Employees of the Quarter
Third Quarter 2013

Justin Proulx
Soo Area Office

James Lewis
Great Lakes Office of Hydraulics and Hydrology

Crystal Kelley
Operations Office

Innovator of the Quarter
Nathan Schulz
Lake Michigan Area Office

Justin Proulx demonstrated exceptional performance as construction representative with the Soo Area Office. He contributed significantly to the success of a project to replace a compressed air bubble system that keeps ice away from miter gates in the locks, and a project involving roof and masonry repairs to the North Maintenance Support Building. Proulx’s performance and dedication are exemplary and reflect great credit upon himself, the Detroit District and the Corps of Engineers.

James Lewis, lead water level forecaster in the Watershed Hydrology Branch, developed new and improved graphics for use in speaking engagements and media interviews pertaining to Great Lakes water levels and the nature of water level fluctuations. Lewis’ presentation slides explain things in easy-to-understand terms and have been well-received by technical and non-technical audiences alike. Lewis’ innovation, hard work and dedication reflect laudably upon himself and the entire Corps of Engineers.

Crystal Kelley, senior program analyst in the Operations Office and the district’s environmental compliance coordinator, is recognized for her initiative, can-do attitude and leadership qualities. She helped revamp the district’s compliance program for the Environmental Review Guide for Operations, establishing a team to ensure Detroit District facilities are in accord with this initiative. Kelley’s dedication to USACE missions reflects great credit upon herself, the district and the Corps.

Nathan Schulz, a biologist with the Lake Michigan Area Office, developed an automated wetland determination data form. His synthesis and integration of various key components into an automated form have significantly contributed to the district’s mission. Wetland determinations are simplified through completion of the form using field observations. Schulz’s innovation and dedication are exemplary and reflect great credit upon himself, the district and the Corps of Engineers.

Lt. Col. Robert Ellis, Detroit District Engineer, spoke in May to members of the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force, discussing the shipping community’s request for an extension to the Soo Locks operating season. Ellis also spoke in June at a meeting of the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee, HTAC, in Duluth, Minn. He discussed low lake levels, dredging, dredged material management, the Soo Locks and St. Clair River compensation. Another key topic was the 21st Avenue pilot project in Duluth. The project’s intent is to beneficially reuse materials from maintenance dredging over the next three years.

Sabrina Miller, project manager from the Regulatory Office Outreach Team, spoke in May to about 50 people during a meeting of the Huron Beach Civic Association in Onaway, Mich. Afterward, the audience had questions on topics including Michigan’s beach grooming law, and whether a permit is needed to remove boulders from near-shore areas.

John Allis and Keith Kompoltowicz of the Great Lakes Office of Hydraulics and Hydrology spoke May 30 at a University of Michigan seminar and panel discussion, “Low Great Lakes water levels: Understanding the causes and potential consequences.” The presentation was offered before a live audience and as a webinar. Kompoltowicz also spoke about Great Lakes water levels to the Port Huron Rotary Club on June 13 at the Masonic Lodge in Port Huron, Mich.; and at the Michigan Water Environment Association annual meeting on June 26 at Boyne Mountain Resort in Boyne Falls, Mich. On June 29, Kompoltowicz staffed a USACE information booth during Engineers Day festivities at the Soo Locks, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. He reported answering many questions about Great Lakes water levels.

Allis gave a Great Lakes water levels overview June 28 to the environmental group “Green Drinks” in Battle Creek, Mich.
Commander’s Column

Team Detroit, in keeping with the tradition of highlighting one of my priorities I want to take the opportunity in this edition to focus on my priority of People. All of you are doing amazing work on a daily basis in support of our mission to maintain the Great Lakes Navigation System. But, one recent event is worthy of highlighting because of the incredible teamwork and professionalism of the folks involved – the recovery of the tug Hammond Bay on July 3.

For those of you not familiar with the event, on the morning of July 1, the tug Billmaier was underway from Duluth, Minn., to Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., towing three barges and the unmanned Hammond Bay.

At about 3:30 a.m., while Billmaier crew members shortened the tow in preparation for traveling through the Soo Locks, they lost sight of the Hammond Bay.

After securing its barges, the Billmaier and crew attempted to locate the lost tug. During the search, an oil sheen was observed and a life ring from the Hammond Bay was found.

The crew immediately notified the U.S. Coast Guard, USCG, at Sector Sault Ste. Marie. The federal navigation channel was closed and the USCG marked the location and established a safety zone around the Hammond Bay.

A team from the Soo Area Office immediately jumped into action. The U.S. Navy vessel Dufek was dispatched to the site at first light and a USCG helicopter deployed to provide support during the search.

The Dufek located the Hammond Bay and confirmed the tug was sitting in about 37 feet of water inside the federal channel. The team used its remotely operated underwater camera equipment to conduct an initial inspection of the tug as it lay on the bottom of the federal channel. They discovered no clear indicators of why the Hammond Bay sank.

The next day the crane barge Harvey was loaded with dive equipment and mobilized to the site along with the derrick barge Nicoler in preparation for the salvage.

On the morning of July 3, with the derrick barge Schwartz mobilized, the contracted divers and a marine professionalism of the folks involved – the recovery of the tug Hammond Bay on July 3.

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Crews stay busy with maintenance, dredging

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

Summertime in the Great Lakes region is busy not just for marine navigation; it’s also prime time for dredging and maintenance of navigational infrastructure.

