Far East District Korean National Union members go for a team building trip

Related article is on page 16
Commander’s Corner

Col. Donald E. Degidio, Jr.

To the Great Team of the Far East District and our entire Team of Teams,

This is my final monthly East Gate Edition Commander’s Column, as I will be turning over Command next month during a formal change of command ceremony. In short, it has been an exciting two years serving in the Far East District.

Last month I wrote about not losing focus on our families or ourselves. In this issue, we are highlighting some of our District’s family members whose children have graduated high school, thus highlighting the importance of family, friends, and faith in everything we do.

Use this as the foundation for your continued great work! We have accomplished a lot, and we have a lot more to accomplish. You should be justifiably proud of what we have done for our Service Members and their Families, and we look forward to the challenges that lie ahead to further promote their quality of life here on the Peninsula.

Summer is always a good time to talk about safety. As the temperatures rise, and we spend more time outside, we open ourselves up to everything from sunburn to heat stress and the potentially fatal heat stroke. Many of our employees do spend time outdoors, so please make sure that you are wearing the proper protection – in addition to safety equipment and clothing, make sure you wear sunscreen and stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water.

One final note: We have had a lot of anniversaries this month, to include the US Army and the US Army Corps of Engineers. In July, we celebrate three more important ones: the birth of our Nation, the organization of our District, and the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice Agreement ending open hostilities on the peninsula. Please honor our Nation, our District, and our Korean War veterans this coming month.

To our great Alliance – Katchi Kapsida!
To our great Corps – Essayons!
One Team Building Strong® in Korea!
History of the Far East District

The U.S. Army Engineer District, Far East was established in June 1957 pursuant to OCE General Order No. 11. It is an operating component of the U.S. Army Engineer Division, Pacific Ocean. Initially established to assume the construction programs of its predecessors, the U.S. Army Construction Agency Korea and the U.S. Army Construction Agency Japan, the District’s mission is to support the U.S. Forces in Korea by supervising military construction.

Since its inception, the Far East District’s work has involved a wide variety of design and construction projects including complex construction on mountain-top sites, sophisticated well-drilling operations all over Korea, tunnel neutralization projects in the demilitarized zone (Panmunjom), and a host of projects to improve the life of American Forces residing in Korea. Among the Far East District’s significant accomplishments are the rehabilitation of the Inchon Tidal Basin, construction of the USIA Pavilion at EXPO 70 in Osaka, Japan, construction supervision of the 258-mile trans-Korea pipeline communication, medical and support facilities as well as military family housing all over Korea.

From 1963 to 1970, the Far East District was DOD’s design and construction agent in Korea and Japan. However, due to the reorganization of the Corps elements in Northeast Asia, the Far East District lost its responsibilities in Japan and became a semi-autonomous, augmented area office in 1970. The District returned to being a full-service district in 1982 under the leadership of Col. Frederick A. Perrenot and enjoys that status today.

With 744 employees the Far East District enjoyed its peak performance in 1986 during President Ronald Reagan’s administration.

During more than 55 years of its existence, the Far East District has met diverse challenges resulting from fluctuations in the annual workload caused by ever-changing national and international events. The District has designed and constructed nearly four billion dollars worth of facilities consisting of thousands of projects. The size of the District has fluctuated throughout the years in accordance with world and national events. There are, currently, nearly 400 dedicated District employees that include U.S. Department of the Army Civilians, U.S. Army soldiers, and Korean national citizens.

FED employees insert a core rod to take a soil sample at Camp Hialeah, 1960

Three-bedroom duplex in Seoul, 1957

Organization Day in 1970s

Elevated water tank in Joint Security Area, 1979

Current FED compound
Far East District builds a Korean War monument in Busan

By Jason Chudy
FED Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District is building a Korean War monument for the American Battle Monuments Commission at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan.

The granite monument is being built to honor the sacrifices of the men and women from the United States who fought during the Korean War.

