thanks to each and every one of you for your contributions to the success of this event."

*\*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Stockton Lake would like to thank all of the sponsors and volunteers.*



**Bradly Wright, park ranger at Stockton Lake, shows volunteers from the local Girl Scouts troop how to spread mulch during the 11th Annual Stockton Lake Cleanup. This year's event attracted about 225 participants who collected more than 3,000 pounds of litter. Donna Butler, who works at the lake, organizes the event every year. (Photo by Alicia Embrey)**

# Northwestern Division Commander visits Kansas City District

By David S. Kolarik

Northwestern Division Commander Brig. Gen. William A. Rapp recently visited the Kansas City District to meet the leadership and staff and to get an “eyes on” look at military construction projects within the district.

Col. Roger A. Wilson, Jr., Kansas City District commander, hosted and traveled with Brig. Gen. Rapp and reviewed progress of several of the ongoing and recently completed military construction projects at Fort Leonard Wood, Fort Leavenworth and Turkey Creek.

Both Commanders met with installation project managers and were briefed on the current status of each of the construction projects to include their completion dates.

They reviewed military construction projects at Fort Leonard Wood including the newly constructed

Permanent Party Barracks, the Basic Combat Training Complex, the Barracks Operations Training Facility, and the Chief of Engineers’ award winning CBRN Responder Training Facility.

After the Fort Leonard Wood review, the NWD Commander visited the district office and recognized several district employees with commander’s coins for their contributions to the Kansas City District, and then shared his vision on the direction of the Northwestern Division and the way forward.

Brig. Gen. Rapp continued his visit to the district with a tour of the Turkey Creek tunnel project and concluded with an overview of military construction at Fort Leavenworth.



**Brendan Dingman, a team leader at the Fort Leavenworth resident office, informs Brig. Gen. Rapp on the construction progress outside the Battle Seminar Facility. (Photo by David S. Kolarik)**

At Fort Leavenworth, Rapp toured the Chief’s of Engineers award-winning Lewis and Clark Training Facility and the Battle Seminar Facilities.

“The Kansas City District is doing great things, and all of you can be proud of your hard work and accomplishments and be assured that you are making a difference,” said Rapp.

## LDP Quick Facts

- \* First class was started in June of 1999
- \* The program has graduated nine classes
- \* Approximately 105 employees have graduated from the program
- \* Kansas City District’s LDP was modeled after the Seattle District’s program
- \* There have been nine program managers (most were LDP alumni)

National Seminars and Rockhurst College have provided the instructors and classroom facilities since the program was started. Laurie Murphy, with National Seminars, has led the effort since 2000.

The program gives the participants a fantastic opportunity to learn more about leadership, to improve their leadership skills, to learn more about USACE and district operations, to establish a stronger communications network, to see how other agencies and companies run their business and develop their leaders, to see how Washington works and to work as a team to provide a value-added product to the district. —*Steve Iverson, Deputy District Commander for Project Management*

## LDP Program Managers

- \* Steve Iverson (2000 and 2001)
- \* Sue Gehrt (2002)
- \* Lora Vacca (2003)
- \* Valerie Hansen (2003)
- \* Rod Hendricks (2004)
- \* John Holm (2005)
- \* Christine Hendzlik (2006)
- \* Jason Leibbert (2007)
- \* Cindy Moses (2008)
- \* Mike Coates (2009)



# OARS

## REVOLUTIONIZES RESERVATIONS IN THE KANSAS CITY DISTRICT

By Diana McCoy

Three members of the Kansas City District's 2008 Leadership Development Team implemented a reservation system on June 20, 2008, that streamlined vehicle reservations and promises to be an effective tool for data tracking.

The system, known as OARS, stands for Online Automated Reservation System and promises "it'll take you where you want to go."

Team members James Dietz, Steve Fischer and Lauren Hensley comprised Team Blackhawk which was responsible for implementing this revolutionary system. Planning for the project began at the end of 2007.

"This was a great initiative," said Hensley. "When we were assigned this project initially, we discovered this system was already in place within the Division and that Walla Walla District administers the program."

The team decided that instead of re-inventing the wheel, they would use the "tried and true" method and build on it to fit the Kansas City District's needs.

First, the team needed to do a lot of coordination for the project tracking system (P2), and the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System (CEFMS). They also had to coordinate with different budgets and accounting and take a look at how the internal changes would affect the District.

