

SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

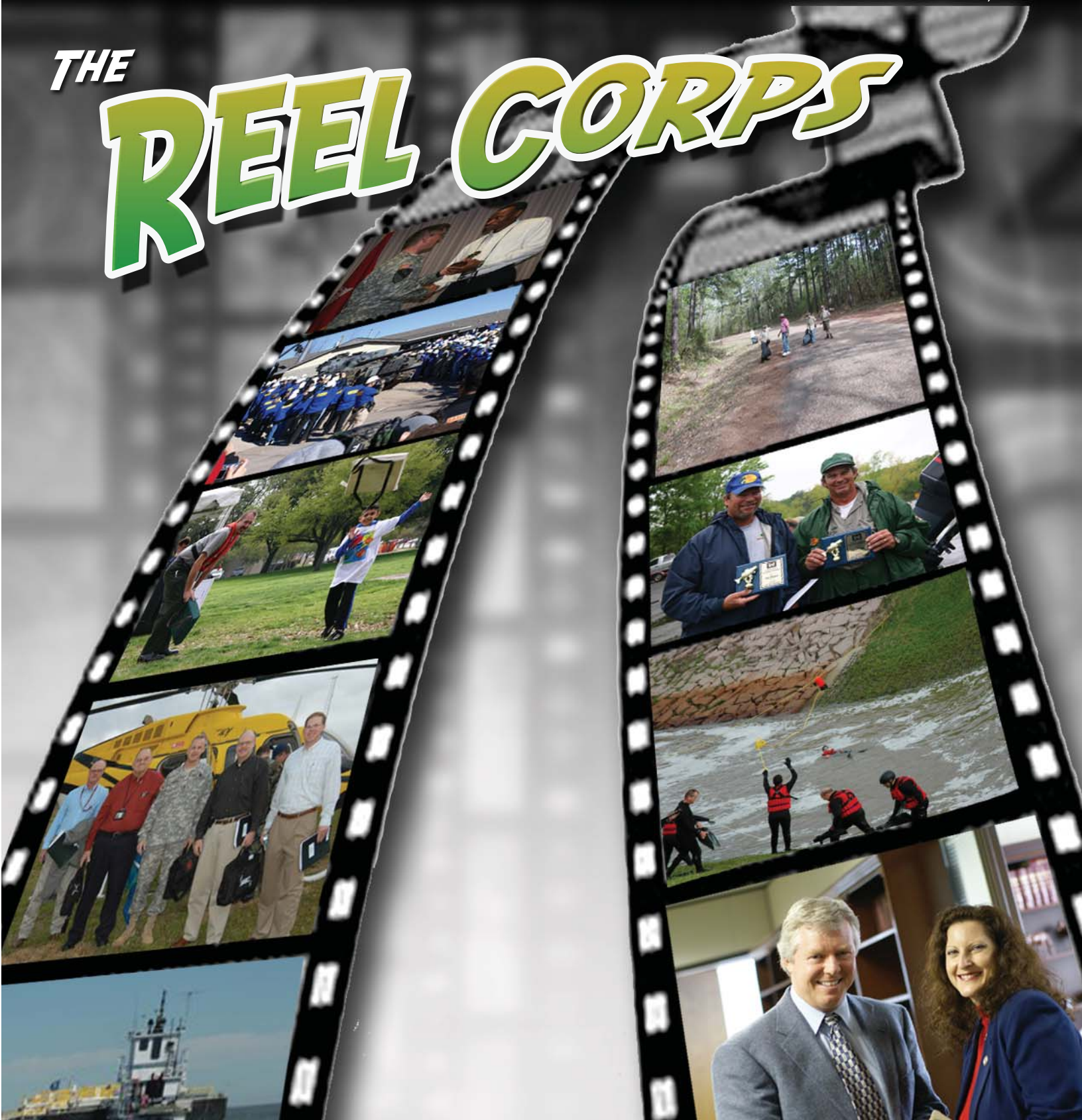
R E G I O N A L

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THE REEL CORPS





Pacesetter

Southwestern Division Regional News Service

Serving the men and women of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Southwestern Division

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On the cover: Original graphic illustration by Andre` Mayeaux, Visual Information Specialist, Fort Worth District. This month's submissions for the Pacesetter highlighted so many different activities it was difficult to select one area to feature on the cover. We received articles on police training scenarios, superior performance awards, safety training and celebration, all very important parts of Corps life. So the "Reel Corps" was created.





We're all in this together; do what a hero does when the going gets tough

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey J. Dorko
Commander, Southwestern Division

I bet you're wondering about that headline. You'll need to read on to know what I mean.

First, great news ... we've received our FY07 Civil Works work plan. Passage of P.L. 110-5 (Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007) provides for the continuation of programs, projects and activities for which appropriations, funds, or other authority were made available in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2006. Unlike normal appropriations acts, P.L. 110-5 does not specify amounts to be allocated to PPAs. The Corps, in conjunction with the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and the Office of Management and Budget, developed a work plan to define the program to be executed during FY07. This work plan is similar in composition to the tables in the Statement of Managers normally accompanying an appropriations act. This was a unique opportunity for the Southwestern Division to develop a plan that allows continuation of many high-priority studies and projects. Our FY07 Work Plan provides an increase in funding of 253 percent for the General Investigations Account (\$9.6M), 140 percent for the Construction Account (\$144M), and 97 percent for the Operations and Maintenance Account (\$299M). Our Civil Works program is healthy, requiring efforts from every member of our regional team.

