



# The *M*obile

*Vol. 3 Issue 1*  
*Feb. 18, 2011*

## **Engineer, inventor brings many to EEO observance**



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### THE MOBILE

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### From the Commander...

Greetings Team,

The district's senior leaders met recently to develop strategic initiatives. We still have a little more work to do but would like to share with you the summary of these meetings. These plans provide a path to where we would like to see this organization in three years, which is well prepared to meet emerging requirements. We will track our progress during monthly Operations Plan (OPLAN) updates.

We have a great district measured by execution in Military Construction, Civil Works and International & Interagency Support programs. Our success is also measured by our operational readiness rates on our locks and dams, hydropower plants, and ability to maintain inland, navigable waterways.

We see excellent service as evidenced by metrics and customer feedback with our recreational & regulatory programs, and real estate missions. We support Overseas Contingency Operations, maintain PRT readiness, respond to FEMA taskings and support SOUTHCOM with a wide-range of capabilities. We are a great district because we have great employees who care about making a difference every single day.

Ok, if we are so great, why then do we need initiatives to change our organization? Well, we will always maintain our priorities listed above; however, we do need to look at capabilities, processes and our people because our environment is changing: budgets are declining; workforce and infrastructure are aging; the Panama Canal is opening a third set of locks; new technologies are emerging; national attention is focused on environmental restoration of the Gulf Coast; and we are seeing national initiatives for energy interdependence – it is a jungle out there!

Our senior leaders are driving organizational change and leading the following groups that each have developed initiatives:

**Group 1** has the goal to create a more expeditionary mindset. Initiatives include creating deployable teams with capabilities that can rapidly deploy in support of SOUTHCOM and worldwide taskings, improving our support to Afghanistan and improving a family readiness network.

**Group 2** looks toward creating a more robust civil works and water resources program through building partnerships with Alabama, Mississippi and Florida; establishing a national-level Deep Draft Navigation Center of Expertise in Mobile with expanded capabilities; advancing the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program with focus on integrating efforts into the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force; and creating a strategic communication plan for the roll-out of our ACF/ACT draft-EIS and Water Control Manual update.

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*Col. Steven J. Roemhildt  
Mobile District Commander*

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### From the Commander...continued

**Group 3** looks at improving our Military Construction support via growing an energy-interdependent technical capability in concert with a regional team; matching capabilities with emerging IIS requirements; targeting some national-level programs; and developing a water-resource, project strategy within our Latin American program.

**Group 4** focuses on building the workforce of the future. Ideas discussed include: training, professional licenses and credentials; various administrative policy enhancements; new initiatives in our Safety Program utilizing composite risk management; and a goal of reducing our lost-time accident rate by 50 percent.

We will continue to look for good ideas on all our topics and encourage you to provide comments.

This group planning serves as the foundation to our OPLAN, that roadmap that drives organizational change. In concert with our Project Review Board, Planning and Budget Advisory Committee and the district's staff meeting, the OPLAN completes the suite of governance boards for the District. All these boards provide feedback as to how the district is doing in support to this region, the Army and the nation - now and in the future.

As we develop these initiatives further, I look forward to providing periodic updates.

Building Strong! - *Col. Steven J. Roemhildt*



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### USA students tour Dredge Wheeler

Story by Lisa Coghlan, Public Affairs Office

Mobile District recently hosted seven students from a new post of the Society of American Military Engineers located at University of South Alabama.

“Our student chapter of the SAME started getting excited about this tour as soon as we found out that we would be given the opportunity to visit The Wheeler,” said Jacqueline Parks, student president of SAME at USA.

The district’s Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Daren Payne and project manager Maj. Adam Harless spoke with each of the students about their chosen engineering disciplines and what they would like to do when they graduate. Parks said that being able to talk to these industry professionals and swap stories went a long way toward breaking the ice with SAME members.



*The hopper dredge Wheeler pictured above. Operated by the New Orleans District, The Dredge Wheeler, on good operating day, can remove 100,000 cubic yards of material, or about 7,000 dumptruck loads, from a project site. Photo courtesy of New Orleans District*

The Dredge Wheeler is operated out of the New Orleans District and it is the largest hopper dredge in the USACE. It keeps waterway channels clear from Brownsville, Texas all the way down to the Florida Keys. Because The Wheeler was dredging along the Mobile Harbor, Mobile District arranged for the students to tour the dredge.

