

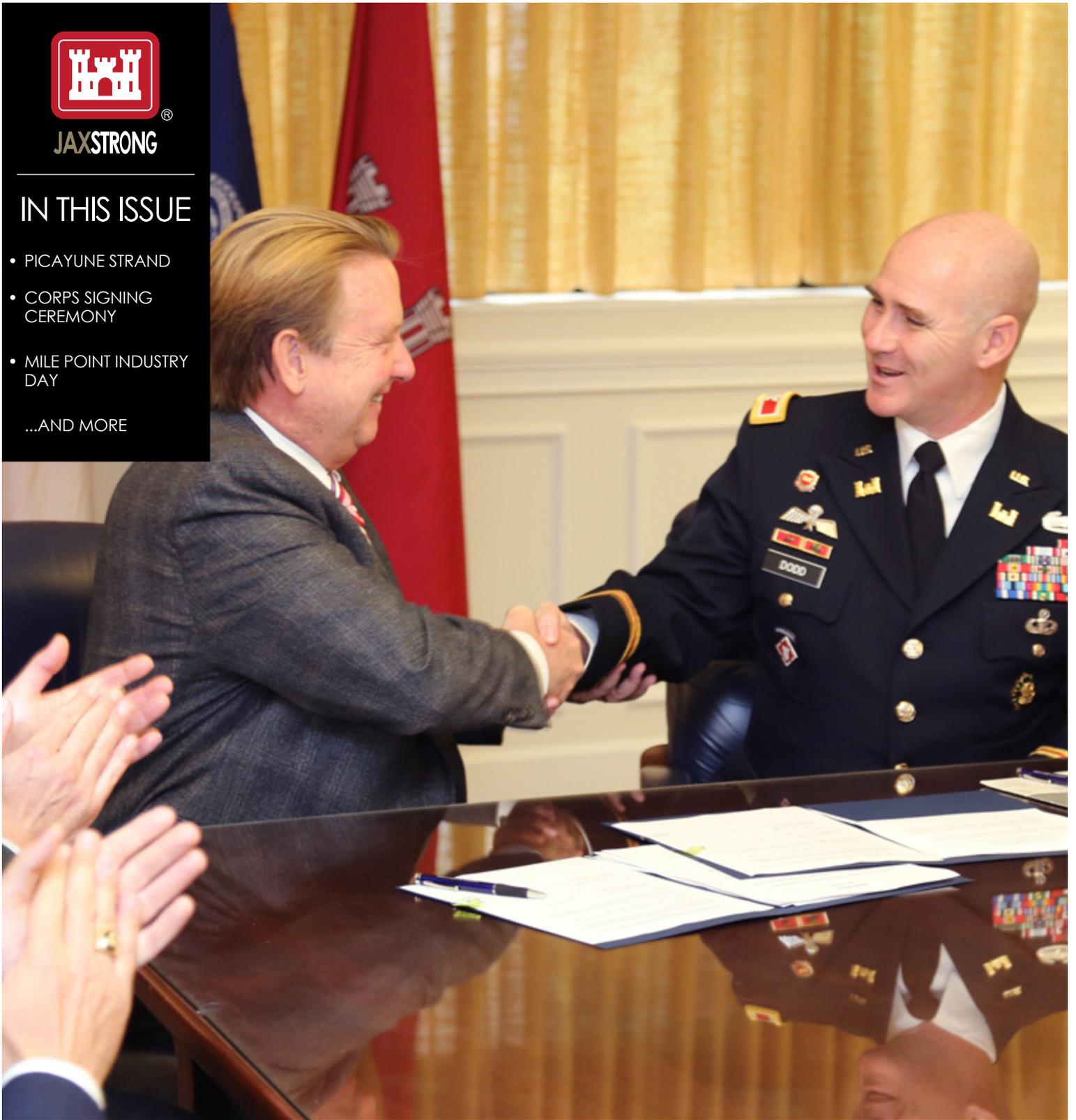


**JAXSTRONG**

## IN THIS ISSUE

- PICAYUNE STRAND
- CORPS SIGNING CEREMONY
- MILE POINT INDUSTRY DAY

...AND MORE



# JAXSTRONG

*jacksonville*

OUR WORK • OUR PEOPLE • OUR DISTRICT

DECEMBER 2014 | Volume 6 Issue 12



# COMMANDER'S CORNER

MESSAGE FROM COL. ALAN DODD

## Accidents don't take holidays; neither should safety

With the arrival of the holiday season, I feel a reminder about safety is in order—especially following two accidents which occurred in recent weeks involving visitors at Lake Okeechobee.

One accident involved a boater who drowned after falling out of his boat. The other seriously injured a man after his motorcycle hit a closed gate while he was riding on Lake Okeechobee's Scenic Trail on top of the dike surrounding the lake. Both accidents could have ended differently if basic safety precautions were observed. The drowning victim wasn't wearing a life jacket and was boating alone; the motorcyclist was riding on a hiking/biking trail where motor vehicles are prohibited.

