

# In the Levee Loop !



News of the Flood Protection Authority

August 15, 2017

## *CAO's Corner*

Your Culture Change working group has been meeting for over a month to discuss where the Authority is, and where we are going. We have identified several Principles that will define the day-to-day interactions of all staff members:

- ◆ Accountability
- ◆ Clear Expectations
- ◆ Open & Transparent Communication
- ◆ Employees are Valued & Appreciated
- ◆ Teamwork
- ◆ Professionalism
- ◆ Mission-Focused

You will see these again in different ways, and you can expect more information and actions soon.

*Derek*

## **THE FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY—EAST COMMISSIONERS**

Lambert J. Hassinger, Jr., - President  
Richard A. Luettich, Jr., ScD - Vice President  
G. Paul Kemp, Ph.D. - Secretary  
Mark L. Morgan, P.E., Treasurer  
Clay A. Cosse'  
Quentin D. Dastugue, CCIM  
Andrew J. Englande, Jr., Ph.D., P.E., DEE  
Jason P. Latiolais  
Herbert I. Miller, P.E.

*"Intelligence is the ability  
to adapt to change."*

*Stephen Hawking*

## ***MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JOE HASSINGER***

So last Saturday, a father had the occasion of moving his youngest daughter to college. It was by all measure a chaotic day, filled with so many emotions - stress, worry, happiness, sadness, pride, love, exhaustion, and others. What he didn't know was that left on her bed at home was a letter, only to be read after the father returned home. And in that letter was some of the most beautiful, heartfelt sentiments that one could express. Expressions of lessons learned over the first eighteen years, a foundation for a life shaped by generosity, empathy, boldness, courage, leadership, selflessness, caring, appreciation and goodness. A theme of true thankfulness throughout.

So I take a moment to thank each of you, and to express my appreciation for the privilege of being a part of this organization. We have a team of character and talent that commands pride.

Over the past several months, the Board has triggered substantial changes, and change is never easy. Our mission, however, demands that we are organized, aligned and structured in a way that enables us to best work as a team to ensure that no matter what, when the water comes every component of the flood defense system must perform, to protect the lives and property in our care. Further, over the last couple of years, you have given us great feedback and direction on what should be done to provide you with a day-to-day working environment that is built on trust, open communication, recognition, accountability, teamwork and leadership. I am confident that the Culture Change Initiative that is currently underway will produce remarkable results.

The Board recognizes how much is on your plate. To say that everyone is working hard for the benefit of the Authority is an understatement. Please know that we appreciate all you do.

I have one suggestion for you... Take a moment to surprise a coworker with a "thank you for your help," a supervisor with a "thank you for taking the time to explain that to me," or a subordinate with a "thank you for being a valuable part of my team." Others don't always remember what you say, but they never forget how you make them feel.

*Joe*

# The Grass Is Jumping

Contributed by Felton Suthon

Pictures contributed by Carroll Barriere

All the Flood Protection Authority Levee Maintenance crews are busy trying to keep up with mowing the levees and other areas. Making their lives even more difficult was almost 25 inches of rain in May and June 2017. The day starts with a careful inspection of all equipment. Then the crew hits the road to travel to where the day's work is scheduled.



The group has to be carefully coordinated at all times. If someone were to stop and talk to

any of these leaders, you would find them taking several radio or cell phone calls directing work and planning future work during the day.

When cutting remote areas, the group is dependent on the Mechanic Shop for fueling and repairs – more on them another in another issue..



Most of us have a tough time maintaining grass on flat areas, but the Levee Maintenance crew has to deal with cutting on slopes most of the time.

The Leadership of the Levee Maintenance crew starts with Troy Scott, Operations and Maintenance Coordinator – next up is Carroll Barriere, Levee

Foreman C. The Foremen leading the crews (Levee Foremen A) are Darrin Richards, Monica Hall, Crayton Byrd and Lavell Lane.



At the end of the day, the crew is hot, tired and ready for some rest in air

conditioning! It's a real challenge to keep up with the grass this time of year, but the Levee Maintenance Crew is up to the challenge.

**After you watch these crews in action, you'll never look at a levee quite the same way again!**



313 Crew members: Frankie Williams, Todd Polk, Micheal Redditt, Chris Neyland, Darrell Dempsey, Keanon Brisco, Wendell Lewis, Tyus Long, Carroll Barriere, Christopher Thiel, Jeff Johnson, Sergio Cardenas, Lavell Lane, Jeffery Beverly, Troy Scott, Ryan Thompson, Rontrell Jones, Brian Lee, Crayton Byrd, Roy Moss, Monica Hall, Darrin Richards and Vashon Hall.