And, as you know, our Army is striving to grow the force. As it does, more facilities will be needed to train, house and enhance quality of life for Soldiers and their families. Our already robust Military Construction program will grow even more as we strive to meet these needs.

Within the division, all of our districts are contributing to our fast-track MILCON Transformation mission. We've got a lot of talented folks on our Pacesetter team, all working smart and hard on this effort. Part of working "smart" is to recognize when additional help is needed on a must-not-fail mission like this one. So, we asked for help and have successfully partnered with the South Pacific Division to provide the necessary assistance.

In addition, our Engineering and Construction Support Office mission for the Department of Homeland Security has ramped up significantly. The ECSO

As a team, we've recognized when help was needed and asked for it. I ask you to do the same on a personal level when you're working a task and encounter a problem. When you face a conflict or are at a crossroads and you're struggling with the action or direction to take, be a hero, raise your hand and ask for help.

manages the Corps' national program for support primarily to DHS's Customs and Border Protection, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agencies. While support for ECSO projects comes from all four of our districts, with primary assistance provided by the South Pacific Division, when necessary, the ECSO can request support from any division or district, lab or center of expertise within the Corps.


When requested, the ECSO provides various facilities and support structures, including tactical infrastructure such as roads, lighting and fencing.

As directed by the Administration and

funded by Congress, border security is an important national program. It is so important that DHS created a Strategic Border Initiative program office to manage the effort. SBI considers the best mix of human capital, tactical infrastructure and technology. The ECSO recently received from SBI a fast-track, critical mission to provide some 225 miles of fence along the Southwestern U.S. border by December 2008. This mission, Primary Fence 225, or PF225, includes engineering, design and construction, acquisition, real estate and environmental services, as well as quality assurance and oversight.

This is a challenging mission for us - one that moves to the top of our must-not-fail priorities list.

Okay, you've read this far ... so, about the headline ... by now you should know that I have every confidence in our Pacesetter team. You have taken on and executed Herculean tasks. As a team, we've recognized when help was needed and asked for it. I ask you to do the same on a personal level when you're working a task and encounter a tough problem. When you face a conflict or are at a crossroads and you're struggling with the action or direction to take, be a hero, raise your hand and ask for help. Don't let some preconceived "fear of failure" keep you from seeking advice from your supervisor or whoever might have a solution. It is not a lack of professional ability or sign of weakness of character to admit you don't have all the answers. In fact, it takes character and courage to do so.

We are all working toward the same goals; we're all in this together ... be a hero! Essayons! 

Southwestern Division's Action Traction Report

New and improved District Support Team tracking sheet

Michael Jordan, P.E.
Galveston District Support Team

Do you know which projects your district support team is working on? Ever had a project that just couldn't get moving? Well then, you need to know there is an Action Traction Report.

Some of you might remember the DST tracking report. That spreadsheet, which lists all project actions received by the DSTs, recently got a shot in the arm from our Director of Programs, Mike Fallon. He reviewed the report and saw its value in providing special visibility to those projects that were being processed through Southwestern Division and Corps headquarters. Fallon uses this report as he makes his rounds in weekly phone calls to the division's Regional Integration Team at Corps headquarters, and during the Guidons call with the Chief. The report allows him to provide extra emphasis to move those projects that get stuck in the system, or get needed traction to get them moving again.

Ray Russo, Chief, Civil Works Integration Division, Programs Directorate, division headquarters, quipped that it was the "action traction report." I thought it a most fitting name and so the new name is the "Action Traction Report." (They don't call this the Pacesetter Division for no reason!)

Additionally, the DSTs will start using this report to highlight current project activities in monthly Project Review Boards. As a result, the DSTs are making an extra effort to keep these reports updated with fresh, hand-picked data

every week and providing those reports to Fallon for his review.

Ideally, we'd like to pull this information from P2, but at the present state of development and usage, tracking individual project actions through the vertical team review and approval process is not practical. So, hand-picked project data is the best alternative available at this time.

We are looking at adding other categories or areas of work that need emphasis. For example, with outsourcing work to other districts on the increase, tracking work that is performed outside the division will give those projects visibility. Work accepted outside the home district should be given the same importance and priority as those within-district projects.

Another area getting a lot of attention these days is schedule slippages. As a result, we are looking at having a forecast of schedule slippages for 90-day milestones. And, the two consumable resources for every project are time and money. Once you have used those up and haven't completed the work - that spells trouble. Having an early heads up of problem areas is crucial to being able to make course corrections. Most issues can be solved at the Project Manager level if there is an early warning system.

Every district should be checking its Action Traction Report for projects submitted to the division headquarters. Simply go to the Southwestern Division webpage at <http://www.swd.usace.army.mil> and "Enter" at the Corps Castle at the bottom of the page. Then click on the button entitled District Support Team (DST) Action Traction Report. The

spreadsheet is not intended for public distribution and is treated as For Official Use Only, that's "FOUO" for the acronym-challenged among us. The tracking sheet is password protected and you will be asked for the "secret" password which is, of course, "USACE." Not every action the DSTs are involved with are shown on the tracking sheet, but those that have either division action required or those specifically referred to Corps headquarters for approval or approval at the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), or other Washington-level office, are shown. A selected group of on-going DST or district actions are also tracked in the lower half of the spreadsheet, usually those actions pending at Corps headquarters.