“Standing about 9 feet tall, the new Korean War monument at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan will be built of Barre Gray granite from the Rock of Ages Quarry in Barre, Vt. According to the architectural concept, “The material is dark gray granite that will change character with the light and climatic conditions. The use of a single material, without application of bronze and without pedestals, contributes to the nobility of the monument. “Attributes of altruism, determination, indeed, heroism are expressed in the material. The simple, yet bold form of a monolithic slab of stone is consistent with the attributes of the material,” the conceptual booklet states.

A polished central section will bear the inscription “Honor, freedom peace” and three stars will be chiseled above the inscription. The rear of the monument will also have the three stars set at the same position as on the front of the monument.

A short path will lead to the monument from the existing stone walkway. The first paver stone of the walkway will be inscribed with the following tribute: “This Monument has been erected by the United States of America to honor the sacrifices of its men and women who risked their lives defending the freedom of the Republic of South Korea. 1950-1953.”

According to the conceptual plans, the path “to the sacred precinct recreates the journey of U.S. troops to Korea and its battlefields.”
Building Strong in Korea!

Duties, responsibilities and building a strong team

By Sgt. Maj. David Breitbach
FED Sergeant Major

I f you’ve been around the Army for even a little while you prob-
ably heard someone say during any discussion about teamwork that “there is no ‘I’ in team.” Then someone will gener-
ally add that there is an “M” and “E,” for which, of course, spells “me,” for some comic relief.

For any team to be successful there are several factors know that come into play that make up a winning team. An organization that has long-
term success are perpetual ranked at the top of their fields, whether in the business world or in college or profes-
sional sports, have several things in common.

These organizations consistently have great leaders from top to bottom. They bring experienced veterans to the team with the qualities and skills necessary to keep the organization performing at a high level, and to also coach and mentor other team members.

The Far East district is no exception. Our team here in Korea is made up of over 500 people with a kaleidoscope of diverse backgrounds, and years of experience.

As with any professional organization people need to know their roles and responsibilities. In the U.S. Army we have regulations and manu-
als which help define each person’s role and responsibilities to the organiza-
tion.

The following Army regulations and field manuals are key guides to un-
derstanding individual roles, responsibilities and duties for both Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilian employees: Army Regulation 600-20 Army Command Policy, FM-7-21.13 The Soldier’s Guide, FM 6-0, Com-

For our Soldiers: Every Soldier assigned to the Far East District has certain duties and responsibilities. Most have some level of authority, ranging from the commander all the way to quality assurance representa-
tives to the unit mail handler.

Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilian employees are accountable for what they do or fail to.

For our Civilians: The Far East District and our Department the Army civilians commit to excellence in all aspects of their professional responsibility so that when the job is done they can look back and honestly say “I have given my all each and every day.”

Paragraph 3-3. FM 7-21.13

Paragraph 3-4. Officers, NCOs, and civilians lead other officers, NCOs, junior enlisted soldiers, and civilians, and help them carry out their responsibilities. Commanders set overall policies and standards, but all leaders guide, assist, and supervise subordinates, who assist and advise their leaders. Mission accomplishment demands that officers, NCOs and civilians work together to advise, assist and learn from each other.

It is important for each and every one of us on this team to know what our duties and responsibilities are in order for the organizations to function effectively and accomplish our mis-
sions. As I’ve mentioned before the Far East district is entering a period with the greatest construction program in its history. How each and every one of us on this team performs in the next three years will be defining moments to this districts great legacy.

I challenge each and every one of you to raise the bar and set the standard higher and help to show what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can do. Essayons!
Sarah Woo featured in USA TODAY

By Jason Chudy
FED Public Affairs

Far East District engineer Sarah Woo was featured in a special Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics issue published by USA TODAY newspaper, focusing on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The issue was released in early June and was distributed free to military installations and veterans facilities, college engineering programs, and various other civilian organizations.

