

# In the Levee Loop !



News of the Flood Protection Authority

February 15, 2018

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

The great things an organization accomplishes are never the result of one person's efforts. Rather, they result from incredible teamwork. Stated another way, it is impossible to accomplish great things without teamwork; with it, though, there are no limits.

We have a lot in works -- a lot of responsibilities, a lot of hard work, a lot of growing pains and a lot of progress. At times it can feel overwhelming. But take a step back, take a breath, and look around a bit. See what you have accomplished, what the Flood Protection Authority team has accomplished over the past several months. And imagine yourself six months from now, one year from now, stepping back and seeing what we have accomplished over that period of time.

I see accomplishment every time I meet with team members, every time I see Authority personnel inspecting a levee, repairing a flood wall, working at a barrier, on patrol or collaborating as a team to organize and plan. The results are clear to me, and it's crystal clear to me where we will be six months or a year from now.

When I see the fantastic work going on at Lake Borgne, for example, where a lot of work is getting done, I see the result of excellent leadership and people who are energized working together as a team. When I see the planning for and execution of the tasks necessary for us to manage and operate the PPCPs, I see the result of energy, collaboration, leadership and teamwork. The same is true in Maintenance, Engineering, HR, Finance, IT, Communications and every other aspect of the organization. One person, one department, one leader doesn't get the credit for the great things that are happening -- WE gets the credit.

Congratulations. As we continue to progress, I challenge you to "be aware of what others are doing, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their successes, and encourage them in their pursuits. When we all help one another, everybody wins."

*Joe*

## **Attention Flood Protection Team !**

**This is your opportunity to share your Mardi Gras memories with the Flood Protection Team. Please submit pictures of yourself and your family in Mardi Grad costume for publication in the next issue of "In the Levee Loop".**

**Pictures can be submitted by email to [gboudreaux @slfpae.com](mailto:gboudreaux@slfpae.com). Deadline for submittals is Friday, March 2.**

### **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.

***"Technology is nothing.  
What's important is  
that you have a faith in  
people, that they're  
basically good and  
smart, and if you give  
them tools, they'll do  
wonderful things with  
them."***

***Steve Jobs***

## News and Updates

The Flood Protection Authority anticipates the turn over of the Permanent Canal Closures and Pumps (PCCP) about the first week in March. FPA staff is diligently working to prepare for the hand over of the facilities, including creating a team of individuals with the expertise and skills needed for operations and maintenance, developing a budget for the facilities, purchasing equipment, supplies and parts that need to be kept in stock, training, determining insurance requirements, and developing operating and maintenance procedures.

The new permitting software system being developed for the FPA by Vinformatix is anticipated to be in place by March. The software development is being funded by a FEMA grant and will allow users to submit applications on-line and monitor the progress of their permit request. Permits is one of the many areas that the FPA is streamlining through the use of technology.

The Dell all-in-one desktop work stations to allow employees to check their emails and gain access to on-line/e-learning activities at a designed work space are anticipated to be deployed by the end of March.

IT and Operations staff members are installing and connecting digital message boards at the FPA's facilities. Digital message boards have been installed and are operational in the Franklin Avenue and Lake Borgne Administration Buildings. Two digital message boards will be installed at the East Jefferson facilities, two boards in the Franklin Avenue Warehouse (mechanics area and electricians area) and one board at the O.L.D. Police Station in the Lake Vista Community Center. Staff anticipates completing the installations and having all the digital message boards operational by the end of March.

The Purchasing staff is taking steps to centralize most of the FPA's purchasing activities at the Franklin facility and to automate the purchase order process. The newly updated Purchasing Policy will be presented to the Board in February for approval.

The final massive collection of data was provided in January to the consultant for the Compensation Study. The report containing the results of the study is anticipated to be received in March.

The audit/video updates to the Franklin Avenue Board Room will be completed by the end of January.

Police personnel completed the Leadership Training Program Workshop held on February 1 and 2. The workshop ends the first phase of the Leadership Training Program for the Police Department. Police personnel will soon commence the second phase of the Leadership Training Program.

The Culture Change Group met on January 25th to kickoff the calendar year. Its focus was on enabling and empowering internal communications.