The dredge is primarily used in the southwest pass of the Mississippi River, dealing with shoaling problems that occur when sediment settles into the lower river basin. The Wheeler is staffed with 38 civil service mariners. The crewmembers are divided into two operating sections working for two weeks and then two weeks off. The work consists of 10 to 12 hour days, seven days a week, and 24 hours a day. Every 14 days the dredge docks for fuel, water, supplies and engine maintenance.

“We were briefed in the ready room by the Wheeler’s Capt. Ed Morehouse. We watched a video that explained what the Wheeler does. The video and the briefing were very informative and gave us an idea of what we would see as we walked around the vessel,” said Parks. “We were introduced to the ship’s Engineers who told us which operations they controlled. Directly after the briefing we were guided across the deck of the ship and shown the three drag arms and the hopper. We were all amazed at the complex system of pipes, pumps and motors that are in operation on the Wheeler,” said Parks.

“The Wheeler is a ‘trailing suction’ hopper dredge. It operates like a giant vacuum cleaner. It is designed with three large drag arms and an impressive pumping capacity. The drag arms are lowered over the side to channel bottoms. While the Wheeler travels forward at a speed of approximately two knots, the drag arms suck water and sand mixture, also known as slurry, from the channel bottom,” said Capt. Ed Morehouse, Master Dredge Wheeler.

Morehouse explained that the slurry passes through the drag heads and pipelines into the hopper. The Wheeler can fill its hopper with slurry in approximately 30 minutes, to a maximum load of 8,364 cubic yards of sediment. The Wheeler can move more than 100,000 cubic yards of material per day from a project site (depending on the amount of transit time to the material placement site), which is equivalent to 7,000 dump trucks.

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### Dredge Wheeler continued

The dredge material is transported to an authorized dredge material containment area, where it is deposited by opening 14 hopper doors on the Wheeler's bottom and allowing the material to fall to the ocean floor.

“Seeing the things that we are learning about in our textbooks on such a massive scale was a great learning experience for all of us. Each of the engineering disciplines being taught at our school was represented on this field trip. The hopper dredge’s many features allowed each one of us to glimpse at the equipment in our future,” said Parks.

Parks further stated, The Mechanical Engineers saw gigantic motors in action, the control room gave the electrical engineer enthusiasm for his circuits, the chemical engineer was intrigued by the processes happening in the engine room and the civil engineer was captivated by the Wheeler’s dredging of the Mobile Bay ship channel.



*University of South Alabama students from the student chapter of the Society of American Military Engineers stand with Mobile District’s Maj. Adam Harless and New Orleans District crew members aboard The Dredge Wheeler. Photo by Lisa Coghlan*

“After the dredging we were shown hydrographic surveys depicting areas where shoaling had occurred. We compared them to surveys of the areas that been dredged by the Wheeler in order to keep the Bay passable to the many large ships that use it. Being shown these before-and-after surveys at the completion of the dredging was a great hands-on lesson in underwater excavation, not to mention that the view from the bridge was incredible,” said Parks.

After the tour of the Wheeler was completed, the students returned safely to shore.

“It was a huge thrill for us to tour the Wheeler and see the ship in action. Most of our time in college is spent learning from teachers in a classroom or by reading books. This tour provided us with a fun and refreshing way to see how the things that we are studying actually work,” said Parks.

Parks enthusiastically stated the Corps of Engineers personnel and the ship’s crew were extremely courteous and knowledgeable. “They answered all of the questions we had as we moved through the various rooms and explained each of the ship’s major components,” said Parks.

“It was a great experience that helped us to understand a little more about what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does and how it uses engineering to solve navigational issues in our community,” said Parks.