Again, this listing is not intended as all-encompassing, but only to highlight those projects that are being given extra emphasis and visibility. If district project management teams have additional action items or have updated information to post, contact your DST members for assistance.

As a reminder, your District Support Team Leaders are: Mike Jordan, Galveston District; Sam Arrowood, Tulsa District (for a 90-day assignment); Paris Embree, Little Rock District; and, Lee Conley, Fort Worth District. These folks are working for you in the districts but are located at division headquarters. Feel free to contact them with any assistance you need or with concerns you may have on your projects, or to discuss the Action Traction Report. 📧

Tulsa earns high ranking in customer service survey

Tulsa District recently ranked number two out of 16 military districts in the aggregate Corps-wide military programs survey.

Speaking to district employees, District Commander Col. Miroslav Kurka said, "This achievement was a direct result of your hard work, dedication and overall commitment to our customers. Congratulations and keep up the good work!"

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Dorko, Southwestern Division commander said, "These results show a district staff with a continued day-to-day commitment to customer service. I commend you for your outstanding performance."



Move that bus! (and that tank!)

National television program features wounded Soldier's home

Mary Beth Hudson
Pacesetter Staff

Sunday evening, April 22, should be eerily quiet on Fort Sill Army Post and in Lawton, Okla., in general. That's because most citizens, Soldiers, and family members will be gathered around televisions watching the ABC show "Extreme Makeover" feature the demolition, design, and construction of a home hundreds of them helped build.

Gene Westbrook, a senior non-commissioned officer from Fort Sill, was disabled in the Global War on Terror. He returned home from Iraq paralyzed. Through local donations, the Westbrooks were equipped with a wheelchair-adapted van. Shortly thereafter, in a tragic twist of fate, the family was involved in an automobile accident that left the son a paraplegic and resulted in the loss of a kidney by one of the daughters.

Their heartrending but uplifting story will soon be told to a national audience. Many folks from the Lawton area lobbied to have the Westbooks featured in the popular makeover show. On Feb. 15, they got their wish. That was the morning a knock on the door signaled the start of a few frenzied days and nights during which their 1,200 square-foot home was emptied, demolished, landscaped, and replaced with a striking new home that is completely accessible to wheelchairs. Its design was patterned after Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie-style architecture.

Building day started with dramatic flair when a British tank plowed into the existing structure to begin demolition. That work was completed with track hoes and bulldozers. Soon after, the lot filled with hundreds of volunteer workers. Several of Tulsa District's Fort Sill Resident Office personnel took annual leave to work as safety officers. They were teamed with counterparts from the post's Department of Public Works. Burl Ragland, installation engineer and former Corps employee, was the Safety Team leader and helped coordinate some of the key construction logistics. FSRO volunteers were Walt Garner, Todd Hughes, Dennis McCants, George Lumley,

April 2007



Volunteers work to put the finishing touches on the Westbrook house. Inset: The community shows support for Extreme Makeover and its volunteers.

Brad Carter, and Rick West.

"It is truly amazing how quickly 1,300 volunteers, most of whom have never worked together before, can get through the learning curve when everyone has the same objective and no task is 'beneath' them," West said. "Communication is key and perhaps the only factor separating orderly chaos from catastrophic failure."

He said the Corps volunteers were all very excited about the opportunity to give something back to the community and be a part of this special, short-fused construction project. Numerous light plants were set up and some of the neighborhood was displaced to accommodate the 24/7 operation. The schedule called for demolition first thing Saturday morning and concrete placement that night. Shortly after, prefabricated walls and trusses were delivered by truck and erected.

The bulk of construction was done in 106 hours. West said, "Prior to actual start of the work, several members of the Fort Sill Resident Office team helped a local equipment supplier fabricate two manifolds capable of running up to 20 nail guns simultaneously off a 185 cfm commercial compressor. They looked a little strange, but I saw one of them in

operation when the framing crews started, and it worked fine."

According to one of the project superintendents, Randall Kendall, one of their greatest challenges was as much cultural as physical. They had to transform the execution approach from the traditional horizontal build that would ordinarily take four to six months to a vertical build with less than a week to complete. Careful planning, material selection, proper equipment, and use of readily available supplies were fundamental to success.

There were many safety challenges. It was a congested site with narrow streets and limited access. "Most of my time was spent guiding and spotting equipment and ensuring that other volunteers did not inadvertently put themselves in harm's way," West explained. "During the peak of the afternoon, there were in excess of 100 workers, numerous production crew members and three to six pieces of equipment -- excluding concrete and vendor trucks -- running at any given time," he added.

Ragland estimates that 26,400 volunteer man-hours were worked without any

See **Extreme** on page 6

Extreme

Continued from page 5

significant injury. He was told by the television crew that this was the best safety team ever assembled for the show.

People in the Lawton area opened their hearts and pocketbooks to help with the project. Much of the materials and labor came from the local area. "Although some of us gave up a little of our weekend or took a day or two of leave, many of the trade workers sacrificed wages as well," West said. "A number of the craftsmen and women took time off without pay even though not really in a position to do so."

It was a moving experience for Walt Garner, project manager forward. "The Westbrooks returned to the location of their old home to be greeted by thousands of well wishers and a brand new, 4,000 square-foot home completely handicap accessible and totally furnished with everything new including landscaping and an automatic flag pole that raises the American flag at daylight and lowers it at night time," he said.