The impacts of these accidents reach beyond the victims. Think of the families who had to change their holiday plans, or worse, find themselves suddenly without a husband, father, or grandfather because he didn't want to take time to put on a life jacket. Think of the time that will now be spent in recovery and rehabilitation because the lake's view from riding a motorcycle on top of the dike was too much to resist. It's senseless, and we can do better.

Have you thought about safety for the holiday season? As you make your travel plans, are you building in time for rest to avoid fatigued driving? For parties where alcohol is consumed, have you considered how you will safely return home? If you're traveling to a cold-weather environment, will you be prepared for snow, ice, and whatever else winter throws at you?

Safety should be a consideration around the home as well. Do you have appropriately sized ladders for hanging holiday decorations? Will your electrical system support the demands placed on it by holiday lighting? Has your wood-burning fireplace been cleaned this year?

Safety considerations shouldn't hinder your enjoyment of the holiday season. Rather, I believe it should enhance your enjoyment as it reduces risk of unexpected trips to the hospital. One of the greatest gifts each of us can offer is the gift of ourselves through our ability to help others. Accidents take away our ability to offer that gift due to injuries, lost time and lost energy.

On behalf of the hard-working employees in the Jacksonville District, I want to wish you and your loved ones a most joyous holiday season.

Be safe!

Army Strong. BUILDING STRONG®. JaxStrong.

Alan Dodd  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
District Commander



**US Army Corps of Engineers®**  
Jacksonville District

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## ON THE COVER

*University of North Florida (UNF) President John A. Delaney (left) and Col. Alan M. Dodd (right), Commander, Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed a Memorandum of Understanding on November 25, 2014, in order to advance educational opportunities between the Corps and UNF in STEM subject areas – math, science, engineering and technology – for developing student scientists and engineers. (Photo by Ty Erickson)*



# Completion of major Everglades restoration construction contract celebrated at Picayune Strand

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JENN MILLER



Jacksonville District commander Col. Alan Dodd and South Florida Water Management District Executive Director Blake Guillory cut a ribbon to celebrate the completion of the first major construction contract for the Picayune Strand Restoration Project.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District celebrated the completion of a major construction effort for the Picayune Strand Restoration project Oct. 24 alongside federal, state and local representatives and Everglades restoration supporters.

The project is conducted in partnership with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), as part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), a joint endeavor to restore, preserve and protect water resources in central and southern Florida.

Restoring Picayune Strand includes the plugging of 48 miles of canals, removing 260 miles of crumbling roads and constructing three major pump stations, all of which will restore more than 55,000 acres of natural habitat in an area once partially developed for an intended sprawling residential area. The Corps completed construction of the Merritt Pump Station in October as part of a contract which marks a significant step forward in Everglades restoration.

"When the Corps of Engineers awarded the Merritt Pump Station construction contract in 2009, it not only marked the start of a massive restoration project here in Collier County, but it signaled the value of the important partnership we have with the South Florida Water Management District and the State of Florida," said Col. Alan Dodd, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District commander. "The completion of the Merritt



Jacksonville District's Col. Alan Dodd hosted a ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Picayune Strand Restoration Project's Merritt Pump Station Oct. 24 alongside federal, state and local representatives and Everglades restoration supporters.

## PICAYUNE STRAND (continued from PAGE 3)



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers celebrated the completion of the Merritt Pump Station Oct 24. The pump station is a key piece of infrastructure for the Picayune Strand Restoration Project.

Pump Station is a clear demonstration of this partnership at work, and it's precisely this type of partnership that will further the goals and objectives envisioned in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan [CERP] over the coming years."

The Merritt Pump Station is a key piece of infrastructure for the Picayune Strand Restoration project that will maintain current levels of flood protection while directing fresh water to drained wetlands located downstream. In addition to the pump station, the contract includes 95 miles of roadway that were removed and degraded and about 10 miles of canals that will be plugged to restore the natural flow of water in the area.

Federal appropriations provided more than \$66 million in order to complete the Merritt Pump Station. This included approximately \$40 million funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, which accelerated the construction schedule and helped create local jobs.

"Florida remains committed to Everglades restoration and to the shared investment needed to achieve this goal," said Blake Guillory, executive director of the South Florida Water Management District. "Today's event here in the western Everglades underscores the fact that we are making tangible restoration progress."

Ecological benefits are already being seen at Picayune Strand as a result of the restoration work done to date. Native plants and animals are returning to the area, including the wood stork and endangered Florida panther.

By restoring the hydrology in the area, the completed Picayune Strand Restoration project will also directly benefit the southern Gulf Coast estuaries, improving juvenile fish habitats and

increasing fish and bird populations, as well as recreational opportunities in the area.

"Picayune Strand is a great conservation success story and provides early proof that Everglades restoration works to improve wetlands and freshwater flows. What could have been a sprawling development is on its way to being great habitat for wading birds, panthers and other wildlife," said Eric Draper, Audubon Florida's executive director. "As great flocks of wading birds return to the Everglades we will witness nature's resilience."

