

Electronic Town Hall



Recovery acts:

the Galveston District moves on

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In April of this year, the Galveston District released the list of civil works projects to be undertaken under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009—colloquially, “the Recovery Act.” These projects, spanning operations and maintenance, construction, and investigations, were funded right under \$300 million and are intended to invest in the infrastructure of the nation. Contracts have been awarded throughout the summer months, with more on the horizon. These projects are just one facet of the recovery that the Galveston District has undertaken in the last year.

In fact, in the year since Hurricane Ike, the Galveston District has come to know the term “recovery” as many variations of a theme: recovery of their homes, recovery of their possessions, recovery of their sense of normalcy.

“Recovery” has also meant salvage operations to open the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, repairs to hurricane protection structures damaged by Ike, as well as the previously mentioned contracts for work unrelated to Ike under the Recovery Act.

Hurricane Ike made landfall at 2:10 a.m. on Sept. 13, 2008, with a 17-20 foot storm surge. The eye, which was 46 miles wide, passed over the Galveston District’s Jadwin Building as the hurricane hurled itself over Bolivar peninsula and inland into southeast Texas.

Sustained winds were clocked at 110 miles per hour, with gusts up to 125 miles per hour. Ike was the third most destructive hurricane to ever make landfall in the U.S., causing an estimated \$3.2 billion on Galveston Island alone, with 75 percent of the island flooded.

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Workers make repairs to one of the rock groins on Galveston Island. The Galveston Seawall and related repairs were funded under Public Law 84-99, Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies.

withstanding hurricanes...and the tests of time

by Courtney Brodbeck
Galveston District Public Affairs Office

No matter how much people prepare for a natural disaster such as Hurricane Ike, one cannot prepare for the devastation of seeing their lives literally being gutted.

Casey Cutler, chief of Regulatory Policy in Galveston Districts Regulatory Branch, returned 36 hours after Ike ravaged Galveston Island to find eight feet of water under his living quarters, just four inches shy of flooding his home.

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recovery acts (continued from page one)

Those are some statistics, easy to list. Those statistics have a deeper meaning to the Galveston District employees whose homes were almost destroyed by Ike. Casey Cutler, chief of Regulatory Policy in Galveston District's Regulatory Branch, was one of the first to return home to the island after the hurricane and braved it out without water or electricity for months. Loretta Buddenhagen, a program analyst in the Real Estate Division, just moved back into her "Fish Village" home in July, with the help of some friends. John Machol,



Preparations begin to repair damages to the Port Arthur levee. Public meetings were held prior to the work to inform homeowners of Corps actions. (USACE photo)

a policy analyst in the Project Management branch, moved back into his island home in March, after living in four different locations. And Gus Marinos, the District's own Emergency Management chief, had three feet of water in his Galveston home and lived in 15 different locations since the storm—hotels, condos, rental houses. He moved back into his home in August, and work is being finalized on the home.

Another kind of recovery was taking place after Ike. An operations, engineering and construction and contracting team was working to open the federal waterways. The District spent

about \$3.2 million to clear the GIWW from High Island to Port Bolivar, according to Joe Hrametz, chief of the Navigation Branch. "We finished the job in just 23 days after the storm," he said. "We found telephone poles, trees, boats, and an intact bathroom."

There were other recovery acts to be accomplished. The Jadwin Building had to be made habitable for the workforce again, and the logistics team took care of that. The computer system had to be stood up again, and ACE-IT took that on. These kinds of recoveries were taking place in virtually every functional area of the District.

A vital part of the recovery has been the repair of the damage caused by Ike to the hurricane protection structures in Galveston, Texas City, Port Arthur, and Freeport. Repair work is ongoing to the Galveston Seawall and the Texas City and Port Arthur hurricane protection structures, and will soon begin on the Freeport structure. This repair work is 100 percent federally funded under Public Law 84-99, Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies.



The repaired West End (USACE photo by John Machol)

from the commander

The end of September brings closure to many things, and marks the beginning of others. Year-end closeout keeps the District—especially the Resource Management and Contracting staffs—operating in “hyper drive”: contracts awarded, budgets executed, projects completed, all to start over again on Oct. 1.