The Westbrooks' lives will never be the same, and the Corps volunteers said it was fulfilling to be part of such a large effort. Peggy Westbrook, Gene's wife, said the outpouring from the community



Volunteers cheer as a tank prepares to demolish the Westbrook home, clearing the way for construction to begin. Inset: Volunteers move a prefabricated wall during the construction phase.

was about one hand helping another hand and is something that will live beyond the television show.

West says the amazing experience can be seen in a special, two-hour presentation on April 15 on ABC. "Be sure to watch!" he reminds. 🇺🇸

Note: Many photos documenting the entire project can be found at <http://www.extremeok.com/mambo/index.php>. Members of the safety team are identified by their orange hard hats and safety vests. A page in Tulsa District's scrapbook is also devoted to the project. It can be accessed from <https://155.88.1.235/teamtulsa/TeamLibrary/Images2007.htm>.

Joining the ranks ...



Mayor Morrissey (left) joins Col. Gessner and his son, John III, following the Eagle Scout award ceremony, Feb. 11.

John Gessner III, son of Col. John Gessner, Military Deputy for Customs and Border Patrol Projects, Southwestern Division headquarters, was presented the rank of Eagle Scout in a ceremony Feb. 11, in Rockford, Ill. Only one percent to two percent of all scouts reach the rank of Eagle. John has been a boy scout in Troop 14 for seven years. To reach this benchmark, he was required to advance through the scout ranks, earn at least 21 merit badges, and to complete a project which benefited the community. Among the nearly 200 people attending the ceremony was Rockford City Mayor, Larry Morrissey. 🇺🇸

Retiree Branch, inducted into Gallery by wife, commander

Ed Rivera
Pacesetter Staff

Alfred L. Branch, Jr., was inducted March 22 into the Fort Worth District Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees, among a gathering of family and district members, past and present, at the Fort Worth Petroleum Club.

Branch, introduced by his nominator and wife, Anita, was inducted as the gallery's 52nd member by Col. Christopher W. Martin, commander, Fort Worth District, during the annual District Retiree Luncheon.

"I'm humbled by the thought of being considered of the same caliber as those already inducted," Branch said.

Branch began his 32-year federal service career in 1971 after graduating from Texas A&M University as a geotechnical engineer. He invested 23 of those years in the Fort Worth District.

The ceremony seemed more of a family affair than a formal ceremony. After Anita introduced him to the attendees, his son, Matthew, read a touching letter from his daughter, Lori, who could not be in attendance.

Branch softly smiled as his son read his daughter's words.

"It turns out that all those years growing up, what I really loved about science was being with my dad, who was so great at explaining the world and the past and making it come to life – something I hope



U.S. Army photo by Ed Rivera
Anita Branch, wife of gallery inductee Al Branch, celebrates with her granddaughter, Annie, and friends at the induction ceremony.



U.S. Army photo by Ed Rivera

Fellow Distinguished Gallery of Civilian Employees inductees J.B. West, 2001, William Stroman, 1994, and Donald Samanie, 2004, congratulate Al Branch at a ceremony March 22 at the Petroleum Club in downtown Fort Worth. Branch is the 52nd inductee.

to emulate," read Matthew.

Branch distinguished himself as a technical expert and regional authority in numerous fields. He also authored a number of engineering technical letters, regulations, manuals and pamphlets on a wide variety of geotechnical topics, to include earthquake design for civil works, levee design and construction, and career development guidelines for geotechnical engineers.

Anita said that Branch didn't have a clue as to who nominated him, and she was a little nervous at the ceremony because her secret would soon be revealed.

"From the moment I knew about the Gallery and what it represents, I had planned to nominate him," she said. "Al embodies all that is good about the Corps: technical excellence, integrity, and the commitment to do what's right."

Branch served in the Southwestern Division from 1994 until 1996, at which time he transferred for four years with Corps Headquarters in Washington, D.C. He also served as an instructor for PROSPECT courses and shared his expertise with agencies outside the Corps.

He was a special consultant to the

Department of Energy, Department of Justice, Bureau of Reclamation, Air Force Aerospace Systems Command and the Environmental Protection Agency, enhancing the reputation of and bringing honor to the Corps of Engineers in the process.

"Al's contribution to the Army Corps of Engineers has left a lasting impression on the district and beyond, but what stands out today is his continued support and mentorship to those still here," said Martin.

His contributions continue to provide valuable technical knowledge to engineers in service to the Corps and other agencies. In recognition for his many contributions to Army engineering, Branch was awarded the prestigious de Fleury Medal upon his retirement in 2003.

"When I came to this district, one of the things that struck me was how many people liked Al and remembered him," said Anita. "So even though his technical accomplishments are many, I think that the positive impact he made on those he worked with and mentored is his most significant and lasting contribution to the Fort Worth District." 🇺🇸

Worth Remembering ...

Fort Worth rises to the challenge of Johnson Space Center

Judy Bullwinkle
Pacesetter Staff

When Americans opened their newspapers Oct. 4, 1957, they were shocked to read the Russians had launched Sputnik, the first man-made earth satellite. The Cold War was on, and alarm grew that American technology had fallen behind. In response, a new agency was formed to lead America in the “space race,” and a reliable old agency was chosen to help make it happen.

The fear of space-launched atomic warheads motivated the government in 1958 to create the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. By 1963, however, the dream had grown, and President John F. Kennedy challenged the nation to “landing a man on the moon and returning him safely” by the end of the century. The Apollo missions focused on that goal, and NASA began to look for a good site to launch that program.