The Manitowoc crane barge and its accompanying tugs, the Racie and Kenosha, are regularly deployed from the Kewaunee Area Office to do work in the Detroit District and adjacent Chicago District in southern Lake Michigan.

Recently its nine-member crew completed breakwater maintenance at Milwaukee Harbor in Milwaukee, Wis., and Calumet Harbor in Chicago, Ill. At Milwaukee Harbor, workers placed armor stones along the north wall — a 700-foot section of the four-mile-long breakwater, said Joe Kane, captain of the Manitowoc.

A few weeks later, the crew rebuilt 1,150 feet of the Calumet Harbor breakwall. The district compressed the former lengthy project delivery process to a wider range of continuous improvement, CI, tools. CI goals are achieved in many ways: from employee suggestions; audits identifying issues that are analyzed to determine root causes; planning and executing of corrective action plans to correct the issues; and back-checks to ensure that issues are fixed and remain fixed.

One approach you will hear more about is the use of Lean Six Sigma, LSS. As our Quality Management System matures, we grow from focusing on standardizing business processes to a wider range of continuous improvement, CI, tools. CI goals are achieved in many ways: from employee suggestions; audits identifying issues that are analyzed to determine root causes; planning and executing of corrective action plans to correct the issues; and back-checks to ensure that issues are fixed and remain fixed.

As we employ LSS, we see material savings worth of investment. Decisions to initiate LSS projects are supported by data including initial cost and benefit calculations. Three common LSS project improvement targets are reducing process lead or cycle time, decreasing process costs and increasing customer satisfaction. Six Sigma doctrines assert that CI efforts to achieve stable and predictable process results are of vital importance to business success; business processes have characteristics that can be measured, analyzed, controlled and improved; and achieving sustained quality improvement requirements commitment from the entire organization. Projects follow a defined sequence of steps and have calculated and quantified value targets. For instance, we could spend $2,000 in labor on an LSS project with $250,000 potential cost savings over two years — a clear savings worthy of investment.

Initiation of LSS project improvement targets are reducing process lead or cycle time, decreasing process costs and increasing customer satisfaction. Six Sigma doctrines assert that:

- CI efforts to achieve stable and predictable process results are of vital importance to business success;
- Business processes have characteristics that can be measured, analyzed, controlled and improved;
- Achieving sustained quality improvement requires commitment from the entire organization.

The Lean Six Sigma approach is set apart from other quality improvement initiatives by a clear focus on achieving measurable, quantifiable financial returns; an increased emphasis on strong management leadership and support; a special infrastructure of practitioners to lead, implement and follow through on the LSS approach; a clear leadership commitment to make business decisions based on verifiable data/statistical methods, rather than assumptions and guesswork. A recent LSS project in the Louisville District examined small, low-risk military construction projects – projects involving rehabilitation of existing structures rather than new construction. The district compressed the formerly lengthy project delivery process cycle time from about 6 ½ months to 42 days by reducing non-value-added steps, saving about $442,000 annually.

If you have any suggestions for improvement, please let a member of the Quality Team know so we can take advantage of your ideas.

Ells family enjoys Coast Guard Festival

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

The Detroit District and partnering organizations are ahead of schedule on a dredged material disposal facility, DMDF, promising multiple benefits.

Restoration of the Cat Island chain in Green Bay, Wis., will create a DMDF for placement of non-contaminated material dredged from Green Bay Outer Harbor. At the same time, it will recreate ecologically vital wetlands for the benefit of fish, wildlife and natural vegetation. Additionally, the wave barrier portion will help protect the shoreline from erosion. Completion is expected in early summer 2014 — about six months earlier than projected, with the final cost anticipated to be less than $20 million, much lower than expected.

“This project is the benchmark by which all future dredged disposal material facilities shall be measured,” said Corps Project Manager Steve Check. “The cooperation between commercial and environmental interests was paramount to the success of the project.”

Workers are constructing a 4.3-mile-long, eight-foot-high stone wave barrier with five perpendicular dikes, called “legs,” that will separate three cells for disposal of dredged material. Barges will transport dredged material from Green Bay’s outer harbor either by hydraulic offload or by trucks at the offloading platform.

A gravel road on top of the dike will enable truck transport or pipeline placement of the dredged material to the cells. Over a period of time, the dredged materials will build up the new islands.

Material the Corps dredges from the Green Bay Outer Harbor channel will continue to be placed in the Bayport Confined Disposal Facility on the east shore of the bay.

The original Cat Island chain, consisting of Cat, Willow and the Bass Islands, was washed away in the 1960s by high water levels, waves and ice. This effectively wiped out over 1,400 acres of marshland. The new islands will help coastal marsh areas and underwater plants to thrive and provide 1,440 acres of habitat for various fish and wildlife species, according to the project sponsors, which include Brown County, Wis., the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Commander’s Column (Continued from Page 2)

the Hammond Bay to the Harvey, the team successfully raised the sunken vessel. When the tug was back at the surface, the team pumped out all the water, conducted a walkthrough of the vessel and determined it was seaworthy. The team secured the Hammond Bay and towed it to the boat basin at the Soo Area Office to begin repairs. The salvage operation was completed in about four hours.

A board of investigation, BOI, was established by the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, and the team lead, John Cheek, observed the salvage operation. He praised the team and said it was one of the most professional, well-planned/executed operations of this type he has seen.

