ST. LOUIS ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT

ESPRIT

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The real meaning of Christmas

By Terrie Hatfield, HR-P

The spirit of Christmas was alive and well at the Froebel Elementary School. It warmed the hearts of the elves who represented the St. Louis District and the Veterans' Administration at holiday parties for six first-grade students and their families. Froebel is a St. Louis City school with a very diverse cultural and economic mix, including many students whose families are severely economically deprived. Daisy Fisher, a former St. Louis District HR student employee, teaches first grade at Froebel and continues to work part time in HR. Daisy's first hand knowledge of the plight of some of her students and their families opened the hearts of District and VA employees.

Brian Schrameyer and DeAngelo W. test drive the awesome remote controlled motorcycle.

It began with HR's intent to adopt a family for Christmas. Letters were sent home with each of Miss Fisher's 28 students, advising the parents or guardians of the Corps' desire to help a family in need. Responses were verified and the adoption of six families (10 adults and 37 children), became a labor of love. Because some families cannot afford to buy books, Miss Fisher was concerned that her students, who are just learning to read, might "lose the magic" with no books of their own, so she specifically requested that books be included in the gifts.

Smiles just don't get any bigger than this.

Because of sheer volume, the deliveries had to be arranged on

(Continued on page 6)

To make progress, we must change

It's been known by a host of monikers including reorganization, upsizing, downsizing, reengineering and a few less positive ones, like... a pain in the neck.

But change is with us always. It always has been and always will be. Some changes are more dramatic and extensive than others, but they all have one thing in common: They require that everyone working with the process keep the faith.

That means two kinds of faith: The first involves trusting those who determine that the change will bring about the progress and improvements that the organization needs. The second is an individual, personal faith, the self-confidence that we will be able to change and grow with the organization by working with the plan.

In their book The Flight of the Buffalo (Wiley Books), authors James Belasco and Ralph Stayer say, "We need substantially different actions to get substantially different results. A definition of insanity is: Doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result."

While you might think that a substantial change in the way things are done would "drive you crazy," as the authors say, it would be "crazy" not to make changes.

Get ready to change your mind set if you think your boss or his boss is responsible for making the process successful. Rather, it's individuals who are responsible for its success, and who will benefit.

The path to better things is the path through changing times and a changing world. We must positively and resiliently follow it.

US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District

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News Briefs

Rend Lake:

New name

Assistant Project Manager, Andrea Pickard, is now Andrea Lewis after her marriage November 2nd to Randall Lewis of Carbondale, Illinois.

Promotions

Dawn Kovarik has been promoted to the lead ranger for Interpretive Services; Mark Roderick has been promoted to the lead ranger for Visitor Assistance; and Maureen Curran received the GS-9 position in the Facilities Management shop.

Service awards

Charlie Grubb, Equipment Operator, and Arlyn McCormick, Civil Engineering Technician, received their service awards for 30 years of federal service. Park Ranger Lowell Summers recently received his 25 year service award.

Deer hunt

The 17th Annual Rend lake Deer Hunt for Persons with Disabilities was held during the weekends of November 21-23 and December 5-7. Twenty-five very special hunters braved the winter chill to try their luck. By closing day, 15 hunters had gotten their deer.

Hall of Fame

Norm Carlile, Seasonal Park Ranger, has been nominated to be inducted into the Illinois Basketball Coaching Association's Hall of Fame. Mr Carlile was nominated for his many years of coaching and his life long commitment to the game of basketball. His 33-year teaching career included 29 years of coaching. In addition, he has been keeping score, maintaining the bench and keeping game statistics for local games and regional tournaments for 36 years. He will be inducted in April, 1998, at the Hall of Fame in Peoria, Illinois.