The hurricane season, while still a fact for us in October, has lowered probabilities and expectations. We can exhale a guarded sigh of relief, remembering the old mariners’ hurricane song, “September, remember; October, almost over.” We won’t forget Hurricane Ike. For our District and the Galveston area, the recent Hurricane Ike anniversary was an opportunity to look back and then to put it behind us. We now have a new first floor Seawall display here in the Jadwin Building, serving as a testament to both the historic partnership between the Corps of Engineers and Galveston, and the Corps tradition of “building strong” for more than a century.

As an impacted District, we were in a unique position to learn much about ourselves and how we operate as a team. Those lessons have been assimilated, and now we need to look forward as a District to new challenges.

In addition to Ike, we had much to keep us busy this past year. Repairing damages caused by Ike has been on the front burner, but that burner was shared by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus projects.

October brings us a fresh start. We will kick off the new fiscal year with the Combined Federal Campaign, which helped so many people after Ike, and continues to give to the community every day. We will execute a new budget, one that will bring many benefits to the community and the Nation. What a monumental time it has been for our District. Thanks for all your tremendous work that has enabled us to come shining through!



Colonel David C. Weston

Galveston District celebrates Women’s Equality Day

by Isidro Reyna

Galveston District Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District celebrated Women’s Equality Day Aug. 25, 2009, at the district’s headquarters building with a program inspired by the accomplishments of women pacesetters.

The program, titled “Women Who Dare,” drew a diverse crowd from the district’s various departments and featured stories about the struggles and accomplishments of Rosie the Riveter, Maya Angelou and many women military heroes.

“It’s important to commemorate Women’s Equality Day and the 19th Amendment, which allowed for women all over our nation to vote,” said Franchelle Craft, a civil engineer and Federal Women’s Program coordinator. “Our program showcases the struggles women have overcome and allows for others to see that women are able to accomplish so much.”

Patricia Brannan, a project assistant in the district’s Engineering branch, portrayed Rosie the Riveter during a skit presentation to the crowd.

“I wanted to pay tribute to my mom, Mary S. King,” said Brannan. “When she was younger, she worked during World War II when the men went off to war and there was no one to man the refineries in Port Arthur, Texas, where she lived at the time.”

“The women were asked to work in the refineries to replace the men who went to fight in the war,” she said. “My mother went to work at the Gulf refinery to help with the war effort, packing part of the refinery where they canned 50 gallon drums and loaded oil to transport to other places.”

“It was awesome,” said Brannan. “My mom was Rosie the Riveter-like.”

A poem written by Maya Angelou was also recited by Celia Cockburn of the district’s Contracting Office.

Craft hoped to provide empowerment to the workforce by educating event goers about women who took chances, risked their lives, were a voice and inspired others.

“Our program reminds women everyday that our struggle is not over,” said Craft. “It’s very important for us to have so many male employees in the Galveston District show their support and participate in our event.”

a monumental effort



From left, Don Carelock, Terrell Smith and Brandon Smolinsky from the Northern Area Office display a West End Seawall monument battered by Hurricane Ike.



The monument is now straightened out and awaiting finishing touches before being put in place again at the West End.

Ike by the numbers

Galveston District Response

- Supplied **1,217** truckloads bottled water
- Supplied **1,071** truckloads Ice
- Performed **434** Generator Pre-Installation Inspections
- Installed **177** generators
- Removed **97,328** cubic yards of debris
- Installed **26,534** temporary roof (Blue Roof)
- Supervised installation of **3,844** mobile homes
- Provided supervision of **two** Disaster Housing Community Sites
- Conducted **306** Infrastructure Assessments
- Conducted **44** Critical Public Facility Assessments
- GIWW cleared in **23** days

Galveston Island

- FEMA funds allocated to the City of Galveston of 8/4/09 Obligated: **\$82,671,078**; Received: **\$66,032,857**. 90% of these funds are debris related.
- Approximately **80%** of Galveston's population has returned.
- Three Galveston Island School District schools remain closed: Scott and Burnet Elementary, and Central Middle School. September '09 Enrollment: **6,099**; September '08: **7,724**
- Building permits: **21,000+** have been processed with a construction value of more than **\$327 million**
- Storm damaged trees: **3,381** have already been removed accounting for **48,202** cubic yards of debris. An estimated **30,000** more trees were killed by Ike's salty storm surge
- Galveston's businesses: **75%** have returned
- Tourism related businesses: **95%** have opened

withstanding hurricanes

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“It wasn’t the seawater we were fighting when we got back, it was the muck, which looks and smells like the sewerage and it was all over people’s lives,” remembered Cutler.

