

## Corps comes to aid of region in February floods

by Nola Conway

Roaring rivers raged out their banks and inundated homes, roads, businesses, sewer systems and railroads throughout the Walla Walla District in the flood of February 1996.

Normally a dry and semi-arid region of the Pacific Northwest, inland communities in the states of Washington, Idaho and Oregon were quickly overwhelmed by the volume of water rushing through normally quiet streams.

Strategically placed inland, Walla Walla District was able to assist several communities in the region with their efforts to save their towns. Though the rising waters cut off access to major highways, the Corps still found ways to get much needed assistance and more than 129,000 sandbags to the beleaguered towns.

In Eastern Washington, locals citizens were praising the value of Corps-constructed flood control projects. In Colfax and Walla Walla, Wash., rivers roared through the flood control channels, saving millions of dollars of damages to those cities. Corps hydrologists predicted that without those flood control projects, those cities would be inundated with several feet of water in the heart of their downtown sections.

In Washington, heavy flooding was occurring in the cities of Waitsburg, Dayton and Palouse. Floodfight teams from Walla Walla District assisted several of those communities by providing technical assistance and sandbags. More than 94,000 sandbags were provided by the Walla Walla District to Washington State cities and counties.



**Dan Bickelhaupt, a flood control official, explains flood damage in Waitsburg to Maj. Gen. Stanley Genega, the Corps' director of civil works.**



**FEMA Director James Lee Witt, center, listens to Waitsburg residents talk about the flood damage to their town while on tour of flooded areas.**



Photos by Mark Charlton

**A passerby looks at the damage to 1st Avenue in Waitsburg caused by a broken levee on the Touchet River.**

In Waitsburg, Wash., one resident said as the last available sandbag was filled, a welcomed site was a Corps' truck full of sandbags so residents could continue to fight to save their town. City officials also called upon the Corps for assistance in returning creeks flooding the city of Waitsburg to their stream beds and were successful in that effort.

In Idaho, Walla Walla District provided more than 23,000 sandbags to the Nez Perce Tribe, Nez Perce County and Clearwater County. Dworshak Dam project personnel assisted in keeping limited road access near the

project to nearby towns cleared of mud slides.

Road closures prevented all but a few project personnel from reaching the dam, keeping the dam operational with limited available staffing. All county roads near Dworshak were closed except to emergency equipment during the flooding due to impassable roads.

Dworshak rose eight feet in one day during the February flooding, according to Randy Ryan, project manager. Ryan reported that this had been a wet winter, with a

## COMMANDER'S CORNER

The last few months have continued to be filled with challenges and accomplishments for the Walla Walla District.

In every case the dedicated people of the District have performed and, in many cases, met almost impossible schedules.

From the Ice Harbor Navigation Lock replacement to the Surface

Collection System at Granite, to the accomplishments at Bunker Hill, Idaho, there is no one organization that has been solely responsible — this has truly been a team effort. Without the focused effort of the entire District team, these achievements would not have been possible.

The issue that continues to be on everyone's mind is reorganization. We are still waiting on the guidance from USACE Headquarters that will allow Division Commanders to tailor their districts. Beyond that we are faced with the reality of declining budgets. The outfall is that even without specific restructuring guidance we need to review where we spend our efforts and make sure that we are focused



**Lt. Col. James S. Weller**

on the key mission areas of the organization. As these decisions are made, it becomes a very personal matter because everyone believes their piece of the mission is the most important. Despite that, decisions will have to be made to focus the district on the core areas of our mission.

This issue of the INTERCOM marks my last opportunity to communicate with the District in this manner. I believe that a major strength of the Corps is the manner in which we rotate the District leadership. This system works because all of you are extremely competent and you perform your responsibilities with the highest degree of integrity. It is good to periodically bring in new ideas and questions from the new leadership.