Construction of the O.L.D. Police Complex remains on schedule. Pictured above: final grade for the garage slab (top) and installation of reinforcing steel for grade beams (below).

Construction of the EJLD safehouse/consolidated facility fell about three weeks behind schedule due to the recent freezes; however, the contractor is expected to provide a plan to make up the time (pictures left).

## Welcome New Flood Protection Team Member



**Kevin Bates**  
Engineer Technician  
Hired 01/16/2018

## Congratulations on Flood Protection Team Promotion



**Earl Kugelmann**  
Director of Maintenance  
Promotion 01/08/2018

## GEM — Going the Extra Mile

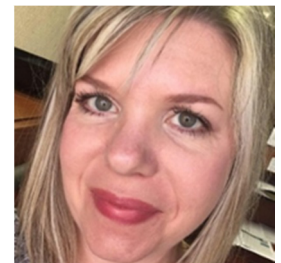
The regionalization of the Flood Protection Authority has proven to be a wonderful opportunity for the Finance Department in more ways than one, but none as significant as the value added to our team by integrating three employees from the East Jefferson and Lake Borgne administrative offices into the offices at the Franklin Facility.

The first employee to transition was Peggy Sembera. In Webster's Dictionary, her picture can be found under three entries: "hard-working", "detail-oriented", and "loud". Her attention to detail and work ethic are unmatched and most appreciated by the Finance and HR Departments as she currently functions in dual roles while temporarily filling a leadership position in the absence of an HR Director. She works more hours than she will ever be paid for, yet I have never heard her complain. Peggy embodies the values of **Professionalism** and **Accountability** by caring about the people she serves inside and outside of FPA, taking pride and personal satisfaction in the work she does, and the connection between her work and the FPA mission. This level of pride and ownership about one's work is critical to delivering quality service.



The next employee to move was Kelly DeRocha – also, from the Lake Borgne office. Kelly has not worked with FPA long but has found her place in the Finance Department, and freely volunteers her talents to the agency in areas outside of the Finance Department, including her photography skills. Kelly embodies the value of **Teamwork** as, more than once, I have witnessed her offering to assist an overwhelmed colleague. "To share" is the most basic definition of true teamwork - shared power, shared responsibilities, shared values, shared mission, shared stress, shared late nights, shared laughs, and SHARED SUCCESS!

Shannon West transitioned to the Franklin Facility from East Jefferson. Shannon has brought an open and creative spirit (and some really good ideas!) to the discussions and collaborations to further consolidate and regionalize FPA Finance Department procedures. Shannon embodies the value of **Open & Transparent Communication** by allowing her team members the respect of honest and non-judgmental communication, including productive conflict, if necessary. This openness in communication creates a safe and open environment where Shannon's team members can communicate their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and professional opinions without fear of ridicule.



I want to recognize that transitioning from a position that was familiar, close to their homes (in most cases), and responsibilities that were defined and understood to a new work environment is difficult. They left behind colleagues they cared for with whom they had formed long-term friendships. They still work for the FPA, but have basically started new jobs and have experienced the stress that goes along with a job transition or any other major life change. I want to acknowledge that transition and the difficulties that accompany it. I also want to say thank you for being YOU. I am so glad you are here with us.

Submitted by Chandra Chaffin

## *Teamwork Produces Significant Results*



40 Arpent Levee Before (pictured above) and After (pictured below) Project



### **Winter Work Featured Project: Clearing the 40 Arpent Canal Levee**

The Flood Protection Authority's maintenance crews remain aware of maintenance issues encountered during their daily routines that must be delayed due to higher priorities and manpower limitations. These issues are usually deferred to the winter months when sufficient manpower is available to address them.

One of the winter projects recently addressed was the 22 mile long Forty Arpent Canal Levee stretching from the Orleans Parish line at the end of the Florida Avenue levee and tying into the Mississippi River Levee in St. Bernard. The flood side of the levee had not been maintained in over three years, resulting in overgrown vegetation and small trees. The Lake Borgne Maintenance Levee crew, consisting of Russell Gelvin, Dale Banks, Jerry Latapie, Roch Canzoneri and Jaurell Aisola, with the help of St. Bernard Sheriff Office Trustees, completed this significant cleanup project in six work days. A combination of dozers, tractor cutters and chain saw labor was used to tackle this enormous endeavor. Additional work to construct turnarounds and access roads using hauled in limestone is being accomplished to provide easier maintenance access in the future. Congratulations to the Lake Borgne Levee Maintenance group for their successful completion of this difficult project due to their hard work and dedication.

