

Edgewood

Summer 2002

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Marine lands on Army project

Maj. Rick Shizuru gets experience with private industry at APG

“Send in the Marines,” is not a phrase usually associated with a construction project, especially not an Army construction project at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground. But, “Send in the Marine,” (to be more accurate), is exactly what happened when Marine Maj. Richard N. “Rick” Shizuru was assigned for duty at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ABCDF) in June 2001.

Shizuru has spent the last year as a member of the ABCDF systems contractor team, Bechtel Aberdeen, where he has worked as an assistant construction manager. “The Commandant of the Marine Corps wanted his officers exposed to a broad spectrum of professional experiences outside the pattern of their normal duty assignments,” explained the 42-year-old Hawaiian native. “He established the Commandant’s National Fellowship Program and each year, sends a number of officers out to work with private industry. I was lucky enough to draw Bechtel and the ABCDF project.”



Photo by Miguel Monteverde

Maj. Rick Shizuru playfully applies the Marine Corps seal to the Army Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization display in the disposal facility’s John Samuel Building.

Trained by the Marines as a pilot for both helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, Shizuru has an eye for detail and a well-developed

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Forested wetland created on APG’s Carroll Island site

The Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility project is creating more than a plant to eliminate the stockpile of bulk mustard agent stored at Aberdeen



Photo by Jason Ebrite

Environmental Engineer Darren Durbin reviews plans, as wetland construction continues on Carroll Island.

Proving Ground since World War II. It’s also creating more than two acres of new wetlands. As part of the state of Maryland’s requirement to restore affected wetlands, a forested wetland of 1400 trees and shrubs is being developed at APG’s Carroll Island.

“Green ash, red maple, willow oak, red chokeberry and highbush blueberry were chosen because they are the primary existing species,” said Dr. James Bailey, an environmental scientist who oversees the project at the Garrison APG’s directorate of safety, health and environment.

Carroll Island, a remote site near Baltimore County historically used in air dispersion modeling and testing, will eventually be designated as a preserved natural resources area, making it a practical site for the new wetland.

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—Maj. Richard N.
“Rick” Shizuru

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Marines are few, but this one’s proud of work on Army’s disposal project

appreciation for safety. “Building a chemical demilitarization facility seems like a far cry from flying a plane, but in doing both, you have to focus on many things at once and double-check them all. Safety is the bottom line, whether it’s your air crew or your construction crew.”

Shizuru’s appreciation for safety fit right in with the ABCDF team, whose purpose is to safely destroy the bulk stockpile of mustard agent stored at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground and whose motto is, “Working Together for a Safe Community, a Sound Environment.”

“I like that motto,” said Shizuru, “because it begins with the concept of teamwork – ‘working together’ – to achieve important goals. That’s what being a Marine is all about.”

Environmental concern is no strange concept to this Hawaiian native, either, as the many unique, but fragile ecosystems of his home state are protected by some of the most stringent regulations in the nation.

But, while Shizuru came to the ABCDF to learn, he made it a two-way exchange. “Rick brought with him an infectious enthusiasm that became an immediate asset to the project,” said Eli Smith, Bechtel’s Engineering, Procurement, and Construction manager. “And, his familiarity with security and the handling of classified documents helped us a great deal, especially in the wake of Sept. 11. While I am sure he learned many new things during his time with us, he made a genuine contribution to the project. We’ll miss him.”

Shizuru, his wife, Lisa, and their two daughters, Kamele, 9, and Kanoë, 7, came to the Aberdeen area from a four-year tour at Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan. He has been selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel and will leave in June for a new assignment in his family’s home state of Hawaii.

“We’ve enjoyed our year here on the ‘mainland,’” Shizuru smiled, “but we are excited to be going home. I’m very proud to have had a small hand in helping Maryland become the first state to be free of its chemical stockpile. When I read about it in the *Honolulu Advertiser*, I can say ‘The Marines did their part. Semper Fi!’”

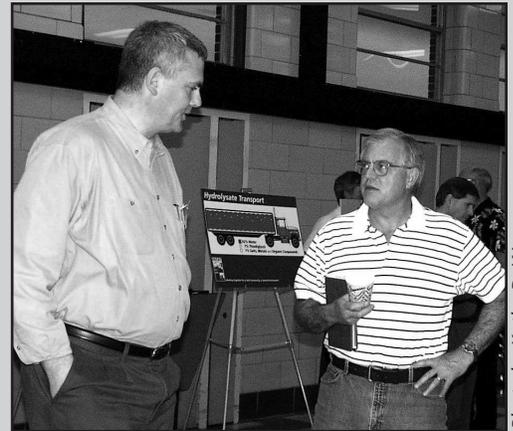


Photo by Kathy DeWeese

Earlville resident Roy Dietz, right, exchanges ideas with Kevin Flamm, project manager for Alternative Technologies and Approaches.

You may have received our “Report Card” mailer designed to help us report on our progress and provide you with a reply-mailer for your questions. We’ve received close to 100 responses and thought you’d like to know what your neighbors think. Keep an eye out for future “Report Cards” and let us know what you think.