## *Tim Pisciotta Recognized as Employee of the Month For July*

Tim Pisciotta was recognized by the Authority as the Employee of the Month. Tim has been employed by the O.L.D. as an Electrician Specialist for four years and has been a major asset utilizing his skills and knowledge of complex electrical and mechanical systems. His knowledge of solutions for limited access methods resulted in his design of a movable platform for access under the GIWW surge barrier cap, in the installation of more modern waterproof fuses and taps along the lakefront, and for trouble shooting the aged Franklin complex electrical system resulting in needed repairs and modernization. He was recently involved with diagnosing Caenarvon Sector Gate electrical issues in conjunction with a USACE contractor aiding in the test operation and completion of the contract. Tim was one of the Authority's representatives sent to the Netherlands last year to attend the I-Storm conference to gain and share knowledge of maintenance requirements for surge barrier structures. Tim has a great work ethic, plans his jobs well, and completes his work in a timely manner.



## *Officer Mike Hoctel Recognized as Police Employee of the Month for July*



Officer Mike Hoctel is a dedicated officer who has a strong rapport with his fellow officers, outside agencies and the public we serve. He is very proactive and is routinely in the top percentile in regards to statistics (items, assists and tickets). He assists the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office (JPSO) on numerous calls and has gained the respect and trust of the JPSO officers. An example of his kindheartedness and dedication to public service took place during a call on July 13, 2017. The nature of the call was an attempted suicide by medication overdose. Officer Hoctel sat with and comforted a three year old girl who was at the home and visibly shaken due to the circumstances. Upon arrival JPSO Deputy Barran retrieved a small stuffed animal from his unit to give to the child as a comfort aid. Officer Hoctel remained with the

child throughout the incident keeping her busy and distracted during a very disturbing call for service. He displayed compassion and helped this family in a dire time of crisis. His actions will have a lifelong impression on this family. Officer Hoctel is being honored for his dedication, compassion and commitment to public service.

JPSO Deputy Barran runs a nonprofit group called Barrans Bears, who's mission is to console children who have been observed during calls of service where there was violence or injury. He posted a message on his group's Facebook page lauding Officer Hoctel's efforts to comfort the child during the incident. The message read "Levee District Officer Mike Hoctel with a young fan! Thank you Officer Hoctel for keeping this kiddo busy during a very disturbing call for service."

## *Betty Vignes Recognized as Administrative Employee of the Month for July*

Betty Vignes was hired by the O.L.D. in November 1990 as the mail room clerk and eventually became the Executive Director's secretary. After Hurricane Katrina she relocated to the north shore and for several months commuted to the O.L.D.'s temporary offices in Baton Rouge until the District's offices could be re-established at the Franklin facility. Betty was assigned to the Flood Authority in 2009 and is now the secretary for the Director of Engineering and Operations and Chief Engineer. During the past 27 years she has been one of our people "out front", routing inquiries from the public and interacting with outside agency officials to schedule meetings and organize special events. She has always conducted herself in a professional and courteous manner, and is a caring individual willing to help. Over the years compliments have been received on her work ethic and clerical skills from members of the I-Storm Network, National Levee Safety Committee, NAFSWM, Corps of Engineers, CPRA and Congressional staffers. She is an excellent cook who specializes in Italian cuisine, including stuffed mirliton casserole. Every Christmas she prepares this much sought after delicacy and returns to work on her day off to share the wealth with her co-workers. She also has a good sense of humor which she readily employs to relieve stress and lighten the mood on difficult days. She is a valuable team member with a proven record of adapting quickly to change and working well with others. Her conscientiousness, work ethic, disarming personality and sense of humor make her a valued asset to our Authority.



## *EJLD Police Officers Sharpen Skills at the Shooting Range*



EJLD Police Officers participated in range day at Camp Villere in Slidell. The continuing professional training received by our Police Officers ensures qualified and profi-

cient members of the law enforcement community ready to serve the public's needs.



## *Gaynell Rome Retires from O.L.D. After 30 Years of Service*



Gaynell Rome began her career with the O.L.D. on October 14, 1987 in the Purchasing Department. In 2006 she was assigned to the Finance Department where she spent the remainder of her career with the Au-

thority. Gaynell's colleagues gathered on August 10th to celebrate her 30 years of service and to wish her well as she leaves on August 18th (pictured right). Gaynell has assured us that she will not be idle and is looking forward to having more time to spend with her family and on varied interests. Gaynell was presented with a plaque thanking her for her 30 years of service.

## *The Flood Protection Team Congratulates . . .*

### *Promotion of Sergeant Coy Canulette*

The EJLD Police Department is proud to announce the promotion of Coy Canulette to the rank of Sergeant. Sgt. Canulette went through a promotion review board and was promoted on July 7, 2017.



### *AGWA Selects Chandra Chaffin As 2017 LA State Chairperson*



The American Grants Writers Association selected Chandra Chaffin as its 2017 Louisiana State Chairperson. Not only is it an honor to be chosen for this prestigious responsibility, but it presents the Authority's Grants Administrator a greater opportunity to connect with her colleagues in the field and to learn about even more funding sources.

### *Anniversaries*

Tyus Long and wife Tasmine Fernandez will be celebrating their third wedding anniversary on August 16th.