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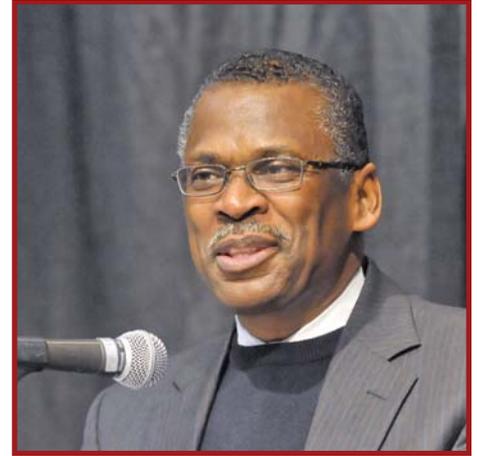
### Engineer, inventor brings many to EEO observance

Story by Lance Davis, Public Affairs Office

The Equal Employment Opportunity Office’s annual Black History observance held in downtown Mobile at the Mobile Convention Center on Feb. 4 drew high attendance, making it one of the most anticipated EEO events in the history of the district.

The keynote speaker was native Mobilian Dr. Lonnie G. Johnson, an engineer and inventor who has achieved a lifetime of success but is best known for his invention of the Super Soaker water gun. His presence brought out hundreds of district employees, citizens from the city of Mobile and surrounding areas and the local media.

Johnson spoke on his experience of growing up in Mobile in the 1950s during the tuberlent times of Jim Crow laws, which mandated segregation and restricted civil rights and liberties from black Americans. Johnson credited Dr. Martin Luther King’s leadership in the Civil Rights Movement to the nation’s progress in race relations.



*Engineer, inventor Lonnie G. Johnson addresses an audience of district employees and citizens from surrounding areas during the district’s annual Black History Observance Luncheon at the Mobile Convention Center. Johnson is most famous for his invention of the SuperSoaker, a popular water gun. Photo by Jon Hauge, Mobile Press-Register correspondent.*



*Hundreds of attendees enjoy their lunch at the district’s annual Black History Observance Luncheon as they await keynote speaker Lonnie G. Johnson, engineer and inventor, most famous for inventing the Super Soaker water gun. The observance is hosted by the Equal Employment Office’s Special Emphasis Leadership Forum. Photo by USACE contractor Cicone Prince*

“Martin encouraged and actively sought harmony among people. He encouraged black Americans to hold their heads high and walk with dignity,” Johnson said.

The Super Soaker inventor described the 1960s as a decade of great visions and ideals that spawned the social enlightenment and the technology revolution America sees today.

“I was 12 years old in 1962 when President John F. Kennedy announced his vision of sending a man to the moon,” Johnson told the audience. “His statement had a profound impact on my view of the world. He said we should choose to go to the moon and do other things in this decade, not because they are easy but because they are hard.”

Johnson concluded his address, citing the nation’s progress with the election of Barack Obama as the nation’s first black president. He also explained the importance of continuing technology revolution in the U.S. For instance, a battery that will generate power in vehicles for up to 1,000 miles is one of his works in progress.

Sonya Rodgers, black employment manager for special emphasis programs, said the event was a sell-out with high attendance that included increased numbers from district field offices. Doug Otto, chief of the engineering division, described Johnson as a genius and complimented him on taking his knowledge and skills in science and engineering to entrepreneurship.

Johnson is the founder and president of Johnson Research and Development Company, Inc., which is based in Atlanta and specializes in revolutionary energy technology. The Super Soaker has generated over \$1 billion in sales since 1990.

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### Deer Island: District to restore its 1910 footprint

Story by Lisa Coghlan, Public Affairs Office



District Commander Col. Steven J. Roemhildt stands with Mississippi state and local representatives from Biloxi, Miss. commemorating a ribbon cutting ceremony in September 2010 at Deer Island, located off the coast of Biloxi. The district is restoring the Deer Island to its original size in 1910. Photo by Lisa Coghlan

Mobile District is restoring Deer Island, located off the coast of Biloxi, Miss., to its original 1910 footprint. Due to various hurricanes and natural storms, the island eroded to about half of its original size. The district began Phase I of the comprehensive restoration project funded with federal monies received following hurricane Katrina, Gustav and Ike.

Sand more than 2 million cubic yards is necessary to fill the gap where past hurricanes breached the western end of the island and to also restore the southern shoreline. The district is working with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and other state and federal resource agencies to dredge sand from nearby areas and pump it back onto the island.