“Pictures of their weddings, their children, and their babies’ toys, you can’t prepare for something like that.”

He is thankful, though, that his house was built right and built strong. It has withstood the test of time, dating all the way back to the pre-1900 storm, and is still standing after Hurricane Ike. But after returning home, Cutler and his family witnessed the devastation of friends and neighbors lives; life was now about survival when amenities are scarce.

Cutler and his wife Sara were one of the first in their neighborhood to return after the storm. They didn’t have water for a full month and the electricity was out for about two months. However, they were both backpackers with the necessary equipment to survive and live in that environment.

“It was a bit harrowing,” said Cutler. “There was no more than one person per block in the neighborhood, and the police would rarely drive by.”

Eventually people returned to their homes but with limited resources. With a gas grill, Cutler and his wife were one of the only families within a six block reach that had any capacity to cooking.

“We ended up basically having an outdoor kitchen that got so well known it almost turned into a drive-through,” recalls Cutler. “People started dropping off drinks and food. They knew they had gotten help when they needed it, so they would drop stuff off at our house for other people that needed help. It was beautiful, the community did pull together, what few of us there were.”

Though there is a kind of stark beauty from the wreckage, there is damage that cannot be repaired. Cutler recalls how the devastation from Ike ruined many lives. He remembers an older man who owned a carriage business in Galveston. James was 76-years-old and about to sell his business and retire, but after Hurricane Ike he lost his business, his home, and some of his horses.

“It totally destroys some people’s lives,” Cutler said. “That hopelessness and helplessness from being there

“It’s a whole new time for Galveston. If people look at it as trying to fix the problems of the past and addressing the issues that we saw didn’t work before and try to bring new solutions to those issues, then Galveston can be a better place.”

and trying to help, but there’s nothing you can do, it really shatters you.”

Cutler, like so many others, lost several items that had been accumulated over the years. He does a lot of carpentry work and restores a lot of old doors and

windows that come out of the old homes in Galveston so all of his tools were downstairs. Dozens of carved doors and stained glass were lost along with other equipment.

In addition to the loss of equipment, Cutler lost a lot of invested time. He had just finished building his fence three weeks prior to Ike, but after the storm the fence was gone. He had also invested a great deal of time in their home, which he purchased after it had been condemned 27 years ago. He had just started to catch up on the maintenance of his home, but after the storm hit he felt like it knocked him back a decade.



Casey Cutler, chief of Regulatory Policy in Galveston Districts Regulatory Branch, has learned a few things about withstanding storms over the years.

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withstanding hurricanes

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“You have to revisit things you didn’t expect to revisit in fifteen years, now you have to go back and start from scratch,” said Cutler. “It’s getting to be too tough as I get older. It has forced me to look at something I never wanted to look at and that’s getting off this island.”

Cutler stayed during Alicia, witnessing the devastating effects of a natural disaster. However, picking up the pieces is getting harder every time, so Cutler and his wife have purchased property in Austin where his children and grandchildren live. There is sadness on Cutler’s face as he talks about leaving his home in Galveston.

“I have never thought about leaving Galveston,” said Cutler. “We’ve spent virtually all of our lives and our children’s lives here, but it’s getting harder.”

Galveston is working on rejuvenating the island, but it also has the opportunity to recreate itself.

“It’s a whole new time for Galveston, if people look at it as trying to fix the problems of the past and addressing the issues that we saw didn’t work before and try to bring new solutions to those issues, then Galveston can be a better place,” Cutler added.