“USACE has many talented professionals, including scientists and engineers,” said Sarah Woo, chief of the environmental section for the Far East District’s Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering Branch. “For that, USACE is an excellent example for USA TODAY to use to highlight people in STEM fields.”

Woo was one of 16 nominated from the Corps of Engineers to take part. Of those, seven were selected: six civilians and one military engineer officer, with two from Pacific Ocean Division: Woo and Emilee Stevens of the Honolulu District.

According to Lt. Col. Jenny Willis of USACE headquarters public affairs, this issue is a good fit for both the Corps of Engineers and the nation.

“USA TODAY chose to feature USACE in part because we’re one of the nation’s foremost federal employers in STEM-related fields,” she wrote in an e-mail to the district, “employing thousands of engineers, scientists, technicians, and researchers around the world in a wide variety of disciplines.

“Young people reading Sarah’s story can take her example and perhaps be inspired to pursue STEM fields as a career, which will ultimately benefit our nation’s workforce and economy,” Willis added.

“As we strive to have good foundation work for our construction projects, we strive to help building of our future engineers and scientists for the country,” said Woo. “I believe STEM is the foundation of education, but not too many students want to study in STEM field these days. By showing them real-life experiences and careers, we can help them to understand better about STEM field.”

She believes that by taking an active role in advertising and promoting STEM, more people will be drawn towards a career in these fields.

(Left) Sarah Woo, right, the environmental section chief for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering Branch, watches as soil samples are placed in plastic bags at the site of the future Osan Air Base elementary school May 6. Soil samples are collected in clear acetate tubes by a drill rig, and initial chemical tests are done on site. The tests are done to ensure the ground is safe as a foundation for the school’s construction. (Photo by Jason Chudy)

(Right) Sarah Woo, the environmental section chief for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering Branch, was featured in a special Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics issue published by USA TODAY newspaper, focusing on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

(Below) Sarah Woo, right, the environmental section chief for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering Branch, watches as field inspectors Jang, Hyo-kun of Hee Song Geotek, and Kwon, Ku-hyon of the Far East District, prepare to test a soil sample at the site of the future Osan Air Base elementary school May 6. The samples are collected in the clear acetate tubes by a drill rig, seen behind the group. Chemical tests are done on the soil to ensure the ground is safe as a foundation for the school’s construction. (Photo by Jason Chudy)

“When I visited Seoul American High School to give a presentation on the chemical/environmental engineering, I met handful of students who were really interested in listening about real project experiences and what they can do as chemical/environmental engineers,” she said.

“As a mentor, I could show a clear path and encourage them to become engineers,” Woo said.
Three members of the Far East District staff recently returned from deployments to Afghanistan.

The three, Jason Choi and Young Choo from the logistics management office, and Brenda Dunwoody from the office of counsel, spent between a few months and a year in the country. Choi, a logistics management specialist, worked at Kandahar Air Field in southern Afghanistan between May 18, 2012, and May 9, 2013. Dunwoody, a paralegal, was deployed between May 1, 2012, and January 30, 2013 and also worked in Kandahar. Choo deployed to Bagram Air Base in north-central Afghanistan as a property book officer between January 19 and May 2, leaving when her office’s mission was completed.

All three said that they greatly enjoyed their time in Afghanistan, and were proud of the work they accomplished.

“It made me feel like I was back in the service,” said Choi. “I feel like we had a main role there, supporting troops, our resident offices, and areas offices.”

“I learned so much [more] about my job,” said Dunwoody about her nine months there, “and just the experience and opportunity to work on something so important to our country, and to their country.”

“Most of what you hear [about Afghanistan] is the bad stuff,” Dunwoody added. “We’d go out and see projects and talk with people. They were very supportive about what we were doing and very appreciative.”

For Choo, her accomplishments were easier to quantify: She and her four-person team deployed to other coalition bases in northern Afghanistan, collecting and cataloguing more than 10,000 property items worth $1.4 million.