For me this has been a truly outstanding experience. The past three years have been filled with many challenges and accomplishments and, in all cases, my enjoyment has been heightened by knowing the great people of this District. In my 20 years of active duty I have yet to see a more professional and dedicated group. On June 21, I will pass the command to Lt. Col. Don Curtis. I am confident this organization will provide him and his family the same great reception that was given to me.

While I am leaving Walla Walla this June, the District will always be a part of me. Fortunately the Corps is a small world and I will continue to track your progress. In closing, I may not be able to thank all you in person for the job you are doing for the Corps and for the Nation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you. Keep up the great work.

**Essays**

**Lt. Col. Jim Weller**

### **New chiefs of Engineering, Information Management named**

Lt. Col. James S. Weller, District Commander, has announced the selection of the new chiefs of Engineering and Information Management.

Selected to head Engineering Division was **Surya Bhamidipata**. Surya is currently serving as assistant chief of the Construction Division in Huntington District, W.Va.

Surya holds a doctorate of civil engineering from Colorado State University and an Masters of Business Administration in Finance and Statistics from the University of Chicago.

He is a 1995 graduate of the USACE Executive Development Program, a registered professional engineer in the states of New York and Illinois, and a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers. In Huntington District, Surya has held the position of the assistant chief of the Engineering Division and as the Chief of the Hydrology and

Hydraulic Branch. He also served as a staff engineer at South Pacific Division and at Headquarters, USACE.

Selected for the chief of the Information Office was **Margaret "Peggy" Ballman**. Peggy currently serves as a supervisory information management specialist in 5th Signal Command, located in Worms, Germany.

She holds a bachelor of arts degree from Indiana University in Business Administration and Information Management. She has completed the organizational leadership for executives course and is 1994 graduate of the Army Management Staff College. Peggy has served as the director of Information Management in Bad Kreuznach, Pirmasens and Mannheim, Germany. She has also served as a systems analyst at the U.S. Air Force Accounting Center at Fort Harrison, Ind.

# Contracting specialist meets challenge of certification

by Bryan D. Stroud

"I did it, I did it, I did it, I did it!"

My wife glanced over the top of her magazine at me,

then went back to her reading. I think she was hoping I would either snap out of my fit or go bother someone else.

"So, aren't you interested in this fantastic new accomplishment?" I asked, a bit indignantly.

She put the magazine aside, stifled a yawn, and said, "All right, what did you do, take the garbage out again, or washed a dish, perhaps?"

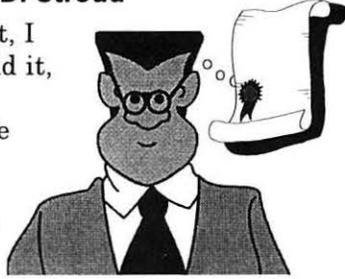
I am completely unappreciated. "No, no, no. What major task have I been hammering away at for over two years?"

"You got your CD collection back into alphabetical order?"

"Okay, I'll give you a hint. I'm now certified."

"It's about time. You've certainly been certifiable for long enough."

"I mean I am now *officially* at Level II in the Army Acquisition Workforce. No small feat."



"That's wonderful, dear," she said with no hint of admiration, and she picked her magazine back up.

Well, I think it's wonderful. Especially after all the pain and agony it required for this coveted title.

You see, the National Performance Review has basically done one thing since it's conception, which is to make my life, and that of many other contracting types in DoD miserable. Suddenly, even if we'd been doing our jobs satisfactorily for a number of years, we had to be "certified." This meant you must either have a sheepskin, or a minimum of 24 semester hours in business disciplines under your belt. Since my college career was pretty checkered, I started to research what would be required.

The paperwork that came down from on high said if we'd been in the 1102 series for 10 years as of October 1, 1993, we could be grandfathered. No such luck. Okay, then, you may take tests for college credit. Except there isn't a test center in the area. Very well, you may go back to school, through the Army Tuition Assistance Program. O-o-o-okay. I was also told that several of our mandatory DoD courses had recommended college equivalent credits, which would not be recognized by the newly formed Defense Acquisition University. Figures.