NASA gave the construction responsibility for the huge program to the Army Corps of Engineers. After review of suitable sites, NASA selected the Clear Lake area near Houston as the site for the Manned Spacecraft Center (which would be renamed the Johnson Space Center in 1973), home of the Apollo missions. In September 1961, Fort Worth District became the leader in building that facility. The assignment proved challenging and frustrating because three critical criteria were imposed: speed, cost and highly technical work. The district was often forced to begin construction before design was completed.

Designed to have a “campus appearance,” the space center was to be an “inspirational environment.” Because the technology was state-of-the-art, NASA and the Corps had to “feel their way” toward completion. One district employee recalled, “We did not know what the results of our design would be.”

As a combined effort among federal agencies, the project propelled Fort Worth into a completely new model for doing business. Fort Worth built the site, but NASA drew up the construction specifications and controlled the money.

From November 1961 through early January 1962, Fort Worth worked to develop a Master Plan and recruit employees highly skilled in engineering and bid analysis.



Few architect-engineer firms could take on a project so large and complex. After reviewing the 175 companies submitted by NASA, Fort Worth identified three capable firms: Kaiser-Warnecke of Oakland, Calif.; Parsons-Becket-Johnson of Houston; and Brown and Root of Houston. In December 1961, Brown and Root was selected, and the company pulled in five other architectural firms.

Problems of organizational structure became evident as NASA incorporated an unending amount of change orders. Frequently the agency bypassed the Corps and went directly to Brown and Root. The district executed the contract, but NASA ordered the specifications and modifications. Further complicating the work was the difficulty in recruiting personnel with necessary scientific/technical skill.

Time was a critical factor easily disrupted.

One example was the brick industry’s protest of prefabricated concrete walls. Asked to reconsider using brick in the Master Plan, the Corps and NASA confirmed that concrete walls were the best solution given the time consideration. However, the discussion cost time that translated into the contractor claiming monetary compensation.


As the specifications desired by NASA conflicted with a tight budget ceiling imposed each year by Congress, drastic revisions continued. The program suffered because, by 1963, Congress was not as enthusiastic about space exploration. This was reflected in the funding. NASA benefited from the Corps’ experience with incremental funding, and both parties worked to get the most for the money.

However, conflict continued over the 1,500 change orders in five years and the tendency for NASA to bypass the district. Because NASA was used to working in a scientific/experimental environment, it found meeting Corps requirements for construction deadlines challenging.

Nonetheless, the project was completed in November 1966.

Overtime and six-day work weeks, though taxing on employees, was a sign of the spirit of cooperation that prevailed, and all took pride in the final product. The Manned Spacecraft Center stood as an attractive and functional complex ready to meet the challenges of America’s space program. And meet that challenge it did. The Apollo missions were successful.

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong of the Apollo 11 mission planted the American flag on the moon. This accomplishment stands as one of the defining moments in human history.

(For additional information and discussion of all the facilities in the Johnson Space Center, see *Rivers, Rockets and Readiness: Army Engineers in the Sunbelt; a History of the Fort Worth District, Army Corps of Engineers 1950-1975* by D. Clayton Brown.) 

More than six years ago, March 28, 2001, Galveston District held a dedication ceremony for the Aransas Wildlife Refuge Project.

Now, six years later, the project is flourishing. Banks armored with articulated concrete mats remain in place and look as pristine as they did the day they were laid.

The project was completed within its three-year time frame. The nearly \$20M project provided erosion control along the shoreline of the habitat for the world's largest breeding flock of whooping cranes.

The challenge was how to stop the erosion being caused by wind driven waves and vessel traffic that was gradually, but steadily reducing the acreage within the habitat. The answer was to armor the banks with concrete matting. Today, when prop wash and waves or wind bombard the banks, the concrete mats and shoreline remain undisturbed.

A 31-mile stretch along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, which included nearly 14 miles of banks within the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, received the concrete armor. Nearly 1,600 acres of marsh, prime feeding grounds for the large birds, were created through the beneficial use of dredged material.

As a result, the crane population has exploded. In the winter of 2001 there were 132 whooping cranes spending the winter at the refuge, arriving in October from nesting grounds in Canada. Today there are 257 of the big birds living at the habitat. They leave to return to their Canadian home around mid-April each year.



Whooping cranes at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.



Armored banks protect the habitat of the endangered whooping crane.



Wind and wave action plus wakes from barge traffic caused fast rate erosion in the refuge.

Six years later

Aransas -- taking a look today

Garner named Little Rock's Engineer of the Year

Tammy L. Reed
Pacesetter Staff

Little Rock District awarded its 2007 Engineer of the Year Award during its Engineers Week program Feb. 20.

Rod Garner, an assistant area engineer for the Central Arkansas Area Office, accepted the award from Randy Hathaway, chief of Engineering and Construction, in front of 30 or so co-workers attending the program.

"When I think of Rod, I think of quality," Hathaway said after presenting the award. He went on to explain that Garner's experience and devotion to his job, day in and out, are what helped him earn this award.

District Commander Col. Wally Walters seconded that.

"Anyone who looks at Rod's projects can fully understand how he merited this award," the colonel said.

Garner's supervisor, Dan Clemans, said Garner has been involved in the vast majority of projects constructed by Little Rock District since the early 1980s, which amounts to an excess of \$850,000,000 in military and civil projects completed or under construction since 1984.