Mark Twain Lake:

Disabled hunt

The Corps of Engineers and many volunteers joined with local businesses and groups to sponsor the 10th annual deer hunt for the physically challenged. Food, equipment and labor were donated to provide 23 hunters the opportunity to experience outdoor activity that is normally inaccessible to them. For the hunters' safety, the annual hunt is held at the Indian Creek Recreation Area, an area where public hunting is prohibited. It is used as both a management tool to control the deer population in the recreation area and as a positive community activity.

Turbine contest

Local elementary schools participated in the 1997 Mark Twain Lake "Design A Turbine Contest." Students from the Madison, Missouri, Middle School were the winners. The contest is designed to supplement a teacher's energy curriculum by increasing a student's understanding of hydropower and promoting innovative thinking. Park rangers continue to encourage careers in mathematics and science with this type of educational program.

Lake Shelbyville:

12 new suites

Dennis and Elaine Fayhee, owners of Sullivan Marina and Campground, have almost completed several improvements to the area.

Twelve 700 square foot kitchenette/suites overlooking the lake should be finished by the end of January. The suites, which are in two two story, six unit structures, will include a bedroom, living room, kitchenette and bathroom. Each suite can sleep up to four persons and will be situated around the swimming pool and next to the lake. Each suite will have a separate deck. The daily rates will be $100 per suite during the recreation season and $60 during the off-season.

Also under construction in the same area is a new convenience store and shower building to service the campground and marina and 40 new boat slips.

For further information you may phone Sullivan Marina and Campground at (217) 728-7338.

Disabled deer hunt

The Corps recently hosted the 8th annual deer hunt for persons with disabilities November 21-23. The 23 hunters who participated harvested 15 deer. This event would not have been possible without the assistance of 20 people who donated more than 800 hours transporting hunters, carrying gear, field dressing and completing many other tasks. **(Continued on page 4)**

News Briefs (cont.)

Carlyle Lake:

Prison labor use

A Memorandum of Agreement between the Corps of Engineers, Carlyle Lake Project Office, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons to use federal inmate labor at the lake project has been approved by Headquarters, Department of the Army. The project will begin to use prison labor next spring after necessary employee training sessions have been completed. The prison labor will aid the completion of unfunded work.

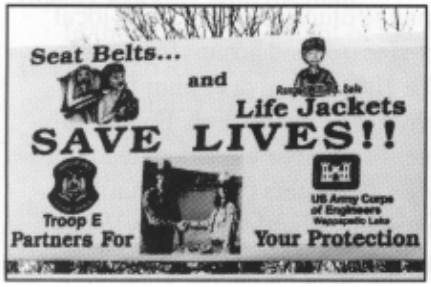
Wappapello Lake:

Safety billboard

A safety billboard featuring "Willie B. Safe," Park Ranger Angela Smith and Missouri Highway Patrol Officer SGT Brent Davis has been placed along Missouri State Highway 67, just north of Poplar Bluff. The billboard was procured by a Memorandum of Agreement between the Corps and the Missouri Highway Patrol.

This billboard serves a two-fold purpose by promoting water safety and driving safety. In addition to this billboard, Park Ranger Smith and SGT Davis developed several 30-second public service announcements that will be aired during 1998.

Through these partnerships, many people are reached in a cost-effective manner as we build our strong water safety team. Our plan is to seek growth opportunities for this campaign and to encourage replication of these initiatives throughout other Corps projects nationwide.



Rivers Project:

The Rivers Project Access and Tour Control Facility (ACTF) is nearing completion at the Riverlands West Alton Area. Originally approved in 1992, this facility replaces the original facility that was destroyed in the 1993 flood. Located adjacent to the Administration Building and the Environmental Demonstration Area (EDA), the enclosed 900 square foot building will serve in many ways, such as a Visitor Overlook and a hands-on classroom for the EDA. Visitors and staff alike are anxiously waiting for the mid-January scheduled opening, with many groups already reserving use of the facility.

Anson Eickhorst retires

Anson receives his retirement certificate from Col. Hodgini.

On December 17, District team members were invited to participate in an informal retirement ceremony for the District Engineer's Executive Assistant, Anson Eickhorst.