The BOI determined that material failure led to leaks in the tug. The good news is there were no injuries, the vessel was salvaged, repaired and put back in service about three weeks later.

This is just another example of the incredible work done by the Detroit District and serves to highlight one of the many ways our district plays a critical role in the Great Lakes.

Thank you all!

Leas Six Sigma plays key quality management role

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

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The Manitowoc crane barge, owned by Mark Drei- fuerst, lays down a cat stone at the Calumet Harbor breakwater in Chicago, Ill.

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The U.S. Customs and Border Protection recently broke ground on a new $17 million Border Patrol Station on the east side of Detroit.

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

The new station is projected for completion by September 2014, with full occupancy expected several months later.

Gathering with Fisher and Chief Patrol Agent Mario Martinez to break ground on the new station Aug. 28 were a variety of federal, state and local officials, including Scott Thieme, the Corps’ deputy district engineer for project management; Jerry Moses, project manager for Turner Construction Co.; and Mark Cone, project architect for SmithGroup JJR, the Detroit-based architecture and engineering firm.

The Detroit Sector BPS is responsible for 70 miles of international border made up of the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair. U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation’s borders at and between the official ports of entry.

**Border Patrol breaks ground on new Detroit facility**

An architect’s rendering of the new $17 million Border Patrol Station now under construction on the east side of Detroit.

employees and families enjoy Corps Day

On a sunny, mild day at Lake St. Clair Metropark in Macomb County, Mich., Detroit District employees, families and retirees gathered for Corps Day — a relaxing day of food, fun, games and fellowship. The Aug.

15 event featured plenty of tasty sandwiches (hamburgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers) plus chicken and cold drinks. Softball, kickball, horseshoes and a nature center tour were among the activities.

**Tall ships visit Duluth-Superior Harbor**

Crowds watch the Dennis Sullivan, a replica of a Great Lakes schooner, in the Parade of Sails July 25 at the Tall Ships Duluth festival. The ship operates as a floating classroom and goodwill ambassador for the state of Wisconsin, offering educational day sails and private charters from May through September. An estimated 250,000 people attended the five-day festival, and the Lake Superior Maritime Visitor Center hosted nearly 25,000 people the weekend of July 27-28.

**Employees and families enjoy Corps Day**

Photo by Sara Rose Melby

Painting camouflage

Photo by Cassandra Kardeke

A diving save

Photo by Ricardo J. Garcia

Enough to feed an army

Photo by Tom Black

Let’s give it a ride

Photo by Michele Ross

Eyeing the snake

Photo by Kevin Gange

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

An architect’s rendering of the new $17 million Border Patrol Station now under construction on the east side of Detroit.
Engineers Day 2013
Length of Service Awards

5 Years
Rebecca L. Chorenko
Johnny D. Durham
Dwight D. Frazier
Jeffrey L. Garlinghouse
Shawer K. Gaylor
Hai P. Harrington
Alaa A. Jafar
Mark R. Kirkendall
Allison M. Klement
Michael T. Klimp
Melissa A. Kropfsteiner
Michael A. Krzycki
Kevin J. Kwasny
Gregorio O. Lontgoria
Maureen “Mo” H. Mahoney
Philip M. Mlinarich
Robert L. Morningstar
Andrew W. Payson
Steven J. Petracic
Paul A. Powell
Bridget G. Rohn
Timothy G. Smith
Zenia Q. Turner
Jason N. Wilderspin

10 Years
Peter J. Baumann
Dominique R. Blockett
Carmen M. Cline
Joshua J. Hachey
Sandra M. Kenzie
Frederick P. Killips
Abraham Lewis Jr.
Christopher V. Lindman
James D. Luke
Jerry V. Petill
R. Douglas. Ratl
Phil B. Stibbald
Christine N. Weisenberger

15 Years
Chris A. Allbrooks
Mark R. Aldrich
Paul D. Anderson
Robert A. Donaldson
Bryan V. Kimatami
Phillip C. Ross
Peter D. Sporte
Shelley J. Tule
Shaneil R. Ward

20 Years
Stephen W. Bernier
Kurt M. Bunker
Scott Gilbertson
Joanne M. Gray
Cassandra A. Kardoske
Tarsus B. Moore
Kevin Shorter

25 Years
Thomas E. Allenon
Dorretta Battles
Michelle D. Booker
Trenice Gray
Denise Galiley
Toai S. Massart
William D. Merte
Louis G. Paynter Jr.
Richard Salinas
Ronald E. Taipalus
Kerry J. Williams

30 Years
Edward J. Arthur
Carole A. Bell
Debra E. Benson
William J. Campbell
David M. Gerczak
Don C. Goltz
Trudi A. Lenieux
David J. Niemi
James T. Peach
Henry Rosenfield
Harry L. Salisbury
Gary W. Segrest
Charles M. Simon

35 Years
Colette M. Luff
Yvonne A. Mitchell
John A. Pelke

40 Years
Michael K. O’Bryan
Dawn M. Pilk
Paul L. Taylor

Leadership Development Program

LDP II
Aaron W. Dansirr
Janice M. Smith
Matthew A. McClure
Joshua J. Hachey
Peter D. Sporte

LDP III
Michael K. Allis

Emerging Leaders Focus Group
Shawn S. Sanchez
Charles R. Gould
Emily R. Schaefer

Detroit District Engineers Day

A Message from the Commander...