### **Office Reconstruction at Lake Borgne Pump Station 5**

The Construction and Maintenance department of the FPA has been working to rebuild the mold and termite infested office at Pump Station 5 in Violet for the Lake Borgne Levee District. The office was falling apart with the termite damage and mold growth due to a roof leak. The work to rebuild the 270 sq. ft. office consisted of demolishing the old office and rebuilding it with a steel framed building and R panel exterior with new electrical and plumbing. The new office will have a work area with bathroom and shower. The crew from the Orleans Levee District consisted of Ross Debouchel, Jason Glenn, David Harris, Karl Hoffpauir, Henry Johnson, Michael LeBlanc, Mike Mai, Kerry McKinney, Timothy Pisciotta and John Richard. The crew from Lake Borgne Levee District consisted of Charlie Canzoneri and several trustees from St. Bernard Sheriff's Office.



## *Pontilly Neighborhood Stormwater HMGP Project*

The Flood Protection Authority has granted a permit for the Pontilly neighborhood Stormwater Network Project. This project will reduce flood risk from rain events and beautify green spaces in the Pontchartrain Park and Gentilly neighborhood through the construction of green infrastructure strategies. The project will combine improvements to the Dwyer Canal with a network of interventions along streets, in alleyways, and within vacant lots designed to slow and store stormwater.

The network area is landward of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal west floodwall. The project will make use of unused lots and parks for temporary storage of storm water runoff and is designed to drain completely in 48 hours.

These strategies will reduce the burden on the strained drainage system, reduce land subsidence and improve water quality while beautifying the neighborhood and creating a more resident friendly environment.

The permit was issued to CDB Smith on behalf of the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority and the City of New Orleans.

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program grant for the project is \$15 million.

## *Rewards and Recognition Policy Reminder*

**Flood Protection Authority employees can be nominated for a monetary lump sum award under several categories, including:**

**Professional Development – Training and Licensure** – To be eligible employees must complete an authorized training or certification program or attain a special license that meets the FPA’s policy requirements. The criteria specifies that the training, education or licensure must be directly related to the employee’s current job, is not otherwise required by the FPA or required as part of the minimum qualifications for the job, and will enhance the employee’s value to the FPA.

**Special Projects and Innovation/Process Improvements** - Individual employees or groups/teams of employees who developed new ideas, beneficial suggestions, process improvements, or worked on a special project that resulted in significant cost savings, increased productivity, improved communications or other notable organizational efficiencies for the FPA. The special project, beneficial suggestion or process improvement must have resulted in a major benefit to the FPA as determined by the Chief Administrative Officer.

**Safety** - Employees who look out for the welfare of themselves and others, above and beyond normal job responsibilities, or demonstrate extraordinary humanitarian efforts in a life-threatening situation.

Nominations for awards must be in writing and may be made anytime during the year. Proposals must be submitted by Department or Division Supervisors to the Chief Administrative Officer and must include the name(s) of the employee(s) nominated for the award, a clear description of the action and how it furthered the mission of the FPA, saved money directly or indirectly with an estimate of how much was saved, and recommendation with justification of the level of the proposed award. In the case of Professional Development – Training and Licensure, evidence of the certification, education or license must be provided.

**For complete information see the FPA’s Rewards and Recognition Policy.**

***“Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren’t used to an environment where excellence is expected.”***

***Steve Jobs***

## *The FPA's Employees of the Month for January*

### *Glenn Hartline Recognized As Employee of the Month*



Glenn Hartline was hired on December 18, 2009 at the EJLD as a Mobile Equipment (ME) Overhaul Mechanic. Glenn progressed to ME Master Mechanic on October 1, 2010, Shop Foreman on February 18, 2011 and Mechanic Supervisor A on April 21, 2015.