Community Outreach Galveston District employees joined the United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Galveston for a community outreach project with the Galveston Island Humane Society recently. The project was organized by Andria Davis from the District’s Regulatory Branch. Davis also serves as the executive officer with the Coast Guard reserve unit. This project, which took place on Sept. 12, was part of the “Revival and Reflections...Marking the First Anniversary of Hurricane Ike” and helped the Galveston Island Humane Society revamp the building to make it more suitable for the care of the animals. In addition to Davis, Galveston District employees Kara Vick, Kevin Morgan, and Ann Logwood, all from the Regulatory Branch, and Bernice Taylor from Resource Management participated.

bringing down the house:

team effort puts District employee back into 'Fish Village' home

by Courtney Brodbeck
Galveston District Public Affairs Office

As the anniversary for Hurricane Ike passes, Loretta Buddenhagen is thankful to be back in her home in "Fish Village" on Galveston Island.

Buddenhagen, who was a Program Analyst in the Programs Management Division of the Galveston District at the time Ike hit, is now a Program Analyst with the Real Estate Division and moved back into her home on July 3, 2009.

With the help of Corps employees and friends, Buddenhagen and her husband George were able to rebuild their home. However, the road to recovery has been long and strenuous.

"We lacked money on the insurance for the exterior and we had to get rid of the brick before we could even start on the interior, said Buddenhagen. "My friends from work and our contractor, who happens to be a very good friend, rallied one Saturday and knocked the house down."

Corps employees and friends pulled up their sleeves and lent a helping hand in an effort to help

In order to restore their lives, Buddenhagen and her husband had to take matters into their own hands.

"We had the same problems as many others did with the insurance companies. We fought them for a while, but we got tired of fighting, so we just said we have some money we'll rebuild and when we run out, we run out," she said.

Buddenhagen stayed with her mother, who lives in Galveston, until her home was rebuilt, but rebuilding the life she had comes with sadness. The thought of cherished belongings she had collected over the years being destroyed brings heartache.

"This is my home and I'm not going anywhere."

"All the stuff we lost, I kept for a reason, I wanted my daughter to have it," she said. "It was a part of our lives and it meant something to us. I would give anything to go back before the storm and take more with us, but I'm not dwelling on it."

Like so many others, the aftermath of the storm consumed her thoughts and conversations, and life before Ike was almost impossible to remember.

"When we were able to start living in our home again, it was the greatest feeling in the world because the hurricane didn't consume us anymore," she said. "We could cook supper, sit down and eat as a family, watch the dogs play in the backyard, and go for our normal walks."

However, she will miss the company of her mother, who was a constant companion during the months she and her husband were unable to live in their home.

"It took a little while to get use to living in our new home; I was worried about my mother because we wouldn't be there anymore," said Buddenhagen.



Karl Brown, an operations project manager in the Operations Division, helps out with the rebuilding of Buddenhagen's home. Other District employees helping out were Nicole Minnichbach, Natalie Rund, Kevin Morgan, and Andria Davis.

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bringing down the house

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Kevin Morgan from the District's Regulatory Branch, joins others at the rebuilding of Buddenhagen's home.

Although it was hard for her to leave her mother, the relief of having a place to call home again is visible on Buddenhagen's face. As each day passes more items are added to the décor of their home, but the new furnishings are bitter sweet.

Sept. 13 marks the one year anniversary of Hurricane Ike and as the memories of the storm fill the minds of many residents, the sense of community and togetherness offers comfort. Buddenhagen looks forward to the anniversary because of the community activities and participating in the Galveston walk.

Although being with the community helps distract from all the problems Ike caused, another hurricane season is here, forcing residents to be prepared for the worst.

Buddenhagen said she will do things differently if another hurricane hits Galveston Island.

"I'm taking everything with me, we're renting a truck, filling it up and it's going with me," she said. "Our pictures will no longer be in albums, but on a disc."

Residents are working together to restore the Island to its glory. It will take time for things to be "normal" again, but that does not faze Buddenhagen.

"This is my home," she said, "and I'm not going anywhere."

With the grace of God and the compassion from others there is hope for better days to come. Buddenhagen and her family survived amid catastrophe and persevered during a time which tested their ability.



Andria Davis, Galveston District Regulatory Branch, works with other Buddenhagen friends to refurbish the home in "Fish Village."