Team Detroit,

Recognizing the accomplishments and service of our outstanding employees is one of the highlights of my job. The annual Engineers Day celebration is an opportunity to do just that and I thank all those who took the time to submit nominations. We received many outstanding recommendations for the annual awards and it made the decision making process difficult.

I congratulate this year’s winners and those who received length of service awards. I thank you all for your dedication and for the great work you continue to do on behalf of the Detroit District, the Army Corps of Engineers and the great nation of ours.

Thank you!

Robert J. Ellis
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army District Engineer
Since the Continental Congress established the Army Corps of Engineers in 1775, the Corps has taken time to present recognition awards to its outstanding employees on Engineers Day. The Detroit District honors the following employees for their excellent work, achievements and innovations.

**Project Manager of the Year**

Maureen “Mollie” Mahoney

Maureen “Mollie” Mahoney serves as the Operations Project Manager in the Technical Services Branch of the Operations Office. Her positive attitude, technical expertise and excellent communication skills help her successfully manage and coordinate $20 million worth of projects. These include dredging and various emergency response projects undertaken following natural disasters. Always a team player, she has established positive working relationships with other government agencies and stakeholders.

**Engineer / Scientist of the Year**

Michael Panik

Michael Panik, a civil engineer and the facility security officer at the Soo Area Office, has developed a reputation as a high-energy, take-charge person. He is dedicated to supporting the facility, the plant and overseeing facility maintenance. Panik has forged productive relationships with colleagues, other government agencies and stakeholders. He also volunteered for two deployments to Afghanistan and one to Iraq.

**Student of the Year**

Maria Schneider

Maria Schneider, a self-starter who provides exceptional service. Among her many contributions, she helped develop a Quality Assurance tracking spreadsheet and made sensible revisions to a payroll analysis form.

**Leader of the Year**

John Laitinen III

John Laitinen III is master of the derrick boat Nicollet in the Soo Area Office, St. Marys River Section. A positive attitude, strong work ethic and leadership are his hallmarks. Following the grounding of the freighter Paul R. Tregurtha in the St. Marys River in August 2012, Laitinen and his crew put in long hours to remove shoals that built up while crews freed the vessel. This enabled vessel traffic to resume within one day.

**Professional Specialist of the Year**

Carole Bell

Carole Bell, an accountant with the Resource Management Office, is trustworthy, always giving her best effort and is consistently kind and helpful to coworkers. She manages the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System, CEFMS, for the district, and oversees CEFMS training and the government travel card program. Her ideas have been adopted divisionwide to improve operational efficiency.

**Technician of the Year**

Michael Klomp

Michael Klomp is lead construction representative for a $20 million boiler replacement project at the VA Medical Center in Battle Creek. He has not backed down from non-stop challenges in what is a very complex project. Through diligence, a commitment to quality and a dedication to safety on the job, Klomp has earned the respect of his colleagues.

**Administrative Employee of the Year**

Daniel Clark

Daniel Clark, an office assistant with the Lake Michigan Area Office, has proved himself to be versatile, dependable and productive. He promotes water safety as the Bobber the Water Safety Dog mascot, and promotes key administrative tasks. Clark consistently reminds coworkers to wear proper safety equipment.

**Maintainer-Boater of the Year**

Leigh Schwartz

Leigh Schwartz, a deckhand with the Soo Area Office, has established a reputation as being proactive and willing to go the extra mile to help the district achieve its missions. He also continued working on his own time to earn a master license qualifying him to operate up to 100-ton vessels.

**Innovation Award**

Keith Kropfreiter and Blake Gerken

Keith Kropfreiter, a project engineer with the Detroit Area Office, and Blake Gerken, a civil design engineer with Engineering and Construction, developed a standard, aluminum replacement stop weir structure at dredged material disposal facilities. It will replace timber stop logs that swell when wet, making them heavier, susceptible to rotting and in need of annual replacement. The aluminum stop logs, which are now in use at Sterling State Park near Monroe, Mich., will also be safer for Corps employees to install and remove.

**Distinguished Civilians of the Year**

Robert Erwin

Robert Erwin retired in October 2010 after a distinguished career in Engineering and Construction. Erwin was known as an old-school employee with a rock-solid work ethic; someone who could handle any job and was firm but fair with contractors. He helped bring formal partnering to the district as an effective means for Corps officials and contractors to assess projects at the outset and resolve problems early on before they become major issues. He was also instrumental in developing the district’s robust and successful participation in EPA’s Superfund program.

**Wayne Schloop**

Wayne Schloop worked 36 years for the Detroit District, retiring in September 2011 as Chief of the Operations Office. During his career, Schloop oversaw nearly 200 employees at headquarters and four area offices. He also managed major repair and rehabilitation projects on Soo Locks hydropower facilities. He retired having built close ties with American and Canadian government agencies, stakeholders and the marine community.

**Team of the Year honored for Value Engineering project**

The Frankenmuth Fish Passage Value Engineering Team is overseeing a project that involves building a series of steps in the Cass River to enable fish to spawn upstream of the Frankenmuth Dam, located in Saginaw County, Mich. The team completed the Value Engineering Study ahead of schedule, returning seven proposals with potential savings estimated at more than $1.4 million. Study completion preceded the engineering and design phases. Project Manager Carl Platz and Value Engineering Officer Leigh Ann Ryckeghem lead the team, which also includes Hal Harrington, Cindy Jarema, Julie Udell, Adam Virga and Andy Wadyz.