"After all the coordination issues were worked out among the different sections, we tested the system to make sure it worked properly, and then provided training to the end-users," Hensley said. "So, now it's very simplified."

The old way of reserving a vehicle meant the requestor had to visit the Logistics Office and look through a binder for an unreserved car—and hope there was one available. Cars were scheduled on a day-by-day basis. There was no way to tell if the car was only going to be used for a few hours or the entire day. OARS takes care of that problem. Once a vehicle is checked back in, it immediately shows back up in the system for someone else to reserve.

The system also tracks your destination and the number of passengers utilizing the vehicle.

"(Data) reporting is great within the system," Hensley said. "There are all types of applications that support the Division's and District's need for upward reporting. They now have a means for justifying the need for more vehicles or the need to keep the number of vehicles we have now."

According to Hensley, the system has been available for six weeks and is being met with positive results. She added that one of the best aspects of the system is eliminating the need for tracking people down for a purchase request and commitment.

USACE Logistics Activity Supervisor Karen McKenna is aware of the process Team Blackhawk put in place and is interested in sharing the information with other districts.

"Our team wanted a project that would have a life beyond this year's LDP class and we wanted to do something that would have the most widespread impact across the District," Hensley said. "Fortunately, this project was assigned to us."

# It's Coming!!! 2009 is the year of the DISTRICT MOVE

The Kansas City District is poised to proceed with a time-phased move to newly renovated floors within the Richard Bolling Federal Building. The General Services Administration (GSA) is in the process of completely renovating every floor in the federal building. In order to accomplish this, current occupants must vacate the space they are in and move into newly renovated space. The renovated spaces are designed to be state of the art and, when combined with new furniture, will provide an atmosphere that will enable district employees to better accomplish both their individual and collective missions.

The move will occur in four phases.

Phase 1 will begin in mid-March when the Environmental Programs Branch (PM-E), the Environmental Engineering Branch (EC-E), the Military Construction Section (PM-MM), Human Resources (HR) and the Operations Division (OD) will relocate from their current locations to the fourth floor.

Phase 2 occurs in mid-August. In this phase, the remainder of the Planning, Programs and Project Management Division, the Hydrology Engineering Branch (EC-H) and the Construction Branch (EC-C) will move to the west half of the fifth floor.

Phase 3 begins in late September of 2009. During the third phase, the Design Branch (EC-D) and the Geotechnical Branch (EC-G) move to the east half of the fifth floor.

Phase 4 is the final phase in which all remaining offices will relocate to the sixth floor in January 2010.

Information regarding the specifics of each phase of these impending moves will be updated and distributed through this publication, the Intranet homepage and other communication tools as needed.

Please contact Mr. Rick Van Saun at (816) 389-3552 or email him at [richard.vansaun@us.army.mil](mailto:richard.vansaun@us.army.mil) with all questions regarding the move.

## We asked ... and you answered!

### What is your favorite CFC charity?



Jan Burton, ACE-IT NWK  
I choose Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). A child has a right to be safe and a right to be a member of a family that loves and cares for them. When they are being abused and neglected, CASA can be their advocate. CASA is cool.



Greg Huber, ULA NWK  
Charities that help kids...I tend to look for charities that have low operating/administrative costs so a majority of donations go directly to children.



Denise Murrugarra, HR  
I have two that I contribute to. Awana and Focus on the Family.



Theresa Matthys, PM-C  
I haven't found a specific charity yet, but I'll be looking for one that supports breast cancer or liver transplants.

Question for December-January issue: What's your New Year's resolution?

If you would like your answer featured in the next issue, email the editor at [diana.mccoy@usace.army.mil](mailto:diana.mccoy@usace.army.mil).

# AROUND THE DISTRICT. . .

Like it or not, FY08 is gone and the **NEW YEAR** has begun

Employees around the Kansas City District gather at the Castle on the seventh floor of the Richard Bolling Federal Building to prove they've survived another Year End. (CENWK-PA Photo)



Hundreds of federal employees gather at Illus Davis Park Sept. 19 to kick off the Heartland Combined Federal Campaign. The Kansas City District's goal this year is to raise \$80,000 for those in need and for those that help the needy. (Photo by Diana McCoy)