Like Choo, Choi and Dunwoody also traveled outside of their base.

“We had to ride in helicopters, drop off supplies when they were needed, and move CONEXes (shipping containers),” said Choi. “We just worked like we were actual Soldiers – I had to carry a weapon as the armorer.”

“I got out a lot,” said Dunwoody. All over the south: Heart, Helmand [province], [Camp] Bastion, and a couple of ANA installations.” ANA is the acronym for the Afghan National Army.

All three said that deploying was rewarding, and that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made their deployment easier with in-processing and out-processing at the USACE Deployment Center. “USACE really took care of our people,” said Choo.

“One thing that the U.S. military and USACE couldn’t provide Choo during her deployment. “I missed Korean food so much,” she joked.
Congratulations to the Class of 2013

During the months of May and June, high schools hold their graduation ceremonies. In the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District there are many proud parents who just celebrated the graduation of their sons and daughters. Here are some of our most recent graduates.

Dakota Degidio, son of Donald and Donna Degidio, FED commander, graduated from Seoul American High School. He will attend New York University. (Photo provided by Degidio family)

Constance Dandridge, daughter of Hunter and Wanda Dandridge, FED Pyongtaek Resident Office, graduated from Daegu High School. She will attend Keimyung University in Daegu and major in chemistry education. (Photo provided by Dandridge family)

Sarah Kim, daughter of Stephen SD and Hye-jung Kim, FED Programs and Project Management, graduated from Seoul American High School. She will attend Princeton University to study economics. (Photo provided by Kim family)

Angelica Sanders, daughter of Rodney Sanders and Yong Chu, FED Security, Plans and Operations, graduated from Seoul American High School. She will attend Kent State University. (Photo provided by Sanders family)

Grace Kim, daughter of Jason and Myung-ah Kim, FED Engineering Division, graduated from Seoul American High School. She will attend New York University. (Photo provided by Kim family)

Michelle Thomson, daughter of Bernie and Jay Thomson, FED Korea Program Relocation, graduated from Kaiserslautern High School. She will attend George Washington University to study biology and pre-med. (Photo provided by Thomson family)

Cleaning up is part of the job

It doesn’t take much for a fire to start or for an accident to happen in an untidy workspace. A few oily rags jumbled together and dumped on the floor, or a few boxes stacked carelessly in an aisle are set-ups for disaster. Bad housekeeping needs’t be as blatant as turning a work area into a pigpen, or using a staircase as a storage room. It can be far more subtle.

Consider these examples

Leaving a cabinet drawer open, creating the perfect opportunity for an unsuspecting coworker to knock his head into it, or trip over it.

Stringing extension cords across a floor, without taping them down.

Walking past a spill on a floor, thinking the person who made it is probably getting equipment to attend to it, or if they are not, then they (not me) should be.

Leaving sharp items protruding from a shelf, even slightly, because someone didn’t want to take a few extra seconds to stack them safely.

Blocking, even for a short time, exits, aisles, stairs, emergency eyewash stations, first aid equipment, or firefighting equipment.

Ignoring a burned-out light in a stairwell or other area where an unsuspecting person could trip and fall.

Letting waste paper, wood chips, or other items that pose a fire hazard pile up in a work area.

Failing to keep machinery clean and free of excess oil, shavings, and other potentially hazardous materials.

Work these habits into your daily routine instead

Consider your daily routine and think of ways to keep your workspace tidy as you go. It may take some time to get accustomed to a new habit, but once you start keeping your workspace neat and organized, you will likely find you work better and faster, and feel better about your space. Consider adding the following to your routine:

Stack items correctly and logically. There should be no materials sticking out into the aisle.

Move all objects away from stairways where they can be easily tripped over. Once you have finished with a tool or piece of equipment, put it back in its proper place. If you have no designated place for tools, create one.

Clean up any spills immediately. Leaving a spill means you could be creating a serious slipping accident. You may know where the spill is and avoid it, but what about your co-workers? What if you forget the spill and slip and slide your way through it to an unhappy landing?