**District honors Employees of the Year**

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Engineers Day 2013

Length of Service Awards

5 Years
Rebecca L. Chorenko
Johnny D. Durham
Dwight D. Frazier
Jeffrey L. Garlinghouse
Shawna K. Gaylor
Hai P. Harrington
Alaa A. Jafar
Mark R. Kirkendall
Allison M. Klement
Michael T. Knoop
Melissa A. Kripfretier
Michael A. Krzyzcki
Kevin J. Kwasny
Gregorio O. Lontgoria
Maureen “Volle” E. Mahoney
Philip M. Minarich
Robert L. Morningstar
Andrew W. Payson
Steven J. Petracchi
Paul A. Powell
Bridget G. Rohn
Timothy G. Smith
Zena Q. Turner
Jason N. Wilderspin

10 Years
Peter J. Baumgart
Dominique R. Blockett
Carmen M. Chene
Joshua J. Hachey
Sandi M. Kenzey
Frederick P. Killips
Abraham Lewis Jr.
Christopher V. Lindman
James D. Luke
Jerry V. Petill
R. Douglas, Rail
Phil B. Sibbald
Christine N. Weisenberger

15 Years
Chris A. Allbrough
Mark R. Aldrich
Paul D. Anderson
Robert A. Donaldson
Bryan V. Kimatsuki
Phillip C. Ross
Peter D. Spofford
Shelley J. Tule
Shaneil R. Ward

20 Years
Stephen W. Bernier
Kurt M. Bunker
Scott Gilbertson
Joanne M. Gray
Cassandra A. Kardos
Tarsus B. Moore
Kevin Shorter

25 Years
Thomas E. Allerson
Dorretta Battles
Michelle D. Booker
Tremiece Gray
Denise Gallay
Toa S. Massart
William D. Merte
Louis G. Paynter Jr.
Richard Saulson
Ronald E. Taupalus
Kerry J. Williams

30 Years
Edward J. Arthur
Carole A. Bell
Debra E. Benson
William J. Campbell
David M. Gerczak
Don C. Goltz

Trudi A. Lemieux
David J. Lierba
James T. Peach
Henry Rosenfield
Harry L. Salisbury
Gary W. Segrest
Charles M. Simon

35 Years
Colette M. Luff
Yvonne A. Mitchell
John A. Pelle

40 Years
Michael K. O’Bryan
Dawn M. Phek
Paul L. Taylor

Leadership Development Program

LDP II
Aaron W. Darnall
Janice M. Smith
Matthew A. McClarren
Joshua J. Hackey
Peter D. Spofford

LDP III
Michael K. Allis

Emerging Leaders Focus Group
Shawn S. Sanchez
Charles R. Gould
Emily R. Schaefer

Detroit District Engineers Day

A Message from the Commander...

Team Detroit,
Recognizing the accomplishments and service of our outstanding employees is one of the highlights of my job. The annual Engineers Day celebration is an opportunity to do just that and I thank all those who took the time to submit nominations. We received many outstanding recommendations for the annual awards and it made the decision making process difficult.

I congratulate this year’s winners and those who received length of service awards. I thank you all for your dedication and for the great work you continue to do on behalf of the Detroit District, the Army Corps of Engineers and this great nation of ours.

Thank you!

Robert J. Ellis
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army District Engineer

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Border Patrol breaks ground on new Detroit facility

By Tom Black  
Public Affairs Office  
The U.S. Customs and Border Protection recently broke ground on a new $17 million Border Patrol Station.

The new station is projected for completion by September 2014, with full occupancy expected several months later.

Gathering with Fisher and Chief Patrol Agent Mario Martinez to break ground on the new station Aug. 28 were a variety of federal, state and local officials, including Scott Thiemann, the Corps’ deputy district engineer for project management; Jerry Moses, project manager for Turner Construction Co.; and Mark Cone, project architect for Smith-Group JMR, the Detroit-based architecture and engineering firm.

The Detroit Sector BPS is responsible for 70 miles of international border made up of the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair. U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation’s borders at and between the official ports of entry.

“Enough to feed an army”  
Photo by Ricardo J. Garcia

Employees and families enjoy Corps Day  

On a sunny, mild day at Lake St. Clair Metropark in Macomb County, Mich., Detroit District employees, families and retirees gathered for Corps Day — a relaxing day of food, fun, games and fellowship. The Aug.

“Let’s give it a ride”  
Photo by Tom Black

“Eyeing the snake”  
Photo by Michele Ross

“Tall ships visit Duluth-Superior Harbor”  

Crowds watch the Dennis Sullivan, a replica of a Great Lakes schooner, in the Parade of Sails July 25 at the Tall Ships Duluth festival. The ship operates as a floating classroom and goodwill ambassador for the state of Wisconsin, offering educational day sails and private charters from May through September. An estimated 250,000 people attended the five-day festival, and the Lake Superior Maritime Visitor Center hosted nearly 25,000 people the weekend of July 27-28.

