I’ve been amazed by your volunteer-spirit to assist in emergency response efforts and Overseas Contingency Operations. And I’m still in awe at your impeccable ability to keep our multipurpose hydropower facilities running day to day and fueling renewable energy to power our Nation.

Living in Walla Walla taught me so much about the good and the bad. I bought a house, adopted another dog and grew with many people in the “friendliest town in America.” In my personal time, I began part-time graduate school with the Johns Hopkins University online and employed my paycheck to discover myself in the unfamiliarity of five countries and 13 U.S. states.

I am thankful for every moment because it helped me grow and prepare for the next chapter.

Mill Creek team opens new, sustainable building

story by Gina Baltrusch

Rainy weather couldn’t stop Mill Creek Dam and Bennington Lake’s grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony April 19 to celebrate the completion of their new office building, the Walla Walla District’s first civil works construction project built to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) sustainable-building standards.

The new visitor area just inside the front entrance was filled with visitors and District staff as Deputy District Commander Maj. Rod Baker and Operations Project Manager Rick Beauchesne officiated a short ceremony to mark the occasion. Mill Creek staff and project delivery team members provided tours of the new facility to highlight the new office’s energy- and water-efficient systems that will reduce operations and maintenance costs while will better accommodating staff and visitors.

“This project’s energy-saving features are designed to achieve a 30-percent reduction in energy consumption and significantly reduce office operating costs over the lifetime of the building,” said Simeon Francis, the new building construction project manager.

Construction began in February 2012, and Mill Creek staff moved into the new building early March. The new 3,756-square-foot office building near Walla Walla, Wash., April 19.