Glenn is an important contributor to the success of the EJLD Maintenance Department. He excels as a team player while also displaying a pleasant and cheerful disposition. Glenn demonstrates natural leadership ability and inspires the cooperation and confidences of others.

As Mechanic Supervisor, Glenn opens the shop early for employees to settle in and make the start of the day comfortable for employees. In 2016 and 2017 Glenn would go on-line to the Civil Service website and train other maintenance employees with the Ethics and Sexual Harassment Prevention Courses.

Through his daily performance Glenn demonstrates teamwork, professionalism, accountability and mission focus. Glenn Hartline is a great asset to the EJLD and the Flood Protection Authority.

Since the Board did not meet in January, Glenn will be recognized at the February 15th Board Meeting.

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### *P/O Gary LaRouge Recognized As Police Employee of the Month*

Gary LaRouge is a Police Officer 2A who joined the EJLD Police Department on February 23, 2015. His demonstration of teamwork, professionalism, accountability and mission focus makes him an invaluable asset to the Flood Protection Authority and to the community. Officer LaRouge has completed AARP training with his Watch (4 people) and B Watch (5 people) and did an outstanding job. He has been proactive running radar enforcement and has assisted Captain Durnin on internal assignments. Officer LaRouge never misses a day of work. He is very reliable and a self motivator.

Officer LaRouge did an outstanding job in March on an arrest warrant involving a business burglary. A suspect was identified through a DNA test on blood located at the scene.



## *Communications Update*

In addition to ongoing efforts to better communications within the organization, the FPA is developing strategies to communicate information on the flood defense system that is so critical to Southeast Louisiana, and the people who operate and maintain that strategic and vitally important system, to public officials, civic organizations, associations, and to the general public. Following are some of the new and ongoing efforts:

- Development of an email subscription/distribution list of public officials, organizations and citizens for disseminating information
- Development of a quarterly newsletter that will focus on the HSDRRS and the FPA's operations and maintenance responsibilities, which will be emailed to the subscription/distribution list
- Development of a series of information/fact sheets on various components of the HSDRRS and FPA operations and maintenance responsibilities for use in public meetings, tours and to present to public officials, organizations, tour groups and various audiences
- Increased presence on Facebook
- Development of new videos for the FPA website

## *A Values-Based Culture*

Vision, mission, and values contribute to building a shared understanding of the purpose and beliefs of an organization, internally (employees and board members) and externally (citizens, funders, community partners). *Vision* is the achievable dream that motivates people. An organization may have an inspirational vision of how they would like the world to be, however, that does not mean that the organization alone does the work to achieve that vision. It is the *mission* which describes what the organization can do to contribute to the vision. The mission answers the questions: “Why do we exist?” and “What do we do?” A specific mission statement helps to focus motivations and effort. *Values* articulate standards.

Values are the standards that guide our decision-making processes, determine our behaviors, and ultimately shape our culture. While vision and mission statements provide direction, focus, and energy to accomplish shared goals, values express the integrity in which individuals and organizations believe which guides workplace behavior. An organization’s values influence all actions and decisions related to the mission and vision.

Organizations have their own unique cultures which are determined by how employees practice their values. Alignment between employee behavior, organizational values, and measurable goals and objectives to achieve the mission determines culture. Organizations whose values statements are carefully crafted and adopted only to be set aside, ignored, or worse, in conflict with the organization’s actual practices and behaviors can undermine staff morale, breed cynicism, and lead to the acceptance of unethical practices. If thoughtfully adopted, accepted, and integrated into daily decisions and behaviors, values foster and maintain a healthy workplace culture and set an expectation of ethical behaviors and practices. The recently adopted FPA values are:

***The Valuing & Appreciation of Employees*** - Employees have the right to work in an environment that affirms their fundamental dignity as human beings, protects them from abuse, embraces and promotes diversity, encourages and supports creativity and innovation, and expresses appreciation for a job well done.

***Open & Transparent Communication*** - All FPA settings must be open environments where employees feel safe to communicate their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and professional opinions without fear of ridicule or retaliation. A safe and open environment allows for the exchange of honest and transparent communication, including productive conflict. This environment promotes and supports the belief that each employee is worthy of trust and will always be treated with respect, and advances the organization’s overall productivity in support of the mission.