New Texas Traffic Laws go into effect in September

by Horst M. Loechel
Manager, Safety and Occupational Health
Galveston District



Buckle your seat belts – it could be bumpy as new driving laws went into effect on Sept. 1 that will toughen the rules of the road, especially for teenagers.

Foremost, you will need to climb into the back and pull those buckles out from between the seat cushions. For the first time in Texas, all passengers will be required to wear a seat belt – not just those in the front seat or younger than 15.

While you're back there, secure a car seat for any child younger than 8. Currently, only children 4 and younger have to be in a safety seat. However, only warning tickets will be issued until June 1.

And if you want to talk about these changes, don't do it on a hand-held cell phone in an active school zone. As of Sept. 1, cell phones in school zones will be banned

statewide.

But most new laws are aimed at young drivers. Drivers younger than 18 can no longer use a cell phone to talk or text while driving.

Research from the Texas Transportation Institute who specializes in teen driving, states a 16-year-old is five times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than any other age group. The research further reveals that, the most dangerous activities for Texas teens are night driving and speeding.

So in order to decrease the probability of these fatalities the legislature passed a prohibition against drivers younger than 18 being on the road between midnight and 5 a.m. will be extended from six months to one year after they get their license. Also extended is the law prohibiting young drivers from having more than one person younger than 21 in the car with them.

In addition to this law, in-car instruction will jump from 14 hours to 32 hours to obtain a license, which now can be procured only by passing an on-the-road test. That test is being brought back after nine years, so today's youths will not be spared that special feeling of sitting next to a certified official – clipboard in hand – as they maneuver the city streets.

In order to keep SWG team members forewarned here is a summarized list of the New 2009 State of Texas Laws (note: HB is House Bill and SB is Senate Bill)

Seatbelts

- HB 537 requires all occupants of a vehicle, no matter their age, to be secured by a safety belt, no matter where they are seated in the vehicle; changes the definition of a passenger vehicle to include a passenger van designed to transport 15 or fewer passengers including the driver.
- HB 537 also prohibits a motorcycle operator from carrying a passenger under the age of 5 unless the child is seated in a sidecar attached to the motorcycle.
- SB 61 amends the existing statute regarding child passenger safety seats. The bill requires that any child younger than 8 years of age be restrained in an approved child passenger safety seat unless the

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child is at least 4 feet, 9 inches in height. The fine is no more than \$25 for a first offense and \$250 for a second offense.



Driving

- HB 55 makes it illegal to use a wireless communication device in a school zone unless the vehicle is stopped or a hands-free device is used.
- HB 2730 increases the penalties for driving while intoxicated with a child passenger by adding an automatic driver license suspension period for first-time offenders and an increased suspension period for repeat offenders.
- HB 2730 allows a new Texas resident to operate a vehicle without a Texas license for 90 days instead of the current 30.
- HB 2012 creates two new punishment enhancements: a Class B misdemeanor if a person drives with a suspended license and without insurance; and a class A misdemeanor if the person driving without insurance or a valid driver license has an accident and someone is seriously injured or dies as a result of that accident.

- SB 129 authorizes neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs) to be operated on roads with a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour or less. The bill authorizes driver license holders to operate NEVs without having a motorcycle endorsement, clarifies that drivers and passengers in such vehicles are not required to wear helmets and specifies that enclosed three-wheeled vehicles as described in the bill are authorized to operate in preferential lanes.

Driver license

- HB 2730 requires that all applicants under the age of 18 take the driving skills exam to receive a driver license. The law also requires that a provisional driver license (under 18) or instruction permit expire on an individual's 18th birthday, removes the requirement that a provisional driver license or instruction permit be renewed annually and increases the fee for those licenses from \$5 to \$15. It also extends the current phase-two restrictions for holders of a graduated driver license from 6 months to 1 year. These restrictions include limited night driving and limits the number of passengers.
- HB 2730 and HB 339 restrict all drivers under the age of 18 from using a wireless communication device while operating a motor vehicle.
- HB 339 increases the total hours of behind-the-wheel driving instruction a teen receives from 14 to 34 after TEA develops criteria for curriculum.
- SB 1317 creates a six-hour driver education course required for driver license applicants 18 years of age or older. It also mandates that applicants 25 or under must submit to an approved driver education course.
- SB 328 gives DPS the power to suspend a minor's driver license if they fail a breath or blood alcohol