So, by hook and by crook, I knocked out courses at the University of Maryland while we were on Okinawa. They also had the luxury of a test center, so I took advantage and got about nine credits that way.

Still, one landmine awaited. Since I wasn't able to get the necessary credits completed by the first of January, 1995, I now had to take a brand new DoD course designed to drive you mad. Intermediate Cost and Price. The name alone strikes fear into the hearts of the bravest souls.

I dutifully signed up and tried to mentally prepare myself for this new round of torture.

You see, I'd had the basic course four years ago, and struggled through that. Algebra and I have never been on a first name basis, and this was part two of that mess. Heaven help me.

Two weeks later, and several sleepless nights, I came back from Port Hueneme, Calif., clutching the all important completion certificate.

I'm a survivor!

So now, at long last, I am certified. I've never been one of those insecure folks with an "I love me" wall littered with all my honors and awards, but this one will be proudly displayed.

I'm certified, and I don't care who knows it.

(Note: Bryan is a contracting specialist in Contracting Division.)

## Intercom



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## INTERCOM submissions sought

The Public Affairs Office is looking for contributions.

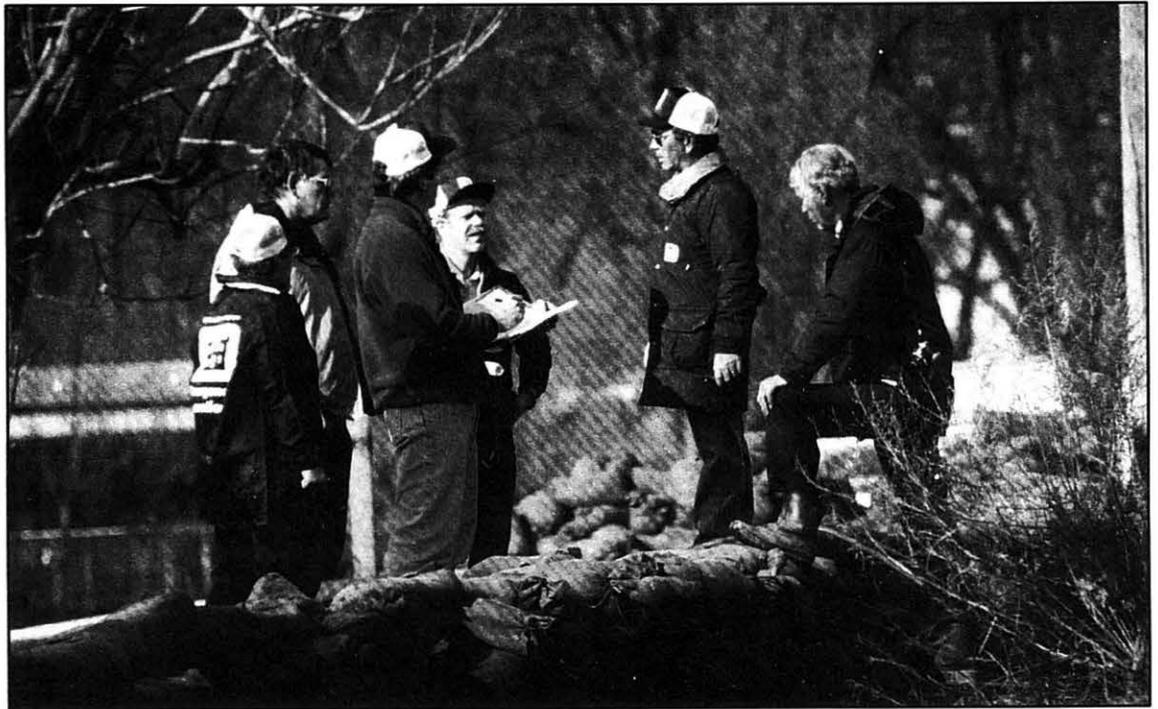
The INTERCOM goes to publication every other month and will appear in April, June, August, October and December. Deadline for submissions for those issues will be the 15th of the month, prior to publication.