The work includes filling in 95 acres with sand and restoration work on the southern

shoreline of the barrier island as well. It will cost \$14.5 million to restore the island back to its original footprint. In addition, \$3 million is available to plant the restored sites with vegetation native to the island such as slash pine, scrub oak, wax myrtle, salt marsh cordgrass and sea oats.

Dredging began in September 2010 and the breach has been filled to date, and a 20,000 foot southern shoreline is being restored. After this phase of the project is completed, the planting phase will follow starting this spring. Additional restoration activities are planned for the northern shoreline of the island as part of the district's Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program.



Mobile District contractors work to install a geo tube on Deer Island off the coast of Biloxi, Miss. The geo tube enhances the restoration process of the 1910 original size and provides greater storm damage reduction to the island. Photo by Lisa Coghlan

“Deer Island is one of a few undeveloped, mainland barrier islands along the northern Gulf of Mexico and is a critical component of the Mississippi Sound ecosystem,” said Susan Rees, MsCIP program manager. “In terms of risk reduction, the restored island will serve to reduce damages to the eastern Biloxi area from waves and tropical storm surge,” said Rees.

In addition to providing habitat for migratory songbirds, the island provides nesting habitat for the bald eagle and habitat for small mammals and reptiles. At one time the island was home to deer and thus the origin of the name. The deer left the island after numerous storms destroyed their habitat.

“The operation is currently pumping 20,000 cubic yards a day,” said Nathan Lovelace, a lead engineer for Mobile District. He describes the amount of sand placed daily as equivalent to 1,000 dump trucks of sand.

Deer Island has been part of Mississippi Coastal Preserves Program since 2002. It is a joint program of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and Mississippi Secretary of State's Office created by the Mississippi legislature in 1992 to acquire, protect and manage Mississippi's remaining coastal wetland ecosystems.

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## Employee Spotlight: Harriette Holland

Story by Lance Davis, Public Affairs Office



Photo by Lance Davis

Harriette Holland works in the district's programs and project management division (PM) as a project scheduler, using a system called P2 to organize and manage the schedule of district projects and the costs. Her role in working with project managers, operations managers, program analysts, technical managers and functional chiefs is essential to ensuring district projects meet Project Management Business Process requirements.

But Holland is not your typical, routine employee. She constantly seeks or creates ways to reinvent herself, making sure her fullest potential is being used.

"Harriette is quiet but also focused. She's always looking for opportunities to expand her service to the district," said her supervisor Tom Fultz, chief of the military support team in PM.

When employees in the planning and environmental division (PD) were detailed to Afghanistan, Holland's supervisor approved her taking a temporary detail assignment in PD as a community planner under the condition she could continue her tasks as a project scheduler. For the last several months, she has been wearing two hats.

While maintaining her normal duties in PM, Holland's PD responsibilities have included: visiting project sites; providing input in planning meetings, organizing workshops and groundbreaking ceremonies; meeting with potential sponsors, working on project studies; and writing review plans and program management plans.

Curtis Flakes, chief of PD, described Holland as "a valuable addition to the team" and one who has provided "excellent service with a smile." Flakes said she has been instrumental in a study of Montgomery, Ala. where findings conclude the city as a potential partner in supporting the district's civil works programs to meet water resource needs for the state of Alabama. Holland appreciates the responsibility of her dual roles.

"It has been a great learning experience as well as an enhancement to my career," Holland said. "I really appreciate PD for seeing my potential and I am grateful to PM for allowing me to embrace this opportunity."

Holland has several other involvements as well. She is the program manager for Federal Women, a program under the Equal Employment Opportunity Office's Special Emphasis Leadership Forum, and also contributes her time to helping with the district's quarterly American Cross Blood Drive. In addition, Holland was the chairperson for the district's participation in the Combined Federal Campaign, running three successful campaigns during her leadership.

"It's more than just coming here and putting in your eight hours. It takes going that extra mile," Holland said. "Don't be afraid to take a challenge, especially if it can help others."