“A diving save”  
Photo by Cassandra Kardeke

“Painting camouflage”  
Photo by Sara Rose Malby

“Tall ships visit Duluth-Superior Harbor”  

An architect’s rendering of the new $17 million Border Patrol Station now under construction on the east side of Detroit.
Crews stay busy with maintenance, dredging

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

Summertime in the Great Lakes region is busy not just for marine navigation; it's also prime time for construction. The Detroit District is busy not just for marine navigation; it's also prime time for construction. The Detroit District quality management role in overseeing the dredging and maintenance work in the Great Lakes region.

The Manitowoc crane barge and its accompanying tugs, the Racinia and Kenosha, are regularly deployed from the Kewaunee Area Office to do work in the Detroit District and adjacent Chicago District in southern Lake Michigan. Recently its nine-member crew completed breakwater maintenance at Milwaukee Harbor in Milwaukee, Wis., and Calumet Harbor in Chicago, Ill.

At Milwaukee Harbor, workers placed armor stones along the north wall — a 700-foot section of the four-mile-long breakwater, said Joe Kane, captain of the Manitowoc.

In recent weeks, the crew rebuilt 1,150 feet of the Calumet Harbor breakwall in South Chicago. This included re-anchoring 50-foot sections enclosed and partitioned by sheet piles; called "cells" - by placing core stone in each cell.

After placing core stone (crushed limestone) into the cells, crews placed cut stones, each weighing up to nine tons, along the top of the cells. Then they added armor stone along the sides. The crew also smoothed up the shear pile on the sides of the breakwall. Next summer, the crew will devote considerable time to grouting the Calumet Harbor breakwalls.

On July 31, the Manitowoc crew arrived at Indiana Harbor in East Chicago, Ind., to begin dismantling a decaying steel superstructure from atop the pier. The catwalk-like structure, 2,300 feet long, was corroded in the area where the pier meets the Calumet Harbor breakwall.

Three common LSS project improvement targets are reducing process lead or cycle time, decreasing process costs and increasing customer satisfaction. Six Sigma doctrines assert that CI efforts to achieve stable and predictable process results are of vital importance to business success; business processes have characteristics that can be measured, analyzed, controlled and improved; and achieving sustained quality improvement requires commitment from the entire organization.

The Lean Six Sigma approach is set apart from other quality improvement initiatives by a clear focus on achieving measurable, quantifiable financial returns; an increased emphasis on strong management leadership and support; a special infrastructure of practitioners to lead, implement and follow through on the LSS approach; a clear leadership commitment to make business decisions based on verifiable data/statistical methods, rather than assumptions and guesswork.

A recent LSS project in the Louisville District examined small, low-risk military construction projects — projects involving rehabilitation of existing structures rather than new construction. The district compressed the formerly lengthy project delivery process cycle time from about 6½ months to 42 days by reducing non-value added steps, saving about $442,000 annually.

If you have any suggestions for improvement, please let a member of the Detroit District Quality Team know. Thanks to Joyce Hess for providing thoughts for this article.

The Manitowoc crane barge, operated by Mark Dreier, lays down a cut stone at the Calumet Harbor breakwater in Chicago, Ill.

Lean Six Sigma plays key quality management role

As our Quality Management System matures, we grow from focusing on standardizing business processes to a wider range of continuous improvement, CI, tools. CI goals are achieved in many ways: from employee suggestions; audits identifying issues that are analyzed to determine root causes; planning and executing of corrective action plans to correct the issues; and back-checks to ensure that issues are fixed and remain fixed.

One approach you will hear more about is the use of Lean Six Sigma, LSS. In the past two years, USACE has trained LSS practitioners to lead teams in improving product quality through the identification and removal of the causes of defects. LSS practitioners use a wide range of statistical and analytical tools to quantify targets and expected results that support decision making. Projects follow a defined sequence of steps and have calculated and quantified value targets. For instance, we could spend $2,000 in labor on an LSS project with $250,000 potential cost savings over two years — a clear savings worthy of investment.

Decisions to initiate LSS projects are supported by data including initial cost and benefit calculations. Three common LSS project improvement targets are reducing process lead or cycle time, decreasing process costs and increasing customer satisfaction. Six Sigma doctrines assert that CI efforts to achieve stable and predictable process results are of vital importance to business success; business processes have characteristics that can be measured, analyzed, controlled and improved; and achieving sustained quality improvement requires commitment from the entire organization.

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Scott Thieme, deputy district engineer for project management, said: "The Detroit District Quality Champion, Joyce Hess, for providing thoughts for this article.

Scott Thieme

Cat Island construction project ahead of schedule

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

The Detroit District and partnering organizations are ahead of schedule on a dredged material disposal facility, DMDF, promising multiple benefits.

Restoration of the Cat Island chain in Green Bay, Wis., will create a DMDF for placement of non-contaminated material dredged from Green Bay Outer Harbor. At the same time, it will recreate ecologically vital wetlands for the benefit of fish, wildlife and natural vegetation. Additionally, the wave barrier portion will help protect the shoreline from erosion. Completion is expected in early summer 2014 — about six months earlier than projected, with the final cost anticipated to be less than $20 million, much lower than expected.

"This project is the benchmark by which all future dredged disposal material facilities shall be measured," said Corps Project Manager Steve Check. “The cooperation between commercial and environmental interests was paramount to the success of the project.”