Photos, stories on work activities, off duty interests, commentaries are all being considered for publication.

Because of space limitations, we reserve the right to edit and condense stories.

For more information, call Nola Conway at (509) 527-7019.

**A District flood response team inspects flooded areas in Waitsburg with Flood District Manager Dan Bicklehaupt, second from left.**



Tom Holt

## Floods '96

Continued from page 1

deluge of water in December that raised the reservoir almost nine feet in one day, said Ryan. The damage experienced in February was far greater, said Ryan. There were a tremendous amount of slides that kept closing roads and access to the project. Project personnel were to be commended said Ryan for going to great lengths to get to work. Several roads were cut off and it took some employees three to four hours just to get to the project.

The rock quarry at Dworshak was in great demand by the area during the flooding. Rock was used as rip rap and to repair flood damaged roads. There were more than 40 dump trucks in the quarry during the height of the flooding and more than 10,000 yards of rock was provided to the local communities for the flood fight.

The flood fight for Walla Walla District began in Oregon with flooding in Union and Elgin, Ore. The Corps provided more 12,000 sandbags to La Grande and Echo, Ore., and to the Umatilla Tribe at Mission, Ore.

More than 70 Walla Walla District personnel were involved in the flood fight of February 1996. Many more volunteered their time and labor to the local communities during and after the flooding, giving up weekends and evenings to assist residents in protecting their property and cleaning up the damage.

As flood waters receded, buckled roads, damaged bridges, homes and water systems were left ravaged by the raging waters. Walla Walla District Commander Lt. Col. James S. Weller toured the devastated communities with the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency James Lee Witt,

local politicians and other Corps officials. Early damage estimates placed the cost of the flood at more than \$22 million dollars in Southeastern Washington alone.

President Clinton signed a Federal Emergency Proclamation, declaring 18 Oregon counties, 13 Washington counties, 14 Montana counties and nine Idaho counties disaster areas, eligible for federal assistance.

The Walla Walla District FEMA-cadre received a mission on Feb. 16 to deploy a damage survey report team to support flood recovery efforts in Southeastern Washington. Approximately 30 employees of the district were trained to assist FEMA.

Walla Walla District was also tasked by FEMA to repair levees along the Touchet River in areas from Dayton through Waitsburg, Wash., at four identified sites. This mission includes sites that have been identified for levee rehabilitation. A survey of the condition of federal and non-federal levees was immediately begun by Walla Walla District as the flood waters began to recede.

The work of the Walla Walla District is not over, though, as cleanup and rehabilitation begins in the post-flood period.

Estimates of property and lives protected by the Districts four Snake River Projects, Dworshak Project on the Clearwater River, Bennington and Lucky Peak lakes, is estimated to be in the tens of millions of dollars.

This estimate should be much higher, including the protection dams holding back water protected cities all the way to Portland, said Randy Ryan, Dworshak project manager.

## THANKS

*The following is an excerpt of letters received by the District in appreciation of the Corps support.*

Thank you for helping me personally view the flooded areas of our region. Although I was stunned by the level of damage, I was encouraged by the outpouring of community support... thanks for the support of these damaged areas.

**George Nethercutt, Jr.**  
Rep., Washington

I want to thank you for your interest in the constituents of my district. The floods have caused many hardships on people, I understand that you have given very informative briefings and answered the constituents questions. I appreciate your concern and thank you for your work.

**Helen Chenoweth**  
Rep., Idaho

We would like to thank you for the help that Walla Walla County received from you ... due to flooding. We could not have done all that was accomplished without that assistance.

Your quick response to Walla Walla County during its time of need was greatly appreciated...

**Charles A. Maiden, Chair**  
**Lewis L. Jacky, Member**  
**David G. Carey, Member**  
Walla Walla County  
Commissioners

Our City Council and I would like to express to you and your staff our profound thanks for the outstanding leadership and assistance the Corps organization provided during the recent flood event.