*feedback
from the...*



“We are very concerned with the disposal program and agree with the need to accelerate. The flyers, notices and REACH newsletter are good ways to disseminate information. Thank you.”

— Edward Decker, Joppa

“Hope we get the federal funding to accelerate disposal. Thanks for all the updates.”

— Mary Hardy, Joppa

“Is there any possibility of an error committed in the disposal of the mustard gas? I feel very uncomfortable about it.”

— Ruth Jones, Edgewood

“Very informative updates. Hope it works without a hitch.”

— Peter Svenson, Chestertown

“I think it is great the Army is working hard to destroy its chemical weapons for less than \$600M. I think shipments should be by rail, not trucks.”

— William and Kimberly Osburn, Abingdon

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Forested wetland created on APG's Carroll Island site

Maryland Department of the Environment set the requirements and approved plans associated with the project. Besides providing habitat for hundreds of plants and animals, wetlands provide various environmental benefits including enhancement of water quality and shoreline protection, while reducing sediments and absorbing nutrients.

Before any excavation work began, topographical surveys were conducted and explosive ordnance disposal crews recovered ordnance around and within the wetland's six-foot basin. Project Manager Jason Ebrite, a senior scientist with General Physics Corporation, said the plans for the forested wetland will use a number of various damage control products to ensure survivability, such as mulching and tree tubes.

Ebrite, a native of Glen Arm, Md., said that the species are being planted in large sizes to reduce their vulnerability to foraging deer.

"We want this area to blend seamlessly into the natural environment within 10 years or so, so we were happy to have the artistic license to design it as naturally as possible from the start."

In addition to the creation of forested wetland on Carroll Island, the plan also calls for the enhancement of existing wetland.

"Approximately 15 to 20 acres of estuarine wetland, also on Carroll Island, dominated by phragmites, a common invasive reed, will be treated to eliminate the phragmites and to encourage the growth of native species," Bailey added.

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*—Dr. James Bailey,
Garrison Aberdeen
Proving Ground
Directorate of
Safety, Health and
Environment*

Accelerated facility construction on track

The Army's plans to accelerate mustard agent destruction are most visible on the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility construction site. Work on the original disposal facility officially was halted on Feb. 1, 2002. Adaptation of those buildings and structures for the accelerated program began immediately thereafter and continues on schedule.

At the heart of the accelerated program is the former ABCDF plant warehouse. This 19,200 square foot structure was originally slated to store construction material and would have later housed the disposal facility's maintenance and repair shops. In a Cinderella-like transformation, this very utilitarian adaptable building has become the accelerated program's neutralization facility.

A new building has been constructed inside the warehouse. This building-within-a-building is the neutralization bay. Outfitted with various holding tanks and four 2,500 gallon titanium neutralization reactors, the structure is a well-ordered maze of pumps, pipes and filtered ventilation systems. Immediately outside the neutralization bay enclosure, but inside the warehouse, workers are installing three glove boxes, where the mustard agent containers will be drained.

Scheduled for completion by the end of the summer, the neutralization facility will undergo a rigorous systemizing and testing program before any mustard agent is introduced. On May 15, DuPont

was contracted to provide biotreatment for the neutralization byproduct at its Chambers Works facility in Deepwater, NJ. The current schedule calls for agent operations to begin in March 2003 and complete six months later, two years ahead of the original schedule.

"The Bechtel Aberdeen team has quickly revised the construction execution and re-oriented their engineering and construction forces to execute the accelerated project," said Robert P. Rizzieri, Army deputy site manager and resident engineer. "They've done a good job, and our teams are progressing well."



George Kreshock of Worton, right, discusses environmental matters with Maryland Department of the Environment's Butch Dye at an April public meeting in Chestertown on the mustard disposal project. MDE's Ed Hammerberg, left, and Bill Schmidt, center, look on.

Photo by Nancy Hofmann

Questions about chemical emergency preparedness?

Talk to the experts in your local community and at Aberdeen Proving Ground about the safeguards at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility and the emergency preparedness planning program that is in place and exercised regularly. The Army, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and local emergency management agencies work as a team to help communities strengthen their abilities to respond to emergencies through improved facilities, equipment, planning, training and exercises.

- **Harford County:** Mr. Doug Richmond, 410-638-4900
- **Kent County:** Ms. Sue Willits, 410-778-7458
- **Baltimore County:** Ms. June Utter, 410-887-5996
- **Maryland Emergency Management Agency:**
Mr. John Healy, 410-517-3632
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region III:**
Mr. David Gilder/Mr. David Gingras/Mr. Landton Malone
215-931-5724 / 215-931-5549 / 215-931-5592
- **U.S. Army Garrison Aberdeen Proving Ground:**
Mr. George Mercer, 410-278-1147
- **Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility:**
Ms. Kathy DeWeese, 410-436-5253



In addition to the agencies listed above, the U.S. Coast Guard and Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, Department of the Environment, and Institute of Emergency Medical Services Systems are also key participants in chemical stockpile emergency preparedness.