Ole! Bob Peel, Galveston District program analyst currently deployed to Iraq in support of Gulf Region Division, celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month at his deployed location. (Courtesy photo)



Rec Committee gets the party started

by Isidro Reyna
Galveston District Public Affairs

The newly-organized Galveston District Recreation Committee has kicked off a fundraising campaign in an effort to raise funds for the district's annual holiday party and Engineer Day festivities.

Chaired by Bernice Taylor of the district's resource management office, the committee promises to deliver a slate of fund raisers that have proven to be employee favorites, along with some new ideas the committee hopes to make district traditions.



Lisa Lathem and Dwayne Johnson, both from the District's regulatory branch, wash a vehicle during the Rec Committee's car wash fund raiser earlier in September.

"We're extremely excited to present a great lineup of fund raisers and activities to raise money for our annual district wide events," said Taylor. "We believe the Galveston District will be pleased with the committee's efforts to make this year's holiday party a success." Fund raisers scheduled for the fall include a car wash, taco breakfast, holiday gift wrapping service and multiple bake sales.

"We highly encourage all employees to actively participate in the rec committee's fund raising efforts," said Taylor. "We want our holiday party and Engineer Day festivities to reflect how great our workforce really is."

Other members of the recreation committee are Dwayne Johnson, Regulatory Branch, Brittany Howell, Internal Review Office, Nick Laskowski, Regulatory Branch, Lisa Lathem, Regulatory Branch, Nicholas Perez, Project Management Branch, Isidro Reyna, Public Affairs Office, Kim Roberts, Planning Branch, Michael Robison, Project Management Branch and Kara Vick, Regulatory Branch.

"If any employee ever has a comment or suggestion, please let any one of the new committee members

know," said Taylor. "We'll gauge the success of each fundraiser based on the amount of money raised and employee comments received after each event."

"If there's a particular fund raising event you've enjoyed, please let us know," said Taylor. "The rec committee is here to get the party started, but we'll need your help to make it happen."

For more information about the district's recreation committee, contact Taylor at (409) 766-3885.

Things are different now

by Marney Mason
IT Program Manager
Galveston District

IT Support has gone through a major change. The District no longer has its own Information Technology people, just waiting to do the things the District needs to have done.

Computer acquisitions are centralized. Computer support is centralized. Telephone support is centralized. All of these things are controlled from Vicksburg, Miss., or Huntsville, Ala. All of our network servers and e-mail are controlled from Vicksburg and Portland, Ore.

So, you see there is virtually no control of any of our information technology issues from Galveston District.

Just so you get a feeling for how it works, we currently have 12 people assigned to positions here in Galveston District. None of these people work directly for, nor are they supervised by, anyone in the District. They work for two different organizations and six different supervisors, sitting all over the country.

Each of them will be glad to let you know who their supervisor is, in case you want to file a compliment, or complaint, but suffice it to say, that someone in Albuquerque is going to have a challenge reacting to your problem in Galveston within a few seconds.

We still have the same, high quality people working in the District that we always had. They are still supervised by folks who care and really only want to make your IT support better and more effective. There have been, and will be difficulties getting the support in these "baby step" times, but the situation is improving and should only continue to improve.

The best way to get your IT issue solved is to call the Enterprise Service Desk at 1-866-562-2348. Usually, they will have the help call dispatched to our local technicians within the hour. We have network and computer technicians on site 5 days per week. For telephone issues, please understand, the technician only comes down on Mondays, to handle our routine needs, so, if you don't get your call in, in a timely fashion, you might have to wait a week or more to get a phone moved.