These projects include work at Eaker Air Force Base, Pine Bluff Arsenal, Fort Chaffee, Little Rock AFB, Fourche Creek, Montgomery Point Lock and Dam, Table Rock Dam Safety and many others.

"His efforts in administering the contracts at Little Rock AFB and the highly visible Pulaski County Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge at Murray Lock and Dam were noteworthy," Clemans, area engineer and chief of Construction Branch, added.

"That work was a major reason why the Pulaski County Bridge project was completed early and in time for a highly publicized ribbon-cutting celebration.

"Rod is one of the most well-rounded engineers we have in the district, as he not only understands most facets of design but also construction and contract administration."

He added that Garner is the district's most experienced reviewer of plans and



Rod Garner, an assistant area engineer for the Central Arkansas Area Office, inspects the metal studs March 29 at the Child Development Center under construction at Little Rock Air Force Base. Garner recently earned Little Rock District's Engineer of the Year Award for 2007. U.S. Army photo by Steve Ring, Little Rock District.

specifications and that his review experience and input are equally feared and desired by designers.

"He digs into project designs, details and coordination and asks tough questions. But as a result this contributes greatly to improving the quality of our work and completed projects."

Clemans said he feels Garner's reputation for turning out an enormous volume of high quality and technically sound work is unmatched in the district.

"Rod is a large part of the foundation of the Area Office," he said.

"His experience, dedication to Construction Branch's mission, mentoring to employees, technical expertise and accomplishments are

widely known and respected."

Garner's reaction to receiving the award was characteristically humble.

"I have been blessed with great leadership from the District and Division offices," he said. "I am extremely honored and humbled to receive this award, considering all of the highly qualified and outstanding engineers in Little Rock District.

"The most important advice I can give is to love your work, know your job, respect your peers, support your supervisor and dedicate yourself to doing whatever it takes to promote the Corps' success."

This sounds like good advice for just about anyone looking to give and get the most from their job in the Corps. 🇺🇸

Fort Worth District to host Administration Professionals annual luncheon

The annual Administrative Professionals luncheon will take place April 23 at the Petroleum Club in downtown Fort Worth. The Administrative Professional of the Year will be announced at the luncheon. Watch your e-mail for R.S.V.P. information. 🇺🇸



Team Tulsa is ready to roll

**Col. Miroslav Kurka
Commander, Tulsa District**

When I was buying my first car in 1979, I was young, restless, and influenced by the movie – *Smokie and the Bandit*; I bought a Pontiac Firebird with a four-barreled V8 and a Hurst four-speed shifter. Like *the Bandit* in that movie, now that we finally have our FY07 budget work plans, we “... have a long way to go and a short time to get there.”

Although I no longer have that 1979 Firebird (who can afford a car that gets only 12 miles to a gallon?), we have a superb district that is part of a great regional team. I know we are more than up to the task of completing a year’s worth of work in six months, so let’s “put the hammer down” and execute!

The budget numbers aren’t bad. Actually, for the General Investigations, Construction General, and the Continuing Authorities Program, they’re quite good. Specifically, we have funding for numerous important studies, the Canton Dam Safety project, the Red River Chloride Control Project, and the following critical CAP projects – Augusta Levee, Cowskin Creek and Sand Creek.

This FY07 budget will allow us to continue those projects and studies in which our non-federal partners have signed agreements with us and contributed funds. As for Operations and Maintenance, we have \$66 million - not great but better than last year. This amount will allow us to meet our personnel, operations and minimal maintenance costs. And in only six months, it will be FY08, and the President’s Budget for FY08 is significantly better.

In our military program, the situation is still unclear. We have the FY07 military construction numbers – both the Fort Sill Whole Neighborhood Revitalization and the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant Fabrication Facility projects are funded.

However, in the BRAC program, most Air Force projects have been delayed until later in the fiscal year, and we are waiting for the FY07 Supplemental Bill to see if the Fort Sill Air Defense Artillery School

will be funded. I’m very confident that whatever happens, we will be able to react quickly and execute.

We have a very lean and flexible organization – one that is sought after to help others with their workload. In this regard, we are forging deeper ties with our sister district to the south – Fort Worth – by assisting them with an enormous and challenging workload.

In addition to the regional tactical equipment maintenance facility contracts for facilities at Fort Bliss, Fort Hood and Fort Sill, we are assisting with source selection for 15 contracts for Customs and Border

Protection projects, and with Request for Proposal preparation and technical management for the Battlefield and Health Trauma Research Facility at Fort Sam Houston. We are proud to support these missions, and I have given Col. Martin my personal commitment that people and resources assigned to this work are our very best.

In short, although the situation is still volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, there IS a lot of work out there that we need to get done! Let’s roll up our sleeves, move out, and get to work!

We continue to thrive in this VUCA environment thanks to your great efforts and to our district leaders who constantly evaluate and assess the situation, are very flexible, and don’t know the meaning of impossible. Thank you for your efforts and for continuing to volunteer in record numbers to support our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Tulsa District is part of a great Southwestern Division Team, and we have great people and a great plan. We are absolutely relevant, ready, responsive and reliable as evidenced by our work at home and on nationally significant projects in Texas, New Orleans and Sacramento.

Thanks once again for all that you do; I remain honored to serve as your commander. 🇺🇸

There is a lot of work out there that we need to get done! Let’s roll up our sleeves, move out, and get to work!