Workers are constructing a 4.3-mile-long, eight-foot-high stone wave barrier with five perpendicular dikes, called "legs," that will separate three cells for disposal of dredged material. Barges will transfer material from Green Bay’s outer harbor to a barge dock by hydraulic offload or by trucks at the offloading platform.

A gravel road on top of the dike will enable truck transport or pipeline placement of the dredged material to the cells. Over a period of time, the dredged material will build up the new island.

Material the Corps dredges from the Green Bay Outer Harbor channel will continue to be placed in the Bayport Confined Disposal Facility on the east side of the bay.

The original Cat Island chain, consisting of Cat, Willow and the Bass Islands, was washed away in the 1960s by high water levels, waves and ice. This effectively wiped out over 1,400 acres of marshland. The new islands will help coastal marsh areas and underwater plants to thrive and provide 1,440 acres of habitat for various fish and wildlife species, according to the project sponsors, which include Brown County, Wis., the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Commander's Column (Continued from Page 2)
The Hammond Bay to the Harvey, the team successfully raised the sunken vessel. When the tug was back at the surface, the team pumped out all the water, conducted a walkthrough of the vessel and determined it was seaworthy. The team secured the Hammond Bay and towed it to the boat basin at the Soo Area Office to begin repairs. The salvage operation was completed in about four hours.

A board of investigation, BOI, was established by the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, and the team lead, John Cheek, observed the salvage operation. He praised the team and said it was one of the most professional, well-planned/executed operations of this type he has seen. The BOI determined that material failure led to leaks in the tug. The good news is there were no injuries, the Hammond Bay was salvaged, repaired and put back in service about three weeks later.

This is just another example of the incredible work done by the Detroit District and serves to highlight one of the many ways our district plays a critical role in the Great Lakes.

Thank you all!

Ells family enjoys Coast Guard Festival

The Detroit District Engineer Lt. Col. Robert Ells and his wife Dominica Ells enjoy the Coast Guard Festival Parade in Grand Haven, Mich., where their daughter distributes plastic toys rings to spectators. The event, which featured tours of Coast Guard vessels, offered an opportunity for The Detroit District to build relationships and socialize with Coast Guard stakeholders.

Photo by Randy Risenhoover

An aerial shot of the Cat Island wave barrier and ‘legs’ that will enclose dredged materials reveals remnants of the original Cat Island in the lower cell.

USACE Photo

This is just another example of the incredible work done by the Detroit District and serves to highlight one of the many ways our district plays a critical role in the Great Lakes.

Thank you all!
Commander's Column

Corps employees demonstrate teamwork and professionalism

Team Detroit, in keeping with the tradition of highlighting one of my priorities I want to take the opportunity in this edition to focus on my priority of People. All of you do amazing work on a daily basis in support of our mission to maintain the Great Lakes Navigation System. But, one recent event is worthy of highlighting because of the incredible teamwork and professionalism of the folks involved – the recovery of the tug Hammond Bay on July 3. For those of you not familiar with the event, on the morning of July 1, the tug Billmaier was underway from Duluth, Minn., to Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., towing three barges and the unmanned Hammond Bay. At about 3:30 a.m., while Billmaier crew members shortened the tow in preparation for traveling through the Soo Locks, they lost sight of the Hammond Bay. After securing its barges, the Billmaier crew attempted to locate the lost tug. During the search, an oil sheen was observed and a life ring from the Hammond Bay was found and recovered. The crew immediately notified the U.S. Coast Guard, USCG, at Sector Sault Ste. Marie. The federal navigation channel was closed and the USCG marked the location and established a safety zone around the Hammond Bay. A team from the Soo Area Office immediately jumped into action. The Army vessel Dues was dispatched to the site at first light and a USCG helicopter deployed to provide support during the search. The Dues located the Hammond Bay and confirmed the tug was sitting in about 37 feet of water inside the federal channel. The team used its remotely operated underwater camera equipment to conduct an initial investigation of the tug as it lay on the bottom of the federal channel. They discovered no clear indicators of why the Hammond Bay sank. The next day the crane barge Harvey was loaded with dive equipment and mobilized to the site along with the dredge barge Niceter in preparation for the salvage. On the morning of July 3, with the dredge barge Schwartz mobilized, the contracted divers and a marine

Rise in permit applications tied to low water levels

By Charlie Simon

Regulatory Office

The Detroit Regulatory Office has seen a notable spike in permit applications. From December 2012 through May 2013, applications were up 66 percent compared to the four-year average for the same time period, said John Konik, Chief of the Regulatory Office. Permits are required from the Corps for all work in navigable waters and for the discharge of material in U.S. waters, including wetlands. In the previous four years, Regulatory Office averaged over 1,650 applications a year. In 2013, 1,300 applications were received in the first six months. The increase in permit applications seems tied to low water levels on the Great Lakes, according to Regulatory staff. Data from Regulatory identifies that 49 percent of recent applications have been for dredging. This compares to 28 percent in previous years. Requests for other types of work remain stable, but shore protection applications are below average.