The ceremony not only provided attendees with the opportunity to see the completed Merritt Pump Station first-hand, it provided an opportunity to see restoration progress in action. It also brought together a diverse group of individuals, representing numerous agencies and organizations whose collective support continues to provide momentum to move restoration efforts forward.

"Let today serve as a clear demonstration of what our continued partnerships and collaborations will bring and set the tone for how we move forward in our restoration efforts," Dodd said.

The construction contract for the Merritt Pump Station was awarded to Harry Pepper and Associates of Jacksonville, Florida, in October 2009. Now that the pump station is fully-constructed, it will undergo one year of operational testing and monitoring.

The Merritt Pump Station was the first CERP construction contract to begin. Progress also continues on the construction of the project's other two pump stations, the Faka Union and Miller pump stations, with scheduled completion in 2015 and 2018, respectively. Additional information on the Picayune Strand Restoration Project available at: [http://bit.ly/CERP\\_PSRP](http://bit.ly/CERP_PSRP). ♦

# Jacksonville district commander signs memorandum of understanding with local university

BY JEAN PAVLOV



University of North Florida (UNF) President John A. Delaney (left) and Col. Alan M. Dodd (right), Commander, Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed a Memorandum of Understanding on November 25, 2014, in order to advance educational opportunities between the Corps and UNF in STEM subject areas – math, science, engineering and technology – for developing student scientists and engineers. (Photo by Ty Erickson)

With a new national goal of having a more effective and focused set of federal programs to support science, technology, engineering and math education (STEM) throughout federal agencies, Jacksonville District has gained momentum with a major leap in this direction.

On Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2014, the Jacksonville District signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of North Florida (UNF), designed to be a framework outlining cooperative educational collaborations between UNF and the district in STEM subject areas for purposes of developing student scientists and engineers.

This memorandum of understanding is the first step in an agreement with the Corps and the UNF School of Engineering in the implementation of an educational partnership program.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been engineering solutions for our nation's greatest challenges since 1775 and is a leader in STEM," said district commander Col. Alan M. Dodd. "Learning is a lifelong process, and one of the most effective ways to learn is to assist in developing others. We're committed to teaming with others to strengthen STEM-related programs that inspire current and future generations of young people to pursue careers in STEM fields."

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recognizes the critical role that STEM education plays in enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leaders of the global marketplace, and enabling the Department of defense and Army in the security of our Nation. We are committed to teaming with others to strengthen STEM-related programs that inspire current and future generations of young people to pursue careers in STEM fields."  
- HQ USACE STEM Web site.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District is the second largest civil works district in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with an area of responsibility encompassing Florida and the Caribbean.

The Jacksonville District provides quality planning, engineering, construction and operations products and services to meet the needs of the Armed Forces and the nation. The UNF School of Engineering in the College of Computing, Engineering and Construction will be a prime beneficiary of the MOU by providing further opportunities for student internships and jobs, as well as possible future collaborative research opportunities between the two organizations.

"The educational partnership is very important to the further economic development of the region since it will help the University produce more ready-to-work scientists and engineers, plus cement an existing university-federal agency cooperative relationship," said Dr. Chris Brown, UNF assistant professor of civil engineering and the main architect of the USACE agreement.

The agreement is an important step for the UNF School of Engineering and is in line with the engaged, community-based approach of its curriculum. "Our students and faculty work on real-world problems of importance to the region, state and nation," said Dr. Mark Tumeo, dean of the College of Computing, Engineering and Construction at UNF. "This educational partnership is one more important part of that mission."

The White House and Department of Education focus on educating global leaders and preparing students for STEM-related fields will increase 14 percent between now and 2020. Even more job growth is expected in STEM-related fields such as computer science and biomedical fields. ♦

## Corps attends south Florida outreach event BY ERICA SKOLTE



Corps water safety volunteers Michael and Teri Young and park ranger Brian Scott Older used the Corps' interpretive multi-use trailer to teach members of the community about water safety and other Corps missions at Kiwanis Kids Day in LaBelle. (Photo by Brian Scott Older)

It may come as a surprise to some that the National Park Service is not the largest federal provider of outdoor recreation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the nation's leading provider of outdoor and water-based recreation with over 420 lake and river projects in 43 states and over 370 million visitors per year. In fact, many of the Corps' missions revolve around water, including navigation and water safety.

Corps park ranger Brian Scott Older and water safety volunteers Michael and Teri Young, exhibited at Kiwanis Kids Day in LaBelle, Florida educating attendees about the Corps' mission and water safety. LaBelle is located along the Caloosahatchee River, which is part of the Okeechobee Waterway on the west side of Lake Okeechobee in south Florida.

"The event was an incredible day of fun for all, including us. There was something for everyone - music, food, rides, games, booths, and yes, clowns! We interacted with over 450 children and their families, promoting water safety and the missions of the Corps," said Older. "It was a really great day and a lot of fun too!"