Colonel Hodgini ran down Anson's varied career during the ceremony and presented him with the Department of the Army's Superior Civilian Service Award, as well as a retirement certificate and letters of commendation and farewell, from the Chief of Engineers, Congressman James Talent and others.

Anson's government service totals more than 33 years and more than 31 years with the St. Louis District.

Levins project at Riverlands

Billy Levins, the son of William P. Levins, Assistant District Counsel, has completed his Eagle Scout Project at the Rivers Project Office.

One of the requirements for becoming an Eagle Scout is that the scout must plan, develop and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to a religious institution, school or community. For his project, Billy worked with a ranger at the Riverlands Office, Mr. Brian Markert, and began planning the project in June, 1997. The project was the construction of an earthen observation mound in the Environmental Demonstration Area. The work consisted of the excavation of topsoil from the site of the mound, the deposit of fill material onto the site and the shaping of the material with an access ramp leading up to a flat surface on top of the mound. The topsoil was then replaced over the entire surface to facilitate the growth of vegetation on the mound.

The mound, which was completed on December 7, 1997, stands about four feet high and will allow visitors on the trail to rise above the native prairie grasses and enjoy a better overall view of the area.

Mr. Markert and other staff members at Riverlands were extremely generous with their time and assisted Billy Levins in every aspect of the project.

Billy Levins and Brian Markert discuss the view from the observation mound. Melvin Price Locks and Dam is in the far background.

Outstanding Young Woman

Angela Sanders, Realty Specialist in our Real Estate Division, has been selected as an Outstanding Young Woman of America for 1997.

For thirty years, Outstanding Young Americans has recognized young men and women whose efforts are dedicated to enriching the communities in which they live and the professions which they serve. Most are nominated for this recognition by outstanding civic and professional leaders in their communities.

Her name and biography will appear in the 31st edition of Outstanding Young Women of America published by Outstanding Young Americans.

Kaskaskia River nomination for American Heritage

Upstream and downstream Kaskaskia River interest groups have worked together to complete a nomination for the Kaskaskia River as an American Heritage River. The American Heritage River Initiative was established by President Clinton and focuses on ecologically sustainable approaches to river restoration and protection.

This national recognition would bring federal attention and dollars to help develop and maintain various river projects. The goal of the American Heritage River project is

(Continued on page 9)

Meaning of Christmas (cont.)

two separate days. On party day #1, we were met by Miss Fisher and Froebel's principal, Mr. William Hardebeck who helped load, transport and arrange the gifts in family groups in the school library. As the families arrived, emotions began to churn. So very touching were the reactions of both parents and children. The adults expressed sincere gratitude and were visibly moved by the generosity of strangers. Some children's faces sparkled with excitement and sadly, some were apprehensive. Even some of the very youngest worked hard at controlling their excitement as if to protect themselves from anticipated disappointment. Particularly heart wrenching were such questions as "What are we supposed to do?" The response, "Find the gifts with your name on them", was met by "We did. Now what are we supposed to do?" Then, "Do we get to take these home?" "Is this really mine?" and "for keeps???" After some convincing and reassuring, they began behaving like children at a Christmas party. Miss Fisher later confirmed the unthinkable—some of these children had never received a gift-at least nothing new and bought just for them, and for keeps!

The wrapping crew: Marybeth Ferrer, Tara Jansen and Tisha Banks.

THE FAMILIES:

The "EW" family: Six children in the custody of their grandmother, sponsored by the VA HRO (Ray Tober and friends). A little girl tightly clutched her new stuffed Simba, another shrieked "It's a Barbie-I have a Barbie!" A teen-age boy who was way too cool to show emotion, gave in a little when he opened his football, then let it all out when he saw his new headphones. This family survives primarily because of federal subsidies and the Grandmother was truly grateful for the Christmas she could not provide.