Put trash in the right containers. If there are no trash containers in a convenient location to you, talk to your supervisor about it. You’ll be amazed at how neat you can be if you have a nearby place to throw out the garbage.

Make sure your work area is clean before you end your day. Give your equipment a thorough going-over. Clean your machinery and tools. If you find something wrong or defective, report it immediately and take it out of service until it is fixed.

Store all materials properly with appropriate labels, and make sure all the equipment you need for a particular day’s work is close at hand. This will save you steps and time.

If you feel as if you have just gotten a lecture from your mother about keeping your room tidy, that’s okay. Mom was right! Housekeeping is everyone’s job and working together will not only ensure a clean workspace, it will also help to ensure a safe one.

Building Safety Strong
ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG
What is rafting?

The term rafting originated from the word “raft,” a vessel made of wood pieces tied together. Rafting is the act of riding the raft. However, nowadays the term rafting refers to an outdoor sport where a group of people get on a rubber boat and enjoy a river’s rapids.

* History

The beginning of rafting started with primitive peoples using rafts for transportation, and more recently, explorers who used rafts to discover uncharted lands. In the early 1970's, the first rubber boats were Army rubber boats used during World War II. From 1966 to 1971 Grand Canyon tour companies in the United States got tourists down the Colorado river, which became very popular and quickly spread to other parts of the world.

* How it reached Korea and its current state

In the early 1970's, the first rubber boats were Army rubber boats. Then in July 1981, Korea Explorer Association members crossed the Nakdong River using a rubber boat, catching people’s attention. The rubber boats that were first used were byproducts of Army rubber boats used during World War II. From 1966 to 1971 Grand Canyon tour companies in the United States used large rubber boats to get tourists down the Colorado river, which became very popular and quickly spread to other parts of the world.

The district’s Korean National Employees Union will work continually to provide team building activities that promote harmony and unity amongst us. We hope you remain healthy and happy through this hot summer weather.

Advantages

The fun advantage of rafting is that even though there are obstacles and the depth of the river is shallow, if there is a strong current people can enjoy the sport safely as well as experience the speed and thrill of it. Second, because those on the raft have to work together to row against the current it is a total body workout and they also get to enjoy the fresh air which can help them stay healthy. Third, because the group must work together as a team, it builds team spirit, increases teamwork, and promotes organizational vitality through communal spirit. As explained above, because it is a sport that requires teamwork, many private business and groups include the sport as part of their training program for employees.

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The program promotes a being leader and intervening, acting, and motivating instead of a follower and staying silent or ignoring the situation whether it is sexual harassment or assault. The SHARP program states that intervention is the cornerstone to the program. Intervening stops sexual harassment/assault before it happens. The program also gives everyone, citizens and military alike, the role in preventing sexual harassment/assault. The SHARP program urges everyone to strongly condemn sexual harassment/assault; however, if risk factors of sexual harassment/assault are recognized then people should become strongly encouraged to report incidents to prevent the crime from occurring again by the same culprit.

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Conrad Liburd  
Construction  
Came from Alaska District  

David Cole  
Construction  
Came from Norfolk District  

Lawrence Grant  
Korea Program Relocation  
Came from Fort Worth, Texas  

Paul Ancog  
Construction  
Came from Honolulu District  

Robert Medlock  
Construction  
Came from Jacksonville District  

Robert Rapp  
Construction  
Came from Honolulu District  

Samuel Yang  
Programs and Project Management  
Came from Sacramento District  

Thomas Yant  
Information Management  
Came from Fort Huachuca, Ariz.  

William Billard  
Construction  
Came from Savannah District  

Col. Philip Keller  
Korea Program Relocation  
Came from Fayetteville, Ga.  

Kim Chong-hwa  
Construction  
Transferred to Fort Knox, Ky.  