The Youngs joined Older at the Corps' interpretive multi-use trailer. The couple have a long history of teaching water safety for the Corps. They took the south Florida water safety program to Georgia, and started a program at Strom Thurman Lake, several years ago.

Older gave water safety goodies to children and families, including the "Bobber the Water Safety Dog" coloring books, with information in both English and Spanish.

"We were very excited to have the Corps of Engineers participate in the annual Kiwanis Kids Day!" said Brenda Barnes, who works with the Florida Department of Health in Hendry and Glades counties and helped organize the event. "Brian and the volunteers did such a great job interacting with the kids and their families!" ♦



Brian Scott Older, a park ranger at the W.P. Franklin Recreation Area near Alva, provides water safety information to families at LaBelle's Kiwanis Kids Day in both English and Spanish. (Photo by Brenda Barnes, Kiwanis Club of LaBelle)

# Mile Point Industry Day information educates contractors

BY ERICA SKOLTE



Project manager Jason Harrah presents during an industry day held in November to engage and inform contractor representatives regarding the requirements and challenges of the Mile Point project. (Photo by Ty Erickson)

If knowledge is power, 75 contractor representatives are probably feeling a lot more knowledgeable, empowered and better prepared to bid on an upcoming contract for the Mile Point Reconfiguration project in Jacksonville Harbor.

Due to the complexity and challenges of the Mile Point Reconfiguration project, project manager Jason Harrah knew it was important to engage and inform the industry about the project early on. An industry day was held in Jacksonville in November, to provide an opportunity for contractor representatives to learn about the details and requirements for the project.

"The Mile Point Industry Day was a complete success. The team presented a detailed technical presentation of all key project components to a crowd of approximately 75 contractor



Joe Miller, JaxPort senior director of facilities development, emphasized the importance of the Mile Point contract procurement to the port and the overall deepening project during an Industry Day held in November. (Photo by Ty Erickson)

representatives," project manager Jason Harrah said. "Completion of this project is vital to the continued success and economic growth of JAXPORT and the surrounding community."

The project consists of the reconfiguration of an existing structure that is more than 100 years old in an open marine environment subject to wind, waves, tidal, river currents as well as seasonal activity, stated Beth Myers, deputy of Jacksonville District's Small Business Office.

"There is a benefit to industry - especially small businesses - by providing prime contractors and subcontractors an opportunity to meet and develop relationships or teaming agreements that benefit contract performance," Myers said. "The overall goal was to promote a common understanding of the contract procurement, provide maximum information to potential offers on the project requirements, answer questions, and improve the contract solicitation based on feedback from the potential offers. The ultimate goal is to make the requirements as clear as possible, to help potential offers who may bid on the contract to provide the best possible solution to the government."



This graphic shows some of the features of the Mile Point Reconfiguration project at the confluence of the Intracoastal Waterway and the St. Johns River in Jacksonville. (Photo by Ty Erickson)

Joe Miller, JaxPort senior director of facilities development, also spoke at the Industry Day presentation, and emphasized the importance of the Mile Point contract procurement to the port and the overall Jacksonville Harbor Deepening project. Contractors who are interested in bidding on the project, advertisement for the Mile Point contract begins Dec. 15 and closes Feb. 12.

View the Jacksonville Harbor, Mile Point Industry Day Presentation: <http://1.usa.gov/12AdnNa>

For more information on the Jacksonville Harbor, Mile Point Project: <http://1.usa.gov/1AIPB2t> ♦

## Lock leader continues to serve, helps other veterans BY ERICA SKOLTE

Photos courtesy Matthew and Brianne Kirschner



Brianne Kirschner, who earned a degree as a relaxation therapist, taught her husband Matthew to crochet to help him relax.

He's a tough guy with a tender heart.

Matthew Kirschner served as a sergeant in the United States Marine Corps before working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District. He did three tours in Iraq, 2003, 2004 and 2005, and was decorated for valor in combat.

A retired Marine is not the kind of guy one would expect to pick up a crochet hook to create hundreds of "beanies," many of them pink. But Kirschner, together with his wife Brianne, created the "Beanies for Vets" program. He has cranked out hundreds of beanies, all to benefit veterans and several charities. He is currently working on a crocheted American flag.

Brianne Kirschner, who earned a degree as a relaxation therapist, has been crocheting for years. One day while he was watching football, Brianne suggested Matthew pick up crocheting. He knew working with his hands was a good way to battle Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and had done some woodworking as therapy. Brianne taught Matthew to crochet to help him relax. He picked it up quickly, starting with simple potholders, but rapidly moved on to afghans and hats, because he wanted to do something that would help others. The "Beanies for Vets" program was born out of Kirschner's desire to help himself, but ended up helping hundreds of others.

"This effort is starting to go national, and people love it," Kirschner said.