***Teamwork*** - Power resides within small groups who share responsibilities and experiences, not with the individual. Group leaders are empowered to empower others; but no person, regardless of position, has permission to treat others in an inappropriate or dictatorial manner. The Flood Protection Authority promotes a “win-win” thinking process that encourages the expression of many different viewpoints and rejects one-dimensional thinking, improving team cohesion and productivity by increasing an employee’s capacity to deal with varying viewpoints.

***Professionalism*** - All employees are required to deliver EXCELLENT quality service that assesses needs and satisfaction, evaluates service outcomes, and is the result of an ongoing process of teamwork and personal and professional enrichment.

***Accountability*** - Every employee at the FPA takes personal ownership of the mission and values, therefore, are all accountable – to the community, the team, and ourselves.

***Clear Expectations*** - Every individual is given the respect and consideration of direct and consistent communication by means of organizational policies and procedures, specific and measurable goals that are realistic, and regular supervision.

***Mission Focus*** - The FPA exemplifies organizational integrity by embracing the obligation to conduct all of its work with strict adherence to the highest ethical standards while maintaining clear focus on the mission.

The values were developed and adopted to serve as a framework for the culture we want to create and maintain at FPA. In order to really live the values, we must incorporate them into everything we do. The values give us rights as well as responsibilities. Carefully consider each value and what it means to bring the spirit of each value into your daily work. Make a commitment to yourself, your team, FPA, and the people of the Greater New Orleans Area to lead and follow in agreement with these values and uphold them as the philosophical and behavioral standards on which the Southeast Louisiana region depends for protection of loved-ones, property, and community “*when the water comes.*”

## *Corps of Engineers Schedule for 2018 Annual Inspection*

Following are the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers scheduled Annual Inspections for the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) and Mississippi River Levees (MRL) remaining for this year.

**Tuesday, March 13**—Inspect HSDRRS levees and MRL in Orleans Parish in the New Orleans East Bank System (St. Bernard Subbasin).

**Thursday, March 15**—Inspect MRL and floodwalls and the Seabrook Complex in Orleans Parish in the New Orleans East Bank System (Orleans Metro Subbasin), and, if time permits, the IHNC West floodwall

**Wednesday, March 21**—Inspect completed HSDRRS levees in the New Orleans East Bank System (Orleans East Subbasin).

**Wednesday, March 28 thru Thursday, March 29**—Inspect completed HSDRRS levees/floodwalls in Orleans Parish in the New Orleans East Bank system (Orleans Metro Subdivision).

**Monday, May 7**—Inspect IHNC Surge Barrier in the New Orleans East Bank System (Orleans East Subdivision).

## *Calendar of Events*

### **March**

March 15 (Thursday) - Board/Committee Meetings

March 30 (Friday) - Good Friday (State Holiday)

### **April**

April 19 (Thursday) - Board/Committee Meetings

### **May**

May 3-4 (Thursday-Friday) - Association of Levee Boards Annual Workshop

May 17 (Thursday) - Board/Committee Meetings

### **Reminders**

Submit your Employee of the Month Nomination Forms by the last day of each month

## *Legal Minute—Beware of Scams !*

Last weekend, a FPA employee received a call from a man claiming to be a U.S. Marshal. The “Marshal” claimed that our employee had failed to report for jury duty and that a warrant had been issued for his arrest and that officers were going to be at his home to arrest him shortly. But, he (our employee) could avoid arrest if he posted a bond that would be refunded after a court hearing. Before agreeing to anything the employee called me. In just a few minutes, I was able to confirm this was a scam.

The U.S. Marshal Service will “NEVER” call you to tell you there is a warrant out for your arrest or that they are coming to arrest you. Apparently, this scam has been occurring in other cities such as Lafayette and Baton Rouge. So, be aware and never, ever, ever give your financial information to an anonymous source.

Generally if something smells fishy – it most likely is.

Nyka Scott, JD, MBA, Executive Counsel

Editor: Glenda Boudreaux  
Associate Editor: Wilma Heaton

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