The "B" family: Eight children in a single parent family, sponsored by Planning Division and Regulatory, coordinated by Diane Ousley and helpers. Six year old Christopher was proud that he could spell his name, but he also had to be reassured that these gifts really belonged to him and would not be taken away. "A coat-it fits me!" (This is what he needed, so this is what he asked for.) He dared not ask for a race car set or a basketball, but Santa decided that he needed those, too.

The "R" family: Two children, two parents, sponsored by ED, coordinated by Karen Bautsch and many helpers on very short notice. (Gifts transported by Greg Dyn, ED elf in attendance.) Mr. R. can only find part time work and medical bills prevent him from providing little more than basic survival. He struggled to control his tears as he watched his children's faces. The children were overjoyed to receive what they wanted in addition to what they needed, and each parent also received a warm winter coat. The family was extremely grateful and we shared an enormous hug. .

The "F" family. Nine children, single parent, sponsored by HR. The mother was absent because of her daughter's emergency surgery.

Kent Hayes hopes Santa brings him one, too.

(The surgery was successful, she was home for Christmas and is recovering). An older sister and a family friend accompanied the children, who also required reassurance that these gifts were theirs to keep. Little James was the life of the party when one of his toys, still wrapped, turned itself on and tried to run away. Everyone laughed as James chased the errant box and then exploded with excitement as he discovered its contents.

Diane Ousley and Kelly Wissehr prepare the PD & CO-F gifts for transport.

Additional gifts included canned goods, paper products and other necessities which did not interest the children at all, but were very much appreciated by the parents. Miss Fisher was given a large quantity of new child's underwear and hygiene supplies to help her cope with the all-too-frequent accidents and hygiene problems she deals with on a regular basis.

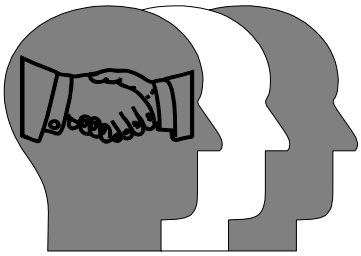
Richard Pappalardo and friends.

The second party resulted from the adoption of the "A" and "TW" families, sponsored by the CAC and RM, coordinated by Dianna Pope, aided by strongman Kent Hayes and a lot of helpers. Marybeth Ferrer and crew commandeered the RM conference room for a gift wrapping frenzy. Generous donations (some anonymous) included grocery gift certificates which generated a tremendous effort by Dianna and friends, and resulted in a lot of very heavy boxes and a complete takeover of CT's Bid Room. Thirty large bags of used clothing were sorted, bagged and labeled according to size and family needs and occupied the fourth floor lobby. This effort required considerable muscle and transportation assistance, and a call for help was answered by LM's Charlie Johnson with a van, ED's Jim Brown and Brian Schrameyer (with trucks), Bryan Colegate, Teri Geahlen, Bill Moeller, Richard Pappalardo, Robin Parks, Jennifer Schottel, Keith Short and assorted cars. They performed like professionals and quickly lifted, loaded, transported and set up the second round of family parties. (Oh, the blessings of youth and strong backs). The crew was then invited to Miss Fisher's classroom for the class party and after introductions were made, assisted in distributing gifts. As a special gift, thanks to the Engineering and Planning Divisions and the Regulatory Branch, each student in Miss Fisher's class received two books at the class Christmas party. They were thrilled and seemed genuinely pleased to receive us as party guests. As the children marched out the door singing Christmas carols, we raced back to the library to await the arrival of our special families.

The "A" family: three adults, five children, recent immigrants from Somalia, speak little or no En-

Mrs. E.W. admires her happy grandson's new coat.

(Continued on back page)



EEO matters

Marking the calendar

Excerpts from the Seattle Times

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who knew it takes time for attitudes to change, would not have been surprised that nearly two decades were required to make his birthday a legal holiday.