"We crochet hats for vets in nursing homes, and send hats, lap blankets, and afghans to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Veterans Village at Fort McCoy, Florida," Kirschner said. "We also crochet small child-sized hats with purple hearts for Brianna's new "Hearts of Valor" program, to benefit the children at the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, Michigan."

The Kirschners sent 70 of Matthew's hats to the agency in November.

"Matthew has found something that is very relaxing and calming, and something he knows is going to help others," she said.

In 2005, Kirschner joined the VFW Post 8189, in Homosassa, Florida. "I felt like I didn't have a place to go, and the VFW was a place I felt like I could go and talk to other veterans," Kirschner said. "I wasn't looking for support, but I found it."

"For some of us, things like PTSD are going to be a battle all our lives, but there's backup. That's what drove me to the VFW. That's what helped me - talking to those members who are 81 and 89 years old," Kirschner said. "I think I'm having a bad day and it puts it all into perspective. Though jungle warfare and desert style warfare in urban environments are very different, the Vietnam vets who have been living with it for years can help the younger generation. The two generations don't judge each other, they help each other. All they need to do is talk."



Matthew Kirschner and his wife Brianne crochet beanies to support veterans, and support the local community as boosters of the Clewiston Tigers, with blue and yellow beanies.

When Kirschner visits family and friends in the hospital or in nursing homes, he often seeks out and talks to other vets. Not surprisingly, Kirschner says the most common complaint is, "My head is cold!"

During one such visit, Kirschner overheard the nurses talking about a 99-year-old patient who served as an Army nurse in Europe during World War II. He went home to grab one of his crocheted hats, and returned to the hospital to speak with the elderly veteran. He walked over and introduced himself, and presented her with the hat, explaining who he was and what he did. "Thank you for your service," he said, and she started to cry. After they had been talking for a while, the elderly vet decided she wanted to get her hair fixed up so it would look nice under her warm new hat, and said, "I'm kind of hungry."

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 9)

**BEANIES** (continued from PAGE 8)

The Kirschners crocheted pink beanies for Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and small child-sized hats with purple hearts for their "Hearts of Valor" program, to benefit the children at the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, Michigan.

The nurse looked up at Kirschner and asked if he could stay a while longer. Following the visit, Kirschner was touched to learn from the nurse it was the first time the woman had eaten in three days.

Today, Kirschner is the lock and dam leader at the Port Mayaca Lock and Dam on the east side of Lake Okeechobee. He serves in positions of leadership and responsibility as the post commander of the VFW Post 4815 in Clewiston, the district 13 sergeant, and as a national aide-de-camp. His wife Brianne is also active in the organization despite her busy life. She serves as the junior vice president of the Ladies Auxiliary and the district guard for district 13. Not your typical "power couple," the Kirschners are more of a "power giving couple," who volunteer and help others on a regular basis.

Kirschner advises veterans and others dealing with PTSD or other stresses to reach out and use the resources available to them. "Go get help - the hardest step is taking the first step. The Veterans Administration (VA) has hotlines for those who are feeling depressed or suicidal, or go to the VA. They are top-notch. Nine times out of 10, they are people who have 'been there and done that,' so they know what they're talking about, and they can help."



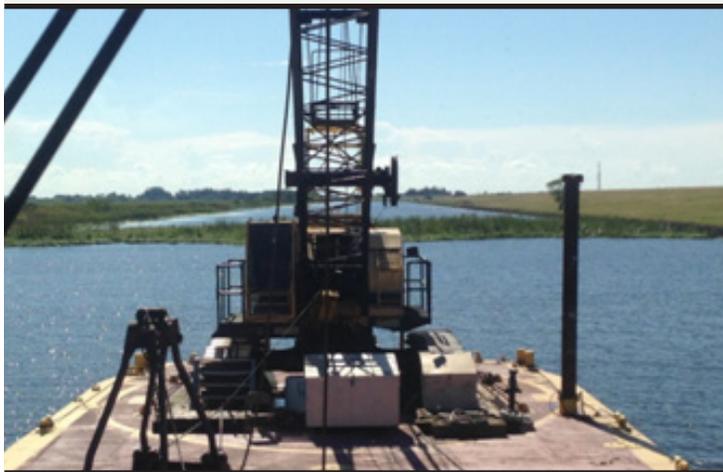
Matthew Kirschner creates patriotic-themed red, white and blue beanies to support veterans and help those who are in nursing homes and hospitals to keep their heads warm.

The Kirschners brought their beanies to the VFW booth at the Winter Wonderland Festival in Clewiston to raise money for a number of VFW programs, including the National Home for Children, cancer aid and research, and the building fund to help maintain Post 4185 for the benefit of the local veterans.