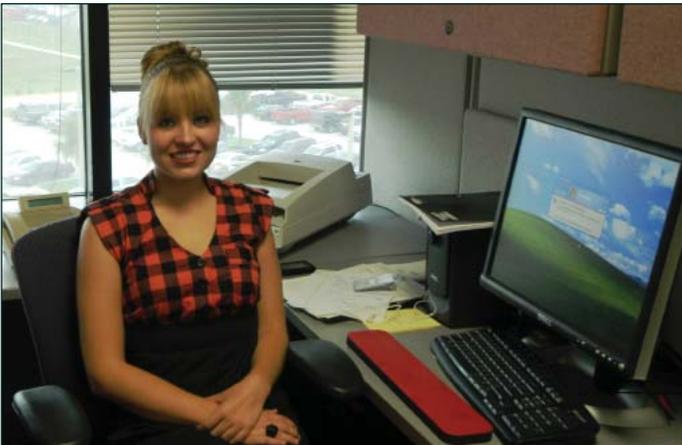
An IT Tiger Team was formed in early September by Maj. Gen. Riley to address some issues with the implementation of the Corporate IT Support structure. It is their job to listen to users, identify issues and propose solutions. This team is comprised of several senior level "Users" of IT services and only one or two IT professionals. This was done to minimize the "fox guarding the chicken house" syndrome and let the issues be identified by those having a stake in the process and end result, rather than in the IT Procedures.

If we all continue to work together and use the system and give it a chance to mature and ripen, it will be better for all of us in the long run.



Arrivals

Carolyn Anthony arrived at the Galveston District Sept. 14 as an appraiser for the Real Estate Division. Prior to joining the district, Anthony lived in Atlanta, Ga., where she worked as a commercial real estate appraiser, a licensed sales agent, and owned her own business called Sandpiper Appraisals. She is also an associate member of the Appraisal Institute. Anthony is married and has a stepson that is 16-years-old. She enjoys traveling, horseback riding and hanging at the beach.



Courtney Brodbeck

began working for the Galveston District July 6 as a public affairs assistant in the Public Affairs Office. Prior to joining the Corps, she worked at Seven Seas grocery store on the west end of Galveston Island. Brodbeck is a senior at the University of Houston-Clear Lake where she is majoring in broadcast journalism. She was born in Girard, Kan., and then moved to San Francisco her junior year of high school. After graduating, Brodbeck moved to Galveston with her mother. Her interests include writing, television news, and writing.

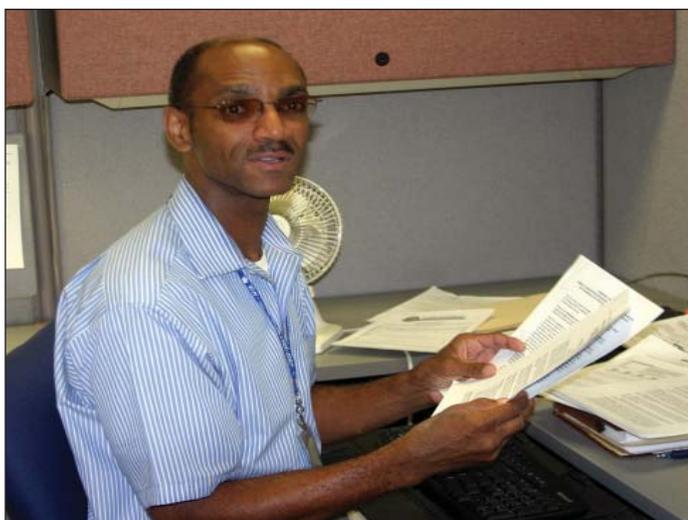
Rebecca Bond-Bostick joined the Galveston District Aug. 31 as an administrative support assistant in the Environment Branch. She was born in Corpus Christi, raised in San Antonio, and lived in Austin for the past 24 years. Prior to arriving to the District, she worked as an administrative program assistant for the Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration in the Planning and Program Development section for four years. Bostick also worked for the Internal Revenue Service for eight and a half years. In her spare time, she enjoys sewing, quilting, crocheting, and remodeling.





Emilee Stevens began working at the Galveston District May 12, 2008, through the Student Career Experience Program; she was hired as a full-time employee July 5, 2009, as a regulatory specialist for the Regulatory Branch. Prior to joining the district, Stevens was a lab technician for Dr. Anna Armitage at Texas A&M University-Galveston in the Coastal and Wetlands Ecology Lab at Fort Crockett. She graduated from the university on May 16, 2009, with a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology. Stevens is engaged and has two sisters and one brother. Her hobbies include scuba diving, swimming, offshore sailing and softball.