Continued from Page 10

and coming loose from some of its attachments to the concrete pier. Crews removed the structure in pieces which they loaded onto the Manitowoc. The Corps worked out an arrangement with a local scrap metal company to take possession of the metal. "It’ll be a win-win for both of us," Kane said. On the dredging front, several key projects were recently completed, said Mollie Mahoney, project manager in the Operations Office. These include Green Bay, Wis., and the Michigan harbors of Holland, Muskegon, St. Joseph and New Buffalo. Grand Haven Harbor was slated to be done by Aug. 31. Several dredging projects were ongoing as of mid-August, including the Detroit River, Saginaw River, Bay, the Saginaw River turning basin emergency dredging and Manistee Harbor. Approximately a dozen other dredging projects had been awarded by mid-August or were scheduled to be awarded in the coming weeks. Last winter, Congress approved a relief package for areas affected by Hurricane Sandy. The legislation included $2.6 million for seven Detroit District dredging projects intended to elimi- nate shoaling in storm-affected navigational channels. The state of Michigan also approved $5.9 million for dredging sandbars.

“Due to the addition of Hurricane Sandy projects, emergency dredging in the Saginaw River and the seven state of Michigan dredging projects, the district’s fiscal year 2013 dredging program has turned out to be much more robust than anticipated,” Mahoney said. She added the district has been pleased with the progress made this year. "They have been pleased with the progress and the storm-affected areas were received this year. "They have been competitively priced and have allowed us to use our limited dredging dollars more efficiently.”

“While we started to see the number of applications creep last December,” Konik said. “There was a dramatic increase in applications in January through April this year. Municipalities, marinas and home-owners realized that water levels could affect boat access, and applied for dredging permits.” Konik commended the Regulatory staff for keeping up with the increased workload. “Staff has stepped up to the challenge, and our permit evaluation time frames remain excelle- nt,” he said.

Engineer receives Order of de Fleury Medal

Brian Romsek, a civil engineer in the Manistee Harbor sub-Office of the Lake Michigan Area Office, LMAO, was awarded the Steel Order of the de Fleury Medal, presented to junior soldiers and civilians within the Engineer Regiment who have made significant contributions to Army Engineering.

Romsek is consistently valued for work accomplished in a timely and efficient manner. His outstanding performance as a site project engineer was instrumental in the successful completion of the challenging Fort Custer Army Reserve Center near Augusta, Mich. He now serves as project engineer on the VA Medical Center projects in Battle Creek, Mich.

“Brian always brings an excellent attitude to the workplace, and he is a pleasure to work with,” said LMAO Area Engineer Tom O’Bryan. “His hard work and dedication are much appreciated.”
Justin Proulx demonstrated exceptional performance as construction representative with the Soo Area Office. He contributed significantly to the success of a project to replace a compressed air bubbler system that keeps ice away from miter gates in the locks, and a project involving roof and masonry repairs to the North Main-tenance Support Building. Proulx’s performance and dedication are exemplary and reflect great credit upon himself, the Detroit District and the Corps of Engineers.

James Lewis, lead water level forecaster in the Watershed Hydrology Branch, developed new and improved graphics for use in speaking engagements and media interviews pertaining to Great Lakes water levels and the nature of water level fluctuations. Lewis’ presentation slides explain things in easy-to-understand terms and have been well-received by technical and non-technical audiences alike. Lewis’ innovation, hard work and dedication reflect laudably upon himself and the entire Corps of Engineers.

Crystal Kelley, senior program analyst in the Operations Office and the district’s environmental compliance coordinator, is recognized for her initiative, can-do attitude and leadership qualities. She helped revamp the district’s compliance program for the Environmental Review Guide for Operations, establishing a team to ensure Detroit District facilities are in accord with this initiative. Kelley’s dedication to USACE missions reflects great credit upon herself, the district and the Corps.

Nathan Schulz, a biologist with the Lake Michigan Area Office, developed an automated wetland determination data form. His synthesis and integration of various key components into an automated form have significantly contributed to the district’s mission. Wetland determinations are simplified through completion of the form using field observations. Schulz’s innovation and dedication are exemplary and reflect great credit upon himself, the district and the Corps of Engineers.

Lt. Col. Robert Ells, Detroit District Engineer, spoke in May to members of the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force, discussing the shipping community’s request for an extension to the Soo Locks operating season. Ells also spoke in June at a meeting of the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee, HTAC, in Duluth, Minn. He discussed low lake levels, dredging, dredged material management, the Soo Locks and St. Clair River compensation. Another key topic was the 21st Avenue pilot project in Duluth. The project’s intent is to beneficially reuse materials from maintenance dredging over the next three years.

Sabrina Miller, project manager from the Regulatory Office Outreach Team, spoke in May to about 50 people during a meeting of the Huron Beach Civic Association in Oce-ee, Mich. Afterward, the audience asked questions on topics including Michigan’s beach grooming law, and whether a permit is needed to remove boulders from near-shore areas.

John Allis and Keith Kompolotwicz of the Great Lakes Office of Hydraulics and Hydrology spoke May 30 at a University of Michigan seminar and panel discussion, “Low Great Lakes water levels: Understanding the causes and potential consequences.” The presentation was offered before a live audience and as a webinar. Kompolotwicz also spoke about Great Lakes water levels to the Port Huron Rotary Club on June 13 at the Masonic Lodge in Port Huron, Mich.; and at the Michigan Water Environment Association annual meeting on June 26 at Boyne Mountain Resort in Boyne Falls, Mich. On June 29, Kompolotwicz staffed a USACE information booth during Engineers Day festivities at the Soo Locks, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. He reported answering many questions about Great Lakes water levels. Allis gave a Great Lakes water levels overview June 28 to the environmental group “Green Drinks” in Battle Creek, Mich.