Kirschner is not the only Corps employee who is active in the VFW. Several Corps employees in south Florida are also officers of VFW Post 4815. Israel "Izzy" Vargas, is the senior vice commander, and a lock and dam mechanic for the west side of the Okeechobee Waterway, working at Moore Haven, Ortona, and W.P. Franklin Lock and Dams. Clewiston biologist David Lattuca is junior vice commander. James "J.C." Hayes, who provides quality assurance for contracting, and William Slaughter, lead facility management specialist and field maintenance lead in Clewiston are also members. Carl Williams, chief of navigation and flood risk management, is a member of VFW Post 4194 in Stuart. ♦

## Tussock removal

BY ERICA SKOLTE



The tug boat Leitner pushed a barge mounted crane into position so a crew could break up and remove a half-acre tussock or floating island, restoring navigation along the Rim Canal Route 2 of the Okeechobee Waterway and the south side of Lake Okeechobee. (USACE photo)

Last month, several "tussocks," popped up as part of the natural process in Lake Okeechobee. Tussocks are like floating islands made up of mud, peat and plants.

A half-acre tussock was blown by the wind, and completely blocked the navigation channel of Rim Canal Route 2 of the Okeechobee Waterway, on the south side of Lake Okeechobee. The Okeechobee Waterway is a navigable waterway that cuts across the state, from the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

A member of the local community reported the problem, which helped the Corps to respond and resolve the issue in a timely manner.

The tug boat Leitner, with Capt. Graham Thompson at the helm, pushed a barge-mounted crane with a crew of three into position. The team successfully broke up and removed the tussock, restoring navigation on the Okeechobee Waterway.

Report any potential hazards to navigation on Lake Okeechobee and the Okeechobee Waterway, to the South Florida Operations Office. ♦

# Safety Office team helps employees maintain workplace health

BY ERICA SKOLTE



Industrial hygienist Rebecca Gray provides hazardous materials training to John Miracle, one of the lock and dam operators at the W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam on the Caloosahatchee River on the Okeechobee Waterway near Alva. (Photo by Eduardo Garcia)

Sometimes you don't know what you don't know.

Fortunately, expert industrial hygienists and safety technicians from the Safety Office do know how to help keep Jacksonville District employees safe and healthy. They are ready, willing and able to educate Corps employees and share their knowledge with anyone who requests assistance.

Though available to provide assistance throughout the year, the Safety Office team makes an annual trip to all of the district's locks and dams in south Florida, including the Canaveral Lock and Dam on the east coast, and the St. Lucie, Port Mayaca, Moore Haven, Ortona, W.P. Franklin Locks and Dams along the Okeechobee Waterway in south Florida.

During the trip, the team provides training and ergonomic assessments, identifies potential issues and works to resolve them. Industrial hygienists like Rebecca Gray in the Safety Office, try to anticipate, evaluate, identify, prevent and reduce hazards in the workplace that have the potential to result in injury or illness, or may affect the well being of workers, such as chemical exposure, ergonomics, noise and more.

Gray offers training in a variety of areas, including chapter six of the Safety and Health Requirements Manual, or Engineer Manual (EM) 385-1-1, which addresses "Hazardous or Toxic Agents and Environments."

"The Army has adopted the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) for hazard communication, and all employees who work with hazardous chemicals are required to have the training," Eduardo Garcia, a safety technician in the Safety Office said.

According to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Safety Center website, "The Globally Harmonized System (GHS), a United Nations initiative recently adopted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, will standardize the way chemical-based hazards are communicated to workers, primarily through labeling and safety data sheets."

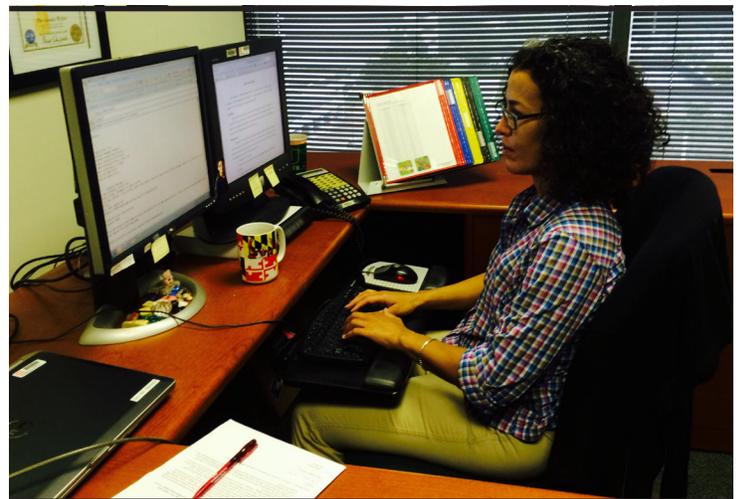
Many people may be surprised to find out that commonly used household chemicals such as vinegar (acetic acid), bleach

and ammonia are considered hazardous and Safety Data Sheets are available for them by contacting the manufacturer.

Industrial hygienists can evaluate your work environment to help keep you healthy and safe. Ingrid Bon was one of several team members in the South Florida Restoration Program Office in West Palm Beach, Florida to request and receive an ergonomic assessment of her workstation.