Even putting aside King's controversial career and his minority race, the odds against the new holiday were imposing. The arguments opposing it --- cost to taxpayers, singling him out over others --- have been used for decades to resist creation of any new holiday.

It is the first new holiday since 1948, when Memorial Day was created as a "prayer for peace" day. It's only the third this century (the other is Veterans Day crated as Armistice Day in 1926 to honor those who died in World War I).

King is the only American besides George Washington to have a national holiday designated for his birthday. Internationally, king is one of the few social leader of any country to be honored with a holiday (Mahatma Gandhi's birthday is observed in India). Such status by a member of a country's racial minority is almost unheard of. Generally, the honor is reserved for military or religious figures. Given such obstacles, the holiday is a powerful tribute to King's philosophy and stature.

When President Reagan signed legislation creating the holiday in November 1983, it marked the end of a persistent, highly organized lobbying effort spanning the nation for 15 years. It was Rep. John Conyers, Michigan Democrat who four days after King was assassinated in Memphis, submitted the first legislation to commemorate his birthday. Petitions carrying more than 6 million signatures, said to be the largest petition drive in history were submitted to Congress in 1970. With help from New York Democratic Rep. Shirley Chisholm, Conyers resubmitted the legislation during each congressional session. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the mass marches in 1982 for voting rights also contributed.

Not specifically patriotic or religious, the King holiday does not fit any traditional category.

Publisher, Frank Blethen, Seattle Times, says the role of the newspaper is critical to achieving the kind of inclusive society King dreamed. Demographic changes are making our country and our community more diverse and multicultural. He has come to regard M L King day as "the first real reflection by our country that diversity needs to be embraced. It's our most valid holiday because it recognizes real needs and real opportunities."

Bike trail around Rend Lake

Across the nation, Americans' interest in cycling is growing by leaps and bounds. Southern Illinoisans are no exception. The Office of Regional Development at SIU-Carbondale and the Regional Bike Path Task Force have received a grant to generate a proposal for a two-tiered project to develop bike trails in the Southern Illinois region, part of which will be around Rend Lake.

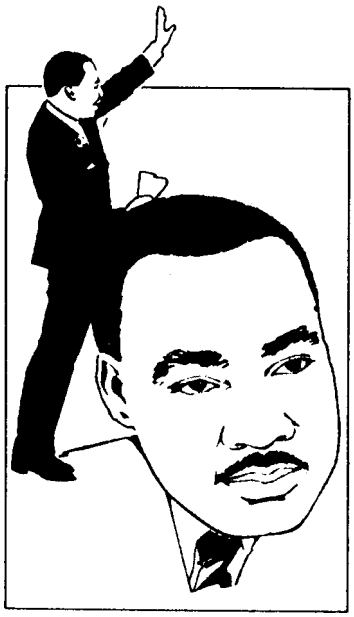
The first tier will be to develop a regional network of interconnected bike trails throughout Southern Illinois. Plans include connecting existing trails in the region with newly established trails. Upon completion, the network of trails will be about 250 miles long.

The second tier is the Rend Lake Bicycle Trail. This trail will cross through public property owned by the Corps of Engineers, the Rend Lake Conservancy District and the Rend Lake College. The proposed trail would consist of a 35 mile trail that encircles the main body of Rend Lake. In addition, two 28 mile legs, connecting the trail to Mt. Vernon, would be built on each side of the lake.

For more information about the trails, contact Jerry Schutte at (618) 724-2493.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Dauy, January 19, 1998

A Presidential Proclamation



(Excerpts from the January 18, 1986, Presidential Proclamation)

This year marks the first observance of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a national holiday. It is a time for rejoicing and reflecting. We rejoice because, in his short life, Dr. King, by his preaching, his example, and his leadership, helped to move us closer to the ideals on which America was founded. We reflect on his words and his works.

The majesty of his message, the dignity of his bearing, and the righteousness of his cause are a lasting legacy. In a few short years he changed American for all time. He made it possible for our Nation to move closer to the ideals set forth in our Declaration of Independence: That all people are created equal and are endowed with inalienable rights that government has the duty to respect and protect.