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### SAM VOICES

*Who do you admire most in African American history and why?*



**Linda Spadaro** - Chief, Small Business Office

*Annie Elizabeth "Bessie" Delany kicked down a lot of barriers to become the second African American woman licensed to practice dentistry in New York State after finishing dental school from Columbia University in 1923 and starting her own practice. This was quite an accomplishment for an African American as well as a woman during that time period. She lived a long life and published a book at age 101.*



**Vongmony Var** - Economist, Planning & Environmental Division

*The person I admire most in African American History is Martin Luther King, Jr. He led the Civil Rights Movement setting a foundation for equality among all races. He didn't do it with violence or rage, but with peace. I'm a direct benefit of his impact.*



**Latonya Campbell** - Administrative Assistant, Planning & Environmental Division

*I admire First Lady Michelle Obama. She's a smart woman with class and style. Seeing her represent our country and relate to people at all levels is awesome.*



**Michael Creswell** - Assistant District Counsel, Office of Counsel

*I'd have to say Thurgood Marshall, first African American Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court. He was one of the best ever. He definitely helped shape my positive impressions of the Supreme Court and how law should be.*



**Kerry Murray** - Human Resource Specialist, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

*Rosa Parks is who I admire most because she stood up for something she believed in, and I think all people should be inspired by her to do the same.*

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### West Point Project Office hosts 'special day, special people'

Story by Park Ranger Steven Rector, West Point Project Office



Several attendees enjoy food and fun at West Point Project's recreational areas. Each year the West Point Project Office hosts "Special Day for Special People," an event primarily for the disabled and the elderly. With the help of several community sponsors, this event continues to be a success. Photo courtesy of West Point Project Office

Rangers from West Point Project Office in West Point, Ga. held the 33rd Annual Special Day for Special People last fall. Over 800 people attended with nearly 100 volunteers at the event.

This annual event strives to make a special day for elderly and disabled people, providing an opportunity for them to visit the lake and enjoy a free picnic lunch, entertainment, boat rides, and a petting zoo.

All activities and food were provided by community sponsors.

Publix Supermarkets of La-Grange, Newnan, and Co-

lumbus, Ga. graciously donated all the food and prepared it. Publix has been assisting with this event for 15 years. Atlanta Coca-Cola Bottling Company of West Point donated all the drinks and also provided cotton candy and sno-cones. In addition, Coca-Cola provided transportation to and from the picnic to the boat ramp and petting zoo areas.



West Point Project Office park rangers assist young people as they exit from complimentary boat rides on West Point Lake provided by members of the West Point Lake Coalition, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Highland Marina and Southern Harbor Marina in support of "Special Day for Special People." Photo courtesy of West Point Project Office



Park Ranger Rocky Millenbine stands with the district's mascot, Buddy the Beaver, at West Point Project's recreational area during the "Special Day for Special People." Buddy the Beaver is used to promote and spread water safety messages. Photo courtesy of West Point Project Office

Boat rides were offered free of charge through the generosity of members of the West Point Lake Coalition, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, Highland Marina, and Southern Harbor Marina. Members of the West Point Lake Coalition also assisted with fitting life jackets and assisted with loading and unloading of the boats. Good Shepherd Therapeutic Center donates time to bring out a petting zoo. There was also a bounce castle donated by a local company B & E Happy Hoppers.

The City of LaGrange donated use of a portable stage. Several volunteers donated their time for entertainment. George Cotton was the MC, playing music all day. The Long Cane Middle School Chorus performed The National Anthem and additional songs. The Springwood Cheer Team performed a routine and danced with the attendees. A local musician, Clay Butler, also performed.

Troup County Georgia Sheriff's Office coordinated an appearance by McGruff the Crime Dog and Lanett Alabama Fire and EMS had an ambulance on site as well as coordinated an appearance by Sparky the Fire Dog.

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### Verbal Judo training equals visitor compliance

Story by Lisa Coghlan, Public Affairs Office

Chief Park Ranger Chris Arthur uses Verbal Judo to gain voluntary compliance from visitors at Lake Sidney Lanier in Buford, Ga. Verbal Judo is a tactical communication tool which Arthur uses on a daily basis. "It's not enough to be good, you've got to look good and sound good or it's no good," said Chris Arthur, chief park ranger of Lake Sidney Lanier Project.