"The keyboard should be positioned at the most neutral position, where you don't have to reach or stretch," Gray said. She suggests the installation of keyboard and mouse trays to keep them close enough to prevent excessive reaching, which strains the shoulders and arms. In addition, Gray says employees who use two monitors should place them close together, directly in front of them at eye level, to minimize the possibility of neck injuries.

"Following proper ergonomics is critical in maintaining workplace health and preventing long term ergonomic injuries. Identifying and correcting problems when you first recognize the signs and symptoms will go a long way in preventing more severe ailments," Gray said.



Ingrid Bon, project manager forward for the Herbert Hoover Dike, was one of several team members in the South Florida Restoration Program Office who received an ergonomic assessment of their work station. Bon sits back comfortably in her chair, her hands are relaxed on a lowered keyboard tray, and her monitors are positioned close together, directly in front of her, at eye level, to help prevent injuries that can be caused by looking up and repetitive sideways movement of the head. (Photo by Erica Skolte)

Gray also encourages Corps employees who work in the office to move around during the day. "Our ancestors were hunter-gatherers and our bodies were built to move all the time, rather than staying in one position all day long," she said. "Try to move around and change positions frequently during the day."

District employees who have questions about safety in the workplace or would like an ergonomics assessment of their workstation should call the Safety Office. "We are here to serve and protect all Jacksonville District employees," Gray said.

"The safety program is here to protect our employees," Garcia said. "Everything we do is for them. They have a right to work in a safe environment, and we are here to help make that happen." ♦

# HAZARDS!

As of June 1, 2015, the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) will require pictograms on labels to alert users of the chemical hazards to which they may be exposed. Each pictogram consists of a symbol on a white background framed within a red border and represents a distinct hazard(s). The pictogram on the label is determined by the chemical hazard classification.

## HCS Pictograms and Hazards

### Health Hazard



- Carcinogen
- Mutagenicity
- Reproductive Toxicity
- Respiratory Sensitizer
- Target Organ Toxicity
- Aspiration Toxicity

### Flame



- Flammables
- Pyrophorics
- Self-Heating
- Emits Flammable Gas
- Self-Reactives
- Organic Peroxides

### Exclamation Mark



- Irritant (skin and eye)
- Skin Sensitizer
- Acute Toxicity (harmful)
- Narcotic Effects
- Respiratory Tract Irritant
- Hazardous to Ozone Layer (Non-Mandatory)

### Gas Cylinder



- Gases Under Pressure

### Corrosion



- Skin Corrosion/ Burns
- Eye Damage
- Corrosive to Metals

### Exploding Bomb



- Explosives
- Self-Reactives
- Organic Peroxides

### Flame Over Circle



- Oxidizers

### Environment (Non-Mandatory)



- Aquatic Toxicity

### Skull and Crossbones



- Acute Toxicity (fatal or toxic)



ARMY STRONG



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

For more information:  
**OSHA** Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor  
[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) (800) 321-OSHA (6742)

## Local agency to issue permits on behalf of district BY NAKEIR NOBLES



Col. Alan Dodd, Jacksonville District commander, and Hans G. Tanzler III, executive director of St Johns River Water Management District, sign the Programmatic General Permit Oct. 31 which allows the water management district to issue permits on behalf of the Jacksonville District. (Photo courtesy of Ty Erickson)

Jacksonville District commander and staff along with representatives from the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) gathered Oct. 31 for a signing of a Programmatic General Permit which will allow the water management district to issue permits on the behalf of the Corps of Engineers. The signing ceremony was conducted in the Jacksonville District's downtown office.

The Coordination Agreement (CA) between the two agencies delegates federal dredge and fill authorization for specific activities under SAJ-111 to authorize the WMD to issue permits on behalf of the Corps.

General Permits (GP) are issued for actions that are similar in nature and have minimal adverse effects when considered individually and cumulatively. Programmatic Regional Permits authorize state and or local agencies to issue permits on behalf of the Corps for activities where there are duplicative state, local and federal permit processes. They expedite federal permit processing timeframes for applicants, reduce the regulatory burden on the applicant and conserve Corps resources that may be applied to more complex permit applications.

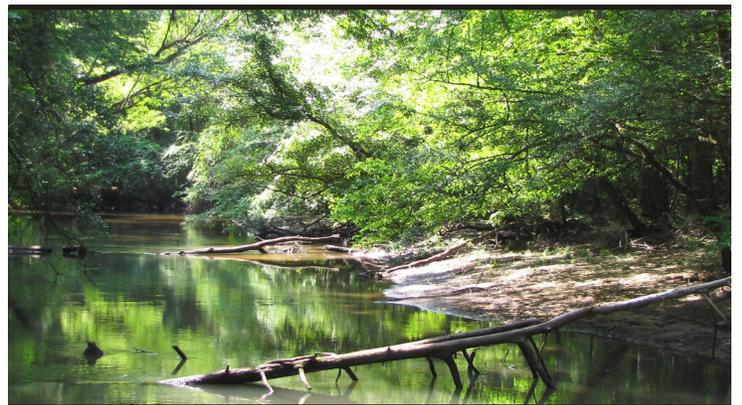
"This is a big day, I'm excited," said Tori White, acting Regulatory Division chief. "The State of Florida wanted to expand the permitting process on our behalf at the state level. We haven't been able to do this in the past."