Let all Americans continue to carry forward the banner that fell from Dr. King's hands.

Today, all over America, libraries, hospitals, parks and thoroughfares proudly bear his name. His likeness appears on more than 100 postage stamps issued by dozens of nations around the globe. Today we honor him with speeches and monuments.

But let us do more. Let all Americans of every race and creed and color work together to build in this blessed land a shining city of brotherhood, justice and harmony. This is the monument Dr. King would have wanted most.

Now, therefore, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, January 20, 1986, as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

Kaskaskia (cont.)

to help communities restore and protect their river resources in a way that integrates natural resource protection, economic development and the preservation of historical and cultural values.

Designated rivers will receive focused support in the form of programs and enhanced services, including a River Navigator to work with the community to provide access to the federal agencies and existing programs and to simplify the delivery of these programs. Designated rivers and their communities will also receive a commitment from federal agencies to act as Good Neighbors in making decisions that affect communities.

— *Earth Notes* —

Reuse your own paper

* Keep a stack of paper used only on one side. Then use the other side for lists, notes and other writings that will not be circulated to others.

* When you brown-bag your lunch, try to take reusable containers instead of disposable plastic and brown paper bags.

* Reuse gift boxes and wrappings you receive with presents.

* Share magazines and newspapers with friends, or take to hospitals and nursing homes.

* Use the right sized box for shipping to reduce use of packing materials suggests the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

New stamps coming

Self-stick stamps, which are preferred by almost all postal customers, gum up machines that recycle paper. Now the U.S. Postal Service is testing linerless, self-adhesive stamps in rolls of 100 at several post offices. After trouble-shooting, they will be available everywhere. They work much like a roll of tape.

Did you say McDonalds?

McDonald's restaurants reduced their waste by an additional 6,500 tons last year. They did it simply by redesigning their napkins, making them an inch shorter than they were before.

To your health

January: National Glaucoma Awareness Month

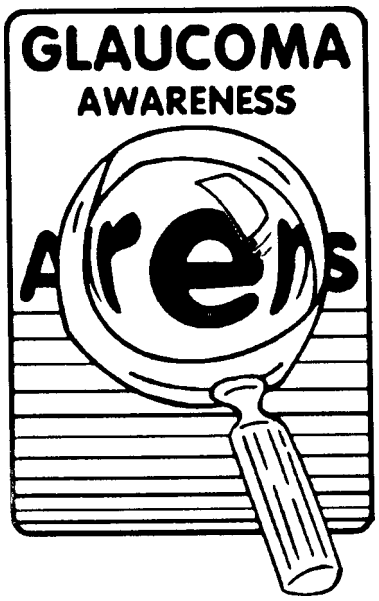
How to arrest this thief of sight

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of adult blindness in North America. In most cases, however, vision loss could have been prevented indefinitely through early detection and treatment. Who should be tested for this condition?

* Everyone over age 40 should be screened every two years.

* African Americans and people who have diabetes are at higher risk and should ask their opthalmologists about more frequent testing.

Chronic glaucoma accounts for 90 percent of all cases. Though it has no symptoms, it causes a fluid buildup inside the eye which creates pressure. Nerve pathways are compressed and eventually die, causing a gradual vision loss.



People with advanced chronic glaucoma may have good straight-ahead vision but have blind spots on the edges of their visual field. But over a period of years, central vision is gradually lost.

Acute glaucoma has pronounced symptoms that result in early treatment, and vision is usually saved, say doctors at Johns Hopkins Medical Centers.

Inflammation and heart attacks

By measuring the concentration of C-reactive protein in blood, doctors may flag people who, despite normal cholesterol counts, face a higher-than-average chance of stroke or heart attack.

Doctors hope people who ignore healthy-living advice will change their life-styles if a high concentration of this protein is found in their blood.