Without the quick response and technical assistance you provided our community might have been faced with a very dangerous situation. It is reassuring to know that your skills were available at such an important time.

**Scott D. Staples**  
Walla Walla City Manager

The flood control facilities designed and constructed by the Corps of Engineers performed superbly. You did a wonderful job of balancing the flood waters between the Mill Creek Channel and Bennington Lake.

Without your flood management skills and a bit of luck, the City of Walla Walla would have suffered millions of dollars in flood damage.

**Dick McKinley**  
Public Works Director  
City of Walla Walla

## Deluge brings debris to Granite

Story and photo by Mike Halter

The floods in February brought more than water and destruction to the Northwest -- it also brought a record amount of debris.

Debris accumulation in the forebay of Lower Granite Dam reached record levels beginning in early February. An estimated 40 acres of debris challenged the Lower Granite staff. I

As if woody debris was not enough of a concern, the flooding also brought parts of houses, furniture, oil tanks, propane tanks and dead livestock.

The Granite crew met the challenge of the massive amounts of debris in the spirit of the old West and began to round up the wayward debris on Feb. 10.

Sections of the logs were surrounded by using a log boom -- a chain of logs connected lengthwise -- using a small boat known as a log bronc.

Once the debris was surrounded, a larger boat was used to tow it to the shore where it could be removed with a crane and piled for burning or later removal.

Using Corps equipment, removal was averaging about 0.8 acres per day.

By February 20, the removal was estimated as only about 20 percent complete and the pile of debris on shore was estimated at 10,000 cubic yards. It was appar-

ent that the growing debris pile would soon run out of available space. In order to speed up the removal process, Columbia Wood Recycling of Kettle Falls, Wash., was contracted to help gather the debris and pile it. Delta Recycling of Pullman, Wash., was contracted to load the debris into trucks and remove it.

The plan was to move all of the debris in the forebay to the north side of the river and restrict it by positioning a confining boom from the dam face to the shore. This prevented it from drifting back in front of the dam and interfering with construction activities. Removal can then take place at an accelerated rate.

As a last option, the debris remaining in the forebay was flushed downriver.

As if woody debris was not enough of a concern, the flooding has also resulted in a large amount of foreign material drifting downstream. Crews have removed a wide variety of items including parts of houses, furniture, oil and propane tanks, and dead livestock.

As the flood waters receded, the spring runoff is still to come, bringing with it another run of debris. But the crew at Lower Granite are standing ready for next log round up.

**(Note: Mike is a fish biologist at Lower Granite Dam.)**



Crews work remove debris brought by the February floods.

# Toothpick bridges put to the test during National Engineer Week celebration

Take an unlimited number of toothpicks, a bottle of glue, a piece of ordinary white typing paper, and send out a challenge to the youngest and brightest in our community to build a bridge that will handle a great amount of weight and you have the heart of the Walla Walla District's National Engineers' Week celebration.

The District, in conjunction with the local chapters of the Society of American Military Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers, sponsored the bridge building contest and a talk on hydraulics as part of the National Engineers' Week Events for Feb. 18 - 24.

The toothpick bridge building contest was won by Clinton Harstead, a sixth grader at Garrison Middle School. His bridge supported a load 2,528 times its own weight, or 233 pounds. More than 330 toothpick bridges were built by students from Garrison Middle School, Walla Walla High School, DeSales Catholic Junior-Senior High School and Walla Walla Valley Academy.

The object of the contest was to design and construct a bridge that conforms to certain size specifications and is both strong and light. The event is designed to explore the forces of gravity and stress. As students designed their bridges, they needed to keep in mind how the

applied load would be distributed and where the weight would be applied. The bridge with the highest strength coefficient -- calculated by dividing the maximum weight the bridge supports by the weight of the bridge -- wins.

According to Jon Lomeland, contest coordinator, local merchants donated more than 250 prizes to the students. Lomeland and Van DeWitt redesigned and changed the testing devices used by the District in past contests to improve the testing and speed up the process of testing the students' bridges.