Making a difference



The Waco Lakeshore Cleanup on Saturday March 24 had over 500 volunteers participating from more than 10 organizations. In addition to taking advantage of low lake levels to remove long-submerged trash around the lake shoreline, drought-tolerant perennials were planted at Midway, Twin Bridges, Speegleville and Reynolds Creek Parks, mitigation trees were cleared of support wires, and restrooms, gatehouses, barbecue cookers, courtesy dock rails, and the Midway Family Center were renovated by Baylor Paint-a-Thon volunteers. 🇺🇸

Catch and release

Anglers brave high winds, heavy rains at annual tournament

Staff Report
Sam Rayburn Lake

On a day with torrential rainfall and 45 mph winds, only die-hard fishermen braved the harsh conditions during the 7th Annual Fort Worth District Spring Bass Tournament held March 31 at Sam Rayburn Lake in Texas.

“We knew coming into this thing that the weather was going to be bad,” said Tom Webb, one of the tournament directors.

On Sam Rayburn, a 114,000-surface-acre lake, high winds can create huge waves and make it comparable to the Gulf of Mexico in a matter of minutes. Even with the volatile weather conditions, the participants managed to catch some fish.

First place went to Dennis Massey, a Sam Rayburn Power Plant mechanic, and partner Dave Atwell. Massey and Atwell caught their limit of five fish, weighing 11.90 pounds, using a Wacky Worm and Senkos while fishing in the Buck Bay area.

Second place went to Kurt Floyd, a project manager in the Civil Project Management Section, and Carl Smith, a biologist in Programs and Project Management Division. They managed to catch four “keeper” fish weighing in at 10.60 pounds. All of their fish came from the Mill Creek area in 2-4 feet of water.

Third place went to Tom Webb, a Sam Rayburn Power Plant mechanic, and his brother, Donny Webb, who caught four fish weighing in at 10.29 pounds. Tom also caught the Big Bass of the tournament weighing 5.90 pounds. All of their fish came from 2-6 feet of water using Senkos and Wacky Worms. The Big Bass bit a watermelon-red Senko in about 5 feet of water.

Other participants in the tournament also managed to catch some fish. Col. Dave Weston, Galveston District Commander, and his son also fished in the tournament as well as some Business Line Customers, Scott Hall and Terry Morgan, of the Lower Neches Valley Authority.

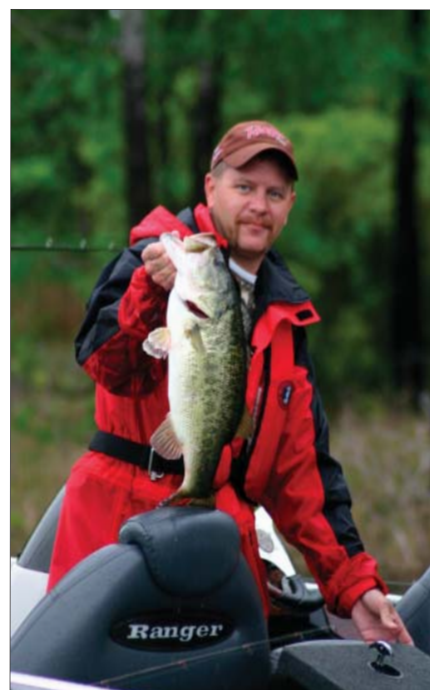
“We look forward to doing this again next year and hopefully get more participation,” said Webb. “Maybe, just maybe, Mother Nature will be a little nicer to us next year.” 🌧️



Mike Carver, Sam Rayburn Power Plant, casts his line shortly after a heavy rain passed through the area.



Dennis Massey, Sam Rayburn Power Plant, and partner Dave Atwell hold up their first place plaques at the annual Sam Rayburn Fishing Tournament.



Tom Webb, Sam Rayburn Power Plant, holds up his winning Big Bass. The fish weighed in at 5.90 pounds.

Runners take your marks

Melanie Ellis
Pacesetter Staff

As a herd of around 12,000 runners made their way in and about downtown Fort Worth during the 2007 Cowtown Marathon Feb. 24, several Fort Worth District team members were among the leaders.

“1979 was the first Cowtown as well as my first marathon,” said Randy Roberts, Real Estate, who joined hundreds of others to run the course for that first time. “I ran with my friend Dr. Mike Bell and we still run together.”

Heidi Swartz, Executive Director of the Cowtown, said before that first race in 1979 there was an ice storm and more than 400 runners still showed up to run the icy streets.

Although district team members have participated in the Cowtown since its beginning, and district participation is down from past



David Madden, Regulatory Division, carried the Winter Olympic torch in 2002.

years, runners are still going strong.

“In 1990, there were about 50 district employees running or walking in all races combined, a record for team totals,” said Roberts.

In the 2007 Cowtown, which promotes community health, Fort Worth District had 13 runners participating in either the marathon, 26.2 miles; the half marathon, 13.1 miles; the 10 kilometer, 6.2 miles; the 5 km, 3.1 miles; and the 5 km team race.

Running one mile or 26.2 miles takes motivation and determination. For many of the participants running has been part of their daily lives, and they are determined to keep it that way.

“Running has been a part of my life since high school,” said David Madden, Regulatory Division. “While my family status, job and location have changed over the years, running has always provided a foundation for me.”

“It has allowed a lot of experiences, from running in almost all the cities that I have visited on temporary duty, to carrying the 2002 Winter Olympic torch, to providing some great base mileage for cycling and hiking,” he said.

Paul Grindel, Engineering Service Branch, incorporates running into his daily life for different reasons.