"We all use language to communicate, to express ourselves, to get our ideas across, and to connect with the person to whom we are speaking. When a relationship is working, the act of communicating seems to flow relatively effortlessly. When a relationship is deteriorating, the act of communicating can be frustrating and may turn ugly and dangerous. The Verbal Judo concept was integrated into our program in the late 1990s, from Dr. George Thompson's program," said Arthur.

Verbal Judo is a tactical communication tool that teaches USACE rangers how to respond to deteriorating communication situations by using verbal, non-verbal and personal protection techniques. Verbal techniques are how you speak to the visitor; tone and delivery are what the visitors hear.

According to Thompson, nonverbal communication is the single most powerful form of communication. More than voice or even words, nonverbal communication cues you in to what is on another person's mind. Nonverbal communication ranges from facial expression to body language. Gestures, signs, and use of space are also important in nonverbal communication.

Personal protection techniques are also very important. Confidence in your ability to protect yourself may save your life, according to Thompson. Techniques are shown and practiced with the rangers until the techniques of deflecting grabs and holds are successful for the ranger to be out of physical contact with the visitor.

The course has been very beneficial to the rangers. According to Arthur, it is stressed to the young rangers that Verbal Judo is one of the most important training courses they will ever take as rangers, and they must practice the techniques on a daily basis. It must become a way of life. There is an annual refresher course every year.

Arthur has been an instructor for the Prospect Visitor Assistance Course since 1993. The course is a National course and all new rangers are required to take it. Arthur teaches the Verbal Judo, Tactical Self Defense and Pepper spray training portions of the course.

"Our goal as park rangers is to generate voluntary compliance whether someone has parked on the grass, or they have a dog off of a leash, or the presence of alcohol. Verbal Judo helps us to facilitate a discussion with the visitor and gain compliance by getting them to do what we want them to do when normally, they don't want to do it," he said.

Verbal Judo is a six-hour training session for the rangers.

"Then it takes a life time of practice, because there are so many skills and concepts of the training that can be applied in the field," said Arthur.



*Park Ranger Chris Arthur speaks to a visitor at Lake Lanier, Ga. Arthur uses Verbal Judo to gain compliance from visitors. He also teaches the course to USACE rangers. Photo courtesy of Lake Lanier Project Office.*

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### Verbal Judo continued...

A few of the concepts are: the eight tactical steps, the five-step “hard style,” how you approach people, how do you interact with them and achieve your goal of compliance.

Verbal Judo helps to diffuse the situation when you are dealing with irate people. “It is good for anyone who works or has to deal with the public,” Arthur said.

“The course was initially created for Law Enforcement Officers, and more than 800 thousands officers have been trained across the United States. Of course, the Corps came on board with the program and it really benefits us because we often have the same types of interactions with the public, even though we are not Law Enforcement Officers,” said Arthur.

“Verbal Judo teaches that there are hundreds of cultures in the United States but there are only three types of people that you will be dealing with, the nice person (a person who will do what you asked the first time), the difficult person (a person who won’t comply even when asked several times) and the sneaky: wolves in sheep’s clothing, (a person who agrees to comply but once you leave they go back to doing what they were doing),” said Arthur.

Back in 2000, Doctor Thompson granted the Corps permission to create the training into a CD type format which is called Safe Self. “It is a CD which allows us to reach out to park rangers, park attendants, volunteers and operation and maintenance folks,” said Arthur.

Rangers can use the CD for their annual refresher training. The CDs are being used nationally throughout the Corps.

“There are eight tactical steps you use on every approach, greeting, identify yourself, the organization, reason for the stop, the reason for the infraction, identification, forecast and close. These answer all the, who, what, where and why questions right off the bat. Who are you, where do you get your authority, what do you want, why are you here, etc. When you meet resistance, go to the five-step ‘hard style’,” said Arthur.

The five-step “hard style” says:

1. Ask them to do something, such as move your car.
2. Then you tell them why they need to comply (i.e. it tears up the lawn, etc.)
3. Present the options (such as your car will be towed, a citation could be writtinen).
4. Confirm with them: “Is there anything I can say to gain your cooperation?”
5. The final step is to act, by towing the car, writing a citation or calling the local law enforcement.