Other volunteers in the district included: Russ Thornton, Bob Hollenbeck, Ernie Rogers, John Boschker, Gareth Clausen, Carol Buckingham, Charlene Duncan, Craig Rockwell, Simeon Francis, Karl Pankaskie, Nicole Heisler, Randy Chong, Randi Jeffrey, Dan Katz, Ed Blodgett, Mark Lindgren, Samantha Handcox, Kelly Cowden, Kurt Friederich, Mac McCann, Bob Williams, Gladys Hernandez-Cruz and Ron Porter.

Hydraulic engineer Mark Lindgren spoke to the Walla Walla American Society of Civil Engineers about "Using Hydraulic Models as Problem Solving Tools," on Feb. 21. Lindgren was the 1995 recipient of the ASCE Engineer of the Year Award. The meeting served as the monthly meeting for the ASCE and

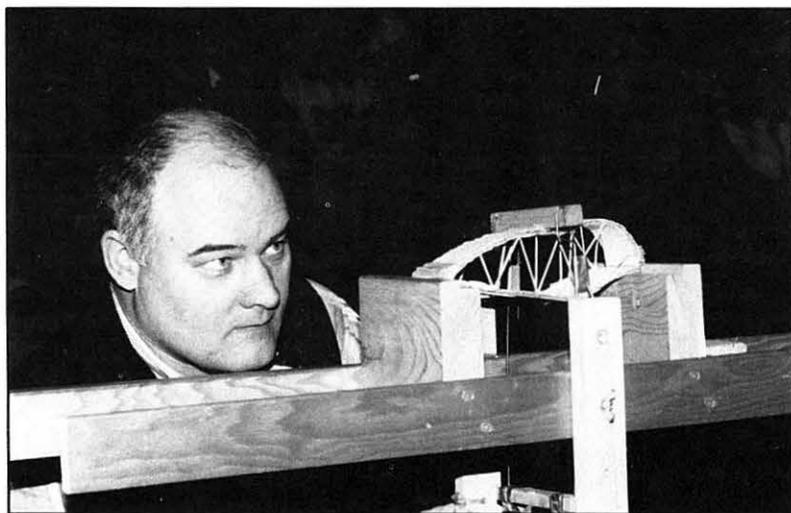


Photos by Tom Holt

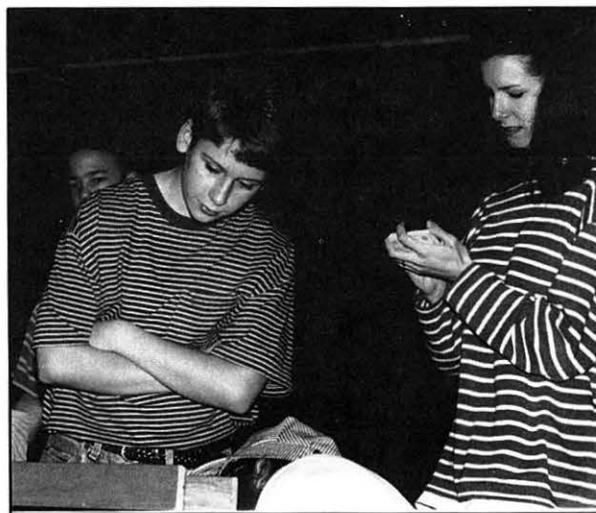
**A DeSales student watches as her bridge is tested.**

was open to the community.

Other local activities included a banquet sponsored by the Walla Walla College School of Engineering, with a talk on the history of the Hanford operations. Dr. Michele Gerber, author "On the Home Front: The Cold War Legacy of the Hanford Nuclear Site," is the Westinghouse Hanford principal historian.