*"The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today."*

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

Editor: Glenda Boudreaux  
Associate Editor: Wilma Heaton

Submittals can be placed in any "In the Levee Loop" suggestion box, emailed to [gboudreaux@slfpa.com](mailto:gboudreaux@slfpa.com) or sent to Glenda Boudreaux, SLFPA-E, Airport Terminal, Suite 225, 6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126.

# In the Levee Loop !



News of the Flood Protection Authority

August 15, 2017

## *Why does PES matter? Performance evaluations are one of the most important communication tools in our leadership toolbox...*

John Lewis - HR Director

The Performance Evaluation System (PES) is one of the most important COMMUNICATION tools in our leadership tool box. The process does not need to be complicated or painful; it just needs to support improved communication, and it's the right thing to do! Performance evaluations should be beneficial to the employee, the supervisor and the agency. It is a time to provide feedback, recognize quality performance and set expectations for future job performance. It is also a time to have candid conversations about how performance can be improved. Ongoing performance discussions can help employees and supervisors avoid serious problems in the future.

A few basic tips will help employees and supervisors make the year-long PES process successful:

- ◇ Don't wait an entire year to provide feedback - Supervisors should conduct Performance Planning Updates with all employees on a regular schedule, say quarterly or semi-annually. That way, employees know that clear expectations are a regular part of their employment.
- ◇ Supervisors should prepare in advance by looking back at the employee's performance over the entire review period so you can discuss the employee's performance in a meaningful way.
- ◇ Give the employee some advance notice that you are going to talk about performance planning, expectations and outcomes so they can also be prepared to discuss issues or concerns.
- ◇ Share the floor by allowing the employee equal time to talk. Don't dread the process, enjoy the opportunity to talk with your employees about how both they and your organization can be successful.
- ◇ If they feel like feedback is lacking, employees should ask for opportunities to talk with their supervisor about expectations, performance and to get a sense of how things are going.
- ◇ Stick to discussing performance expectations - don't turn performance planning sessions or annual evaluations into a discipline session or a "chewing out" - KEEP IT POSITIVE!

Employees and Supervisors should refer to the State Civil Service guides on the Performance Evaluation System (PES) available at [www.civilservice.louisiana.gov](http://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov) under the Performance Evaluation System (PES) link on the left; or stop by their friendly neighborhood HR office to get more information on the PES system and how you can put it to work IMPROVING COMMUNICATION in your workplace.

**Human Resources Supplement**

*Human Resources Reminder—  
Help Us Help You By Keeping Your  
Information Updated !*

Paula Doucet - HR Analyst

Your employee benefits play a major role in your physical, financial and personal well-being. Whether it is health and life insurance through OGB, retirement benefits through LASERS or one of the other benefit offerings through the Flood Protection Authority, it is critically important that your employee records are up to date to ensure your benefits are available when you need them.

Your Human Resources team would like to remind everyone that updated employee information is necessary to ensure that your file reflects your current mailing address, telephone number, marital status, dependents, emergency information, driver's license, etc.

This information is entered into LASERS, Office of Group Benefits, payroll records, supplemental insurance records, agency vehicle insurances, and other employee benefits/records to ensure that you receive mailings at your correct address, can be contacted by phone if necessary, and that you have full access to your benefits.

Don't put yourself or your family in a position where benefits, pay and important communications are delayed or possibly not available - keep your employee information up to date.

Please contact your HR Department if you are unsure how up to date your information is, or if you have any changes that you have not reported, so that we can update your records and ensure you are ready to put your benefits to work when you need them.

*Occupational Heat Emergencies*

Provided by Carol Kiefer, Safety Risk Director and  
Dennis Trocchiano, Safety and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

Heat emergencies are a health condition caused by exposure to hot weather and sun.

Heat emergencies have three stages: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustions may develop suddenly or over time especially with prolonged periods of hot weather outdoor activity.

Possible heat exhaustion signs and symptoms include:

**Heat Cramps:** First signs of heat cramps move the worker to a shady, cooler area, provide water or other cool beverages, massage cramped muscles, do not allow the worker return to activity for a few hours, seek medical attention if cramps do not subside.

**Heat Exhaustion Symptoms:** Goose-bumps with chills, heavy sweating, dizziness, headache, thirst, weakness, rapid pulse, nausea, headache. Move worker to a cool shady area, cool skin with cool compresses or ice packs Give worker plenty of water or cool beverage. **Call 911** if worker does not respond. The worker should not return to work the same day.

**Heat Stroke Symptoms:** Red hot dry skin or excessive sweating, confusion, fainting seizures, high body temperature. **Heat Stroke is a medical emergency Call 911!** While waiting, move the worker to a cool shaded area, loosen clothing, wet worker with cool water or ice water, apply ice pack if available, provide water if person is able to drink. Stay with worker until help arrives.

Courtesy of Heathlines/OSHA

*“Tomorrow: your reward for working safely today.”*

*~Attributed to Robert Pelton*