Cardiologists at Harvard used the Physicians' Health Study to conclude that inflammation caused by C-reactive protein increases the risk of a heart attack, but the risk can be detected up to 10 years in advance.

Studies also showed that those with high concentrations of C-reactive protein were significantly less likely to have a heart attack later if they took aspirin regularly.

Donating blood helps the heart

Giving blood may decrease the risk of a heart attack in middle-aged men, according to a study in the British Medical Journal. Men who donated blood at least once in the two years prior to the study had an 86 percent lower risk of heart attack in the ensuing five years than nondonors. A reduction of blood iron levels may be responsible for the benefit.

Water: Eight glasses a day

Medical authorities agree that drinking lots of water helps people feel fit, stay healthy and look better longer. But surveys show that two out of three adults don't drink enough water. Health-care professionals recommend that you:

* Drink before you get thirsty. If you are thirsty, you are already slightly dehydrated.

* Drink water before exercising.

* For each cup of coffee, tea or alcoholic beverage, drink a glass of water.

* If dieting, drink more water each day to control appetite.

* When you are ill, increase water consumption.

Retiree Review

By the Retiree Correspondent

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! The retirees had their Holiday Luncheon on December 18th at the Salad Bowl. A number of regulars and an even greater number of non-regulars attended. The normal agenda was dispensed with. There were introductions and reintroductions, well-wishing and just plain old fashioned talk of family, friends, etc.

One December birthday was acknowledged, Tom Mudd. When asked about having a birthday so close to Christmas, he said his parents always said that instead of a gift twice a year, they would give him one BIG gift once a year. Sounds good, but did he believe them all the time?

Howard Turner showed some good taste. He brought his bride, Gloria, rather than Farrell Burnett. Farrell, they talked about you. You better show up to protect your interests.

Ron Bockhorst mentioned that he was informed that Harry Stewart, formerly from the Reprographics Section, passed away. Harry was one of the cooks at all the District's picnics. Our sympathies to Harry's family.

Pete Puricelli reported seeing Ken Long the other day. He was placing his order with Santa. Ken looked great and was in his normal jolly spirits. When asked about how he trimmed down, his charming bride divulged his secret - eating his own cooking. Wow, what a way to lose weight.

Laurel Nelson stated that she received a call from Loren Ligon wishing everyone a happy holiday and regretting not being able to attend. He did say he and his bride were celebrating their 63rd wedding anniversary. Congratulations. That is a long time and almost an eternity in today's environment.

The Huizengas were up from the Cape-Jackson area. Elmer said he received a call from Bill Douglas, the Planning Division's expert report writer. Bill was moving into a retirement home in the Cape area. Maintaining his residence was getting a little much for Bill.

The newest retiree in attendance was Nancy Hsieh and her hubby - retired just two months ago. Welcome to the retirees, Nancy. Hope you can become a regular.

Charlie Denzel conducted a riddle quiz, with prizes. The prizes were worth from one dollar to thousands. All the formal prizes were awarded and Charlie had some additional riddles. Those winners were given a thank you and a Happy Holiday.

There were several story tellers: Elmer Huizenga, Elsie Kalafatich (with an assist from hubby John), George Clapp and George's "niece" Louise Cullman. George has seen Bill Hoff come to the luncheons with his niece so often that he is now using the same line.

Speaking of Bill Hoff, he seems to be recovering nicely from his eye surgery. He was there under the watchful eyes of Charlie and Jane Denzel.

Bill Sutton and Art Johnson indicated that Anson Eickhorst did have a retirement celebration on the night of the District's Winter Ball. Welcome to the retirees, Anson. Maybe, if your schedule permits, you may make some of the monthly luncheons.

Mark you calendars for the third Thursday of the month, January 15th, at the Salad Bowl about 11 a.m.

You retiree's correspondent takes this opportunity to wish all of you the happiest of holiday wishes and a joyous and prosperous New Year.