**Van DeWitt, a District electrical engineer, applies pressure to a bridge building contest entry at DeSales High School.**



**Nicole Heisler, a District structural engineer, notes the performance of a student's entry.**

# McNary rigger saves life of Pendleton man

Quick thinking on the part of McNary employee Merlin Cassens contributed to the lifesaving actions when a bowler suffered a major heart attack.

Cassens was at a Hermiston bowling alley on Sunday, Feb. 25, when Pendleton resident William Barth, 62, fell to the bowling alley floor. Merlin and Alan Humphrey, a Umatilla County Sheriff deputy, went to his aid.

According to Cassens, Barth was not breathing and had struck his head. The cut was not bleeding because his heart had stopped. Humphrey started chest compressions while Cassens started mouth-to-mouth.

The two worked on the fallen man for 10 to 15 minutes before the paramedics arrived. The ambulance crew had to use electric shock to revive Barth. An hour later, Barth was reported to be sitting up and talking in the hospital.

Cassens had learned CPR in the Army and had recently updated his training at McNary Dam. Cassens is a rigger at McNary Dam and said the training paid off.

"It is a lifesaving system that does indeed work," said Cassens. "I hope the publicity from this results in more people being trained and updating their CPR cards."

Cassens has visited Barth since the incident and he thanked Cassens and Humphrey for saving his life. Barth is in the VA Hospital in Portland, recovering from the heart attack. "Training pays off. If it saves one life it is worth it," said Cassens.

## Colfax honors Granite hero

Ken McNaughton, a maintenance worker at the Lower Granite Dam fish facility, received a letter of commendation for meritorious service and heroism from the City of Colfax and Colfax Fire and Rescue for his courage and bravery during the floods in February.

Ken, a Colfax volunteer fireman, responded to a residence on the North Palouse River Road on Feb. 7 to rescue the Dennis McDonald family from the rising flood waters. Fire crews reached the home and rescued the family in extremely high and dangerous waters.

During the rescue, a free flowing ice jam collided with the fire engine, pushing it off the driveway and tilting it on its side, threatening the lives of six people. After more than an hour, both the McDonald family and firefighters were removed from harms way.

## PEOPLE AROUND THE DISTRICT

### NEW EMPLOYEES

#### December

Frank A. Godfrey, Ice Harbor-Lower Monumental  
Barry L. Richards, Ice Harbor-Lower Monumental  
Lynn S. Hinton, Dworshak  
Jeffrey E. Liddicote, McNary

#### January

Robert Lustig, Granite-Goose

#### February

Stanley J. Chun, McNary

### RETIREES

#### Timothy N. Lasher

Tim is a graduate of Cristobal High School, Coco Solo, Panama Canal Zone and he started his federal career as a machinist apprentice for the Panama Canal in 1962. He interrupted his civilian career to serve in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam Era. After serving in the military for three years and eight months, Tim resumed his civilian career and in 1973 he transferred to McNary Dam as a power plant mechanic. He worked at McNary for 10 years before being reassigned to Lower Granite Dam in 1983. Tim is retiring from his power plant mechanic position there. During his career, he received a suggestion award, a certificate of achievement, five performance awards a letter of commendation, a letter of appreciation and nine special act awards. Tim retired on Feb. 29 with 33 years and seven months of civilian and military service.

#### Edward F. Long

Ed served in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict era and he started his civilian career with the Navy at Bayview, Idaho as a machinist in 1977. Ed transferred as a power plant mechanic to Ice Harbor Dam in 1980. He was selected as maintenance foreman at the Pasco Shop in 1985 and is retiring from that same position. During his time with the Walla Walla District, Ed has received numerous awards. An active participant in the suggestion program, Ed received six suggestion awards, seven letters of appreciation, a certificate of appreciation, four letters of commendations, seven performance awards and 11 special act awards. Ed retired on March 29 with 21 years of civilian and military service.