Richard Hogle  
Information Management  
Transferred to Middle East District  

Steven Baptista  
Safety and Occupational Health  
Transferred to Hickam, Hawaii  

Maj. Vincent Lee  
Security, Plans and Operations  
Deployed to Afghanistan  

Capt. Sarah Solli  
Security, Plans and Operations  
Came from Washington, D.C.  

1st Lt. Elyse P. Vail  
Construction  
Came from Germany  

Master Sgt. Gary Gainey  
Security, Plans and Operations  
Came from Lakewood, N.J.  

Master Sgt. Thomas Burns  
Information Management  
Came from Vanceboro, N.C.  

Brenda Dunwoody  
Counsel  
Moved to Washington, DC  

Erica Hogle  
Equal Employment Opportunity  
Moved to Winchester, Va.  

Keysha Cutts-Washington  
Korea Program Relocation  
Transferred to Baltimore District  

Kim Chong-hwa  
Construction  
Transferred to Fort Knox, Ky.  

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My Plan

I help the Corps Build Strong in Korea by...

- Assisting the chief of Construction in staffing construction offices and providing oversight, guidance and policy for construction management/surveillance of the multiple programs we are responsible for.
- Always seeking out ways to improve effectiveness of the Construction Division by implementing streamlined processes.
- Being responsible and accountable in meeting commitments: “Doing what I say I will do.”
- Contributing to the mission by employing a breadth of broad construction management and leadership experience from various USACE districts, particularly given urgent and compelling circumstances.

My Face

I am a key person in the Corps by...

- Experiencing Korean culture, cuisine, and attractions with my family.
- Building strong relationships on a personal level.
- Striking a balance between work and home.
- Relaxing, playing golf, supporting my son’s hobbies and making sure he is exposed to good music.

---

Donny Davidson

Construction Division

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Col. Donald E. Degidio, Jr.

사령관 코너

최고의 극동 공병단 팀과 모든 팀들에게.

다음 달 이취임식 행사에서 사령관직을 이임하여 이번 달에 마지막 East Gate Edition 사령관 코너를 작성하게 됐습니다. 극동공병단에서 복무한 2년동안 흥미진진한 시간이었습니다.

지난 달 가족과 자신을 제일 먼저 챙기라고 말씀드렸습니다. 이 달은 공병단 가족 자녀들의 고등학교 졸업식을 실어 가족, 친구 그리고 믿음이 우리가 하는 모든 일에 얼마나 중요한지를 강조하고 싶습니다.

여름은 특히 안전에 주의해야 할 계절입니다. 기온이 오르고 야외에서 보내는 시간이 많아집수록 행성에 타거나, 더위로 인한 스트레스, 또는 치명적인 열사병에 걸리기 쉽습니다. 많은 직원 여러분들이 야외 활동을 하고 계시기 때문에 올바른 보호 장비를 착용하시기 바랍니다 – 보호 장비 및 의상과 더불어 선크림을 사용하시고 수분을 많이 섭취하시기 바랍니다.

마지막으로 이 달에는 미 육군 그리고 미 육군 공병단의 기념일을 포함한 많은 기념일이 있습니다. 7월에는 중요한 기념일이 세가지 있습니다. 미국의 탄생일, 극동공병단 설립일, 그리고 한반도에서의 적대행위를 중지시킨 휴전협정 서명 60주년 기념일입니다. 다가오는 달에는 국가, 우리 공병단 그리고 한국전쟁에 참전한 용사들에게 경의를 표하기 바랍니다.

우리의 최고의 동맹에게 - 같이 갑시다!

우리의 최고의 공병단에게 – 에세이온!

한반도에 강한 건설을 수행하는 하나의 팀!

US Army Corps of Engineers
Far East District

Have a question?
Have some feedback?
Want to share your ideas?

Please visit our Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) website at www.pof.usace.army.mil/home/ice and share your thoughts with us.
I wore a Life Vest!

What have YOU done to save a life today?