Easy ulcer test available

A breath test for the H. pylori bacteria responsible for most stomach ulcers is now available. Doctors who do not have the test, which is cheaper and less invasive than previous methods, can get it by calling (888) 637-3835.

OK to inject through clothes

People with diabetes who inject insulin through their clothes are not necessarily risking safety, say doctors in Diabetes Care. In reported studies, there were no reports of infection or other problems with the through-clothing method. Patients noted that it saved them time and spared them the need for privacy.

Plants that clean the air

Homes are closed for the winter, making air less clean than before. But research by NASA shows that houseplants filter out many harmful air pollutants. Here are some that do it: rubber plant, English ivy, corn plant and bamboo palm.

Christmas (continued)

Dianna Pope assists the "A" family.

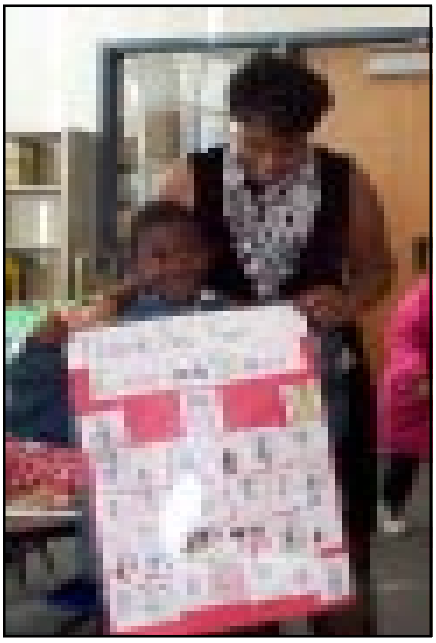
glish and have very few possessions. The father was killed in the war and while the children await the arrival of their mother, they are being cared for by two uncles and their grandmother. They were a bit confused with the Christmas excitement, but extremely grateful for the assistance. One of the boys assisted by explaining that, in our country, we celebrate Christmas by giving gifts. When we realized that they were admiring the bundles of pretty paper, and clearly did not know what to do with them, we tore open a package and revealed a set of racing cars. After that, the children caught on very quickly.

Grandmother, a stately and regal matriarch, tried to remain sedate, but couldn't help but laugh when the boys reacted to their new basketball. Richard followed the family home in his overloaded car and he and the Mr. "A"s, carried countless boxes and bags to the family's second floor apartment.. This trip ended with Richard giving away his own warm cap and scarf, and they seemed genuinely pleased with their gifts of friendship.

The "TW" family, seven children, two parents. The father has a full time job, but making ends meet is extremely difficult. Six year old De-Angelo, who has a real future as a comedian, clenched a large package in his tiny hands, closed his eyes and pleaded, "Oh please don't be a suit!!" It is such a joy to watch a child who has so little receive an awesome toy. Brian Schrameyer spent considerable time on the floor "assisting" De-Angelo with his remote control Kawasaki motor cycle, which had everyone jumping out of the way. The real traffic jam began when little Trai discovered his magnificent remote control truck. Mrs TW was deeply appreciative of the genuine caring of the Corps and expressed sincere gratitude. The family car was filled, and some walked home followed by Charlie's huge van overflowing with children and gifts.

Christmas is for big kids, too.

Thank you to all District team members and representatives of the VA who donated time, money, gifts and labor. Your generosity will not soon be forgotten. Most of these children are loved, but some are not. Today, however, they know that these people who call themselves the "Corps of Engineers" really do care about them. We are blessed with regular paychecks. Our jobs may be stressful and not always fun, but most of us are able to provide for our families and to fulfill our children's wants, as well as needs, at this time of year. How many of our children ask for only a warm coat and socks for Christmas? It was a joy to bring gifts of love to these deserving boys and girls. We are all God's children. Some of us just need a little more help sometimes.



Ms. Daisy Fisher and Christopher B. display the children's gift to the Corps.