#### Donald H. Stiller

Don graduated from Walla Walla High School and served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean Conflict era. He worked one summer while attending Washington State College as an agricultural inspector in Milton-Freewater. Don started his permanent federal career as a clerk-typist, GS-2 in 1958 with Walla Walla District. He was reassigned to contracting in 1962. There Don received several promotions, advancing to procurement agent and contract specialist. He retired from his contract specialist position on March 29 with 41 years and six months of civilian and military service. His awards include seven letters of appreciation, two quality step increases, six performance awards and two special act awards.

# President's budget includes \$102 million of work for District

The President's budget request presented by the Hon. H. Martin Lancaster, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, includes \$102.7 million for the work which would be done by the Walla Walla District in fiscal 1997.

In FY 97, under the Columbia River Fish Mitigation Project, the District could have approximately \$49.8 million for fish recovery efforts. This includes mitigation programs, design and construction of facilities' improvements, and numerous studies and research programs. Assistant Army Secretary Lancaster requested a total of \$107 million for the Columbia River Fish Mitigation Project. The remaining fish recovery programs would be carried out by the Corps' Portland District along the lower Columbia River and its tributaries.

Corps budget dollars fall into three general categories for civil works activities. These are: Construction General, General Investigation and Operations and Maintenance.

The budget request breakdown includes the following breakdown by category:

## Construction General

### Columbia River Fish Mitigation

- \$6.5 million to continue Spill Flow Deflector construction and post-construction evaluation at Ice Harbor Dam.
- \$1.2 million to continue post-construction evaluation at Little Goose Dam.
- \$6.7 million to initiate Fish Transport Barge construction and continue Channel Bypass improvements and post-construction evaluation at Lower Granite Dam.
- \$1.3 million to complete Gate Raise and Gantry Crane modifications and continue post-construction evaluation at Lower Monumental Dam.
- \$4.5 million to complete Extended Screen construction and continue post-construction evaluation at McNary Dam.
- \$29.6 million to continue Surface Bypass, Lower Snake Feasibility Studies and Gas Abatement for Mitigation Analysis.

Lower Snake River Fish and Wildlife Compensation Plan

- \$3.6 million to continue Final Rearing and Acclimation on the Snake, Clearwater and Lower Ronde

ivers and continue Wildlife Compensation facilities.

## General Investigation

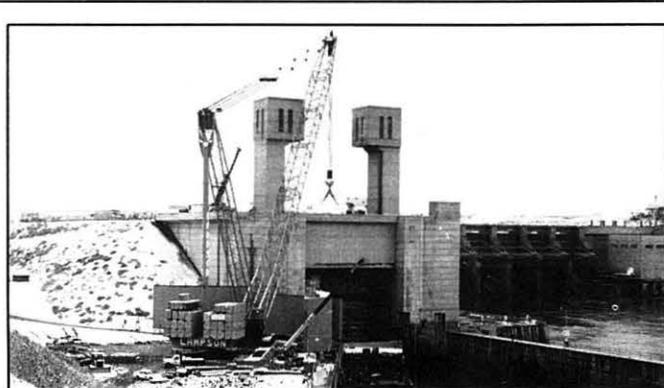
The budget for the General Investigation appropriation includes \$200,000 for the Jackson Hole Restoration project in Wyoming and \$230,000 for the Walla Walla River watershed in Oregon and Washington.

## Operations and Maintenance

The Operations and Maintenance budget for the District in FY 97 is \$48.9 million to achieve navigation, power, flood control, recreation and fish concerns for the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming.

The budget request, according to a key District manager, reflects the prevailing trend in government funding.

"We're all doing more with less just about everywhere these days and this budget certainly reflects a leaner resource environment. We're going to continue to carefully manage every aspect of our people and funding resources, just as we have been doing," said Mark Charlton, Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management. "We fully expect to meet our commitments throughout our geographic business area for the activities described in our budget request. This budget still keeps our dams and other programs such as fish recovery efforts in business, serving the taxpayers, who must ultimately pay the bills."



**Lock replacement - The Snake River reopened to traffic on March 9 when the replacement of the Ice Harbor downstream gate was completed.**

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Walla Walla District, Corps of Engineers  
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

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