“Ninety-eight percent of the time people will comply with your request. Verbal Judo makes it possible to deal with the two percent that won’t. We even use verbal judo in court, it works extremely well,” said Arthur.

“Verbal Judo concepts should be used across the Mobile District anyone that has interaction with the public, such as real estate, operations, planning and regulatory would benefit from this training,” said Arthur.

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## To Your Health

### Prevent, lower your blood pressure with DASH

What you eat affects your chances of developing high blood pressure (hypertension). According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which falls under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Institutes of Health, research shows that high blood pressure can be prevented - and lowered - by following the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension eating plan, or DASH.

High blood pressure is dangerous because it makes your heart work too hard, hardens the walls of your arteries, and can cause the brain to hemorrhage or the kidneys to function poorly, or not at all. If not controlled, high blood pressure can lead to heart and kidney disease, stroke and/or blindness.

NHLBI says high blood pressure can be prevented - and lowered if you take these steps:

- Follow a healthy eating plan, such as DASH, that includes foods lower in salt and sodium.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Be moderately physically active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

The DASH eating plan is rich in fruits, vegetables, fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, whole grains, fish, poultry, beans, seeds, and nuts. It contains less salt and sodium; sweets, added sugars, and sugar-containing beverages; fats; and red meats compared to the typical American diet. This heart healthy way of eating is also lower in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol and is rich in nutrients that are associated with lowering blood pressure - mainly potassium, magnesium, calcium, protein and fiber. It can also help you loose weight, if necessary, because it meets your nutritional needs and has other health benefits for your heart.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the DASH eating plan. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information on NHLBI.

### Quiet down your workplace to protect your heart

Want to avoid a heart attack?

Stay out of loud, noisy workplaces. That's the finding of a national study of over 6,000 workers examining data from the U.S. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, conducted from 1999 to 2004.

The researchers found that 21 percent of respondents said they had worked in a noisy environment for close to nine consecutive months, and they were two to three times more likely to have serious heart problems than employees in quieter atmospheres. These workers tended to weigh more and smoke more than their counterparts in quiet workplaces.

The association between noise and heart problems was elevated when studies revealed workers under 50 were three to four times more likely to have suffered a heart attack or to have coronary artery disease or angina. The study's authors say the findings suggest that excess noise exposure in the workplace is an important occupational health issue and deserves special attention.

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### Briefs

**Black History Month (February).** An annual celebration of achievements by Black/African Americans, and a time for recognizing the central role of African-Americans in U.S. history. Dr. Carter G. Woodson established *Negro History Week* in 1926 as the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the U.S. The 38th U.S. President, Gerald Ford, officially proclaimed February as *Black History Month* and every U.S. president has done so since then. The theme for 2011 is “African-Americans and the Civil War.”

**American Heart Month (February).** Heart disease is the leading killer of men and women in the United States and worldwide, according to the Mayo Clinic website. In the U.S., heart disease is responsible for 40 percent of all deaths - more than all forms of cancer combined. But many forms of heart disease can be prevented or treated with healthy lifestyle choices and diet and exercise.

**National Engineers Week, Feb. 20-26.** A celebration to increase awareness and appreciation of the engineering profession, and to cultivate and support future generations of engineering talent.

**Presidents Day, Feb. 21.** Remember the birthdays of two our nation’s distinguished presidents, George Washington (Feb. 22, 1732) and Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12, 1809).

**Women’s History Month (March).** An outgrowth of International Women’s Day on Mar. 8 of every year, Women’s History Month highlights and celebrates the contributions of women throughout history.

**American Red Cross Month (March).** The Red Cross was created by Clara Barton in 1881. American Red Cross Month recognizes the role the Red Cross plays in saving the lives of people around the world.

**National Anthem Day, March 3.** Anniversary of the adoption of Francis Scott Key’s “The Star-Spangled Banner” as the U.S. National Anthem.

**Fat Tuesday, March 8.** The last day of Mardi Gras, preceding the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, March 9. Enjoy the party!

**Saint Patrick’s Day, March 17.** Wear something green and commemorate Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland (and driving out the snakes, though that’s a myth).

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