Corps regulatory division project manager Jeff Collins says the partnership provides the public an expedited permit process and a simplified regulatory process. Collins said, "PGPs expedite the federal permit processing timeframes for applicants, reduce the regulatory burden on the applicant, and conserve Corps resources that may be applied to more complex state applications. This translates to a more favorable business climate and is good for the State of Florida."

The Corps has 11 PGPs that are administered by various agencies, including the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, county and city governments. Collins says the Corps is reviewing the possibility of expanding similar versions of the

SAJ-111 to other Florida metropolitan areas. "However, any future PGPs of this type would need to be tailored to regional conditions and specifically identify actions that would be considered to have minimal adverse impacts to wetlands, federal threatened and endangered species issues and duplication with the state permit process," he said.

Programmatic General Permits (PGP), under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 403), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District has regulatory jurisdiction over all obstructions or alterations of any navigable water of the United States, the construction of any structures in or over navigable water of the United States, and any work affecting the course, location, condition or capacity of navigable waters of the United States. Additionally under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Corps of Engineers has regulatory jurisdiction over the discharged or dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. Under these authorizations, the Corps of Engineers has authority to issue general permits for specific categories of work. ♦



The Corps of Engineers has regulatory jurisdiction over the discharged or dredged fill material into waters of the United States. Under these authorizations, the Corps has authority to issue general permits for specific categories of work. (Photo by David Clayton)



# Jax Facts: How well do you know Jacksonville District?

BY NAIKEIR NOBLES



Congratulations to Tina Goral, Real Estate Division, the first district team member to submit the correct answers to all ten of the following questions, based on stories that appeared in the November issue of JaxStrong. (Photo by Nikki Nobles)

Lake Okeechobee

**6. When does the district celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month?**

Sept 15 thru Oct. 15

**7. How did the district recognize Hispanic Heritage Month?**

With two events, HHM cook-off and gameshow event, Are you Smarter than a high schooler?

**8. How does the district manage Lake Okeechobee water levels?**

The lake is managed in accordance with the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule

**9. How many deep draft ports does the district have within its area of responsibility?**

17

**10. Who conducted an interview from the Flagler Beach pier?**

Jason Engle ♦

**1. When is the CME award presented and who receives it?**

The CME award is presented annually and recognizes district employees who exhibit excellence in construction management and contract administration activities.

**2. Construction began on the DoDEA school at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico in 2012. The project is 50 percent complete. Once completed, what is the school expected to achieve?**

Leadership Engineering and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver rating.

**3. What district project is one of the first major pieces of infrastructure completed as part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)?**

Merritt Pump Station

**4. A large part of the district's mission is to help what?**

Ensure Florida's ports remain vital in the global marketplace

**5. What is known as the heart of the Kissimmee-Okeechobee Everglades system?**



**For current information on Lake Okeechobee, please click here.**

# Celebrate safely!

Holiday safety tips from the Jacksonville District Safety and Occupational Health Office and Security Office



## Shopping

- Whenever possible, keep a small amount of cash, credit card and driver's license in a front pocket rather than carrying a purse or wallet.
- Keep a record of all credit card numbers in a safe place at home, and notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused.
- Park in well lit and heavily used areas.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages – maintain clear visibility and freedom of motion.
- Place packages in vehicle trunk where they cannot be seen.
- When shopping online, go to the web address of the store rather than click on links given in emails, and only enter credit card information on a page that has an address beginning with "HTTPS" - this indicates the page is encrypted. Remember that any time credit card information is entered online, there is a risk of it being compromised so keep a close watch on credit card statements and notify the issuer immediately of any unauthorized purchases.

## Decorations

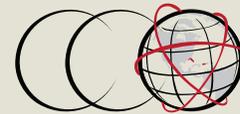
- Check condition of electrical outlets and cords.
- Avoid using too many extension cords and piggy-backing electrical cords.
- Keep live Christmas tree fresh by watering regularly; avoid placing live or artificial trees near exits or heat sources.
- Use caution when climbing ladders to reach and place decorations.
- Always extinguish unattended candles.

## Car Travel

- Drive defensively.
- Ensure your car is winterized and that the battery, brakes, muffler and exhaust system are in good condition.
- If you must drive in foggy conditions, allow extra time – slow down and use low beam headlights so you can see and be seen.
- Beware of "black ice."
- Seat belts save lives – always buckle up!
- Save the phone calls and text messages for when you are out of the driver's seat.

## Parties

- Celebrate responsibly - ensure that all party guests designate a driver in advance and provide non-alcoholic beverages for them.
- Keep the numbers for local taxi companies handy and take keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving while impaired. ♦



Corporate Communications Office  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District

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