Horst Loechel joined the Galveston District Aug. 31 as a manager for the Safety and Occupational Health office. Prior to joining the district, Loechel worked for III Corps and Fort Hood as a safety specialist. Loechel was born in Ansbach, Germany and came to the U.S. in 1972, arriving at Ellis Island. In 1990, he obtained his citizenship in Honolulu, Hawaii and then moved to Belton, Texas. A former U.S. Marine, Loechel has a diverse background in occupational safety and health, ranging from maritime construction to the petroleum industry. Loechel is a single father with a six-year-old daughter, Hannah. His hobbies and interests include golfing, wakeboarding, surfing, traveling, music, and cultural theater. Loechel says “aloha” to all USACE employees and looks forward to working with everyone in the Galveston District.



Bertram Scott joined the Galveston District July 23 as a contract specialist. Prior to joining the district, Scott was a contract specialist at the Tank, Automotive & Armaments Command in Warren, Mich. Scott is married and has a son, who is a junior at Bowling Green State University. In his spare time, he enjoys running, walking, tennis and nature watching. He also has a social work degree and plans to do volunteer work in the future.

Terrell Smith arrived at the Galveston District July 19 as a hydrographic survey coordinator in the Northern Area Office. Smith has worked in the hydrographic survey field for 38 years, 26 of which have been as an employee for the Corps of Engineers. He was hired on as a party chief in 1983 with the Mobile District after working his way up the ranks from a rod man to instrument man with various surveying companies. Smith is married with one daughter and six sons. His hobbies include motorcycle riding, deer hunting, and fishing.



Vinh Nguyen accepted a position Aug. 16 in the Real Estate Division as a real estate specialist for the Galveston District. Nguyen has worked for the district since 2000; his previous position was with the Information Management Office as a system administrator. He was born in Vietnam and moved to Los Angeles in 1989. A year later, Nguyen and his family relocated to Houston. He attended school at San Jacinto College and is currently attending College of the Mainland. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing and playing tennis.

Jonathan Whitmire arrived at the Galveston District Sept. 14 as a civil engineer technician working as a hydrographic and land surveyor for the Corpus Christi Resident Office. Prior to joining the district, the Galveston, Texas native worked as a pipeline surveyor for Reddoch Land Surveying in Lake Charles, La., where he was a surveyor for the Junior Party Chief. Whitmire's father, Richard Whitmire, also works for the Galveston District in the Port Arthur office. In his spare time, he enjoys golfing, fishing, and hunting.



Donald Hester joined the Galveston District's Real Estate Division as a retired annuitant July 9

Brenda Warren joined the Galveston District as a reemployed annuitant June 22; she is the chief of the Safety and Occupational Health office.



Departures

Nicole Minnichbach transferred from the Galveston District to the Philadelphia District as a staff archeologist and was promoted to a GS-12.

Justin Bookout departed the Galveston District to attend the University of Texas, where he received a full scholarship in economics.

Condolences

Sincere condolences to **Ernestine Brown** of the Galveston District, whose father passed away July 6.

Sincere condolences to **Wayne Dunham** of the Galveston District, whose father passed away Sept. 10.

Bernice Rivers, a retired Galveston District realty specialist for the Real Estate Division, passed away July 5. She was born in La Marque, and was a graduate of Lincoln High School. Rivers had three children, Tina, Anthony, and Robert.

Marie Celeste Castiglione Pattillo, a project manager in the Galveston District Regulatory Branch's Corpus Christi Office passed away Aug. 7. A 1981 graduate of Corpus Christi State University, Pattillo earned her bachelor's degree in Marine Science. She was the wife of Mark Pattillo, who works in the Corpus Christi office as well. Pattillo was a member of the Corpus Christi Bromeliad Society, where she served as past president and secretary. She loved nature, traveling, animal-rescue, beachcombing, and celebrations with family, friends, and co-workers.