“I have a history of heart disease and high blood pressure on both sides of my family so a big motivator for me is to use running to help reduce the likelihood of either of those occurring,” he said.



“Running is also a great mental stress reliever for me, and I also love competing both against myself versus the clock and against others in my age group.”

Other participants use their co-workers as inspiration and motivation to get up and get moving.

“In late 1988, at the encouragement of several co-workers, I agreed to enter the 1989 Cowtown 10 km as a walker,” said Bill Collins, Operations Division. “I finished in one hour, 16 minutes, 57 seconds, that year and have never made it that fast again.”

John Rodgers, Contracting Division, started out walking then took off running. “I started walking on the treadmills upstairs at the Club Fed Fitness Center to try to lose some weight and get cholesterol numbers down,” he said.

“After walking steadily for about
See **Runners** on page 14



U.S. Army photo by Tammy Reed, Little Rock District

Mosaic Templars of America focus of black history event

The Little Rock District Special Emphasis Committee presented a Black History Month Observance Feb. 21 in the Federal Building.

District Commander Wally Walters opened the program with the hope that all nations learn from their pasts, especially the bad parts that do not show them well.

Next, Gerry Francis, the district Equal Employment Opportunity officer, introduced Constance E. Sarto, director of the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, who spoke about one of the better parts of Arkansas' black history, the Mosaic Templars of America.

The Mosaic Templars of America was established in 1883 as a fraternal organization to provide insurance and other services to black people during the era of segregation when few basic services were available to them.

By 1905, the Mosaic Templars touted dozens of lodges in Arkansas with thousands of members. At its zenith in the 1920s, the Templars claimed chapters in 26 states and six foreign countries, making it one of the largest black organizations in the world. By 1924, Mosaic Templars industries grew to include an insurance company, a building and loan association, a publishing company, a business college, a nursing school and a hospital. 🌍

Constance E. Sarto, director of the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, describes the history of the Mosaic Templars of America during Little Rock District's Black History Month Observance Feb. 21 in the Federal Office Building.

Runners

Continued

two to three miles at 4 mph, I decided to walk 4.2 mph and 4.6 mph, alternating between the two speeds for two minutes each. Then, one day I said forget this, I will just start running."

Others run for themselves as well as their family.

"My motivation for running is mainly to stay as fit as possible so I can enjoy a variety of outdoor recreation activities with my family," said Don Wiese, Operations Division.

"I also enjoy the lively competition within age groups. I know I can't compete with 20-year-olds but I do try to pass all the gray hair that might be ahead of me."

The individual preparation translated into a great showing for the district at the 2007 Cowtown.

"We have a lot to celebrate this year," said Roberts. "Paul placed 15th overall in the marathon, and David ran his best marathon since 2002, and we were the second place 5 km Open Team."

As with many other competitive activities there are always lessons learned. Some were on preparation.

"My life philosophy is a lot like the way I got through school," said Collins. "I hated the last minute cram so I chose to pay attention in class, do my homework, and take the test when they came without any last minute, all-night study session. In life, I try to live healthy, incorporating activity and healthy eating so when the Cowtown comes along, I am ready."

Madden agrees. "Training for and running the marathon is like looking into a window of our

lives, you need to be prepared, sometimes it feels great, it can be hard, but it is always rewarding at the finish," he said.

One major lesson learned was to share a personal story that might encourage others.

"I listened to a doctor speak once about the physical and mental steps needed to achieve a healthy life style," said Wiese.

"He said that the final step on the path is to share your story with others, a little polite bragging, in the hope that others will be inspired to do the same. With that in mind, when I run a good race I always send a brief e-mail to my extended family sharing the results. From the feedback, I think it has given the younger members hope for the future and has inspired older members to get moving." 🌍

Local Iraq villages show gratitude for Corps project

Kimberley Benavides
Pacesetter Staff

Would you ever think the insurgents in Iraq would get punished by the local surrounding Iraqi village chiefs?

Well, this was the case in Iraq where Shakar Misir from Galveston District is working as a project engineer. The Corps had hired a contractor to build a new Public Health Clinic and furnish it with expensive, first-class equipment according to Misir. But then came the insurgents.

They detonated a bomb in the building at about the time that it was ready for equipment and furnishings. Thankfully, no one was injured since the explosion occurred during the night.

The contractor was required to provide 24-hour security, which it did, but the security was no match for those who were determined to demolish the building. So, the question was who should pay for the needed repairs? Ac-



Damages in suspension false ceilings of the Public Health Clinic.

contractor is at fault and has to pay. But the most interesting part is what came next.

When the local surrounding village chiefs found out the clinic had been badly damaged, they were very angry. The clinic was to benefit their people so they decided to pool their funds for the repairs. They were determined to find out who caused the damage and their efforts led them to find two of the culprits. They will be punished by the local justice system which is very severe in this part of the world.

Thus, the local population has expressed its gratitude to the Corps and are going to receive a top-notch Public Health Clinic that will continue to aid the Iraqi people for years to come. 🇮🇶



Damage was worse closer to where the bomb was placed.



Grassroot values lead to district success

**Col. Christopher W. Martin
Commander, Fort Worth District**

On April 2, I held my first town hall meeting as the Fort Worth District Commander. I appreciated the participation and questions that were sent in from the field. It was fitting that we started the meeting with a "Day in the Life of the District" pictorial. I can't emphasize enough that it is our great people who make our district one of the best in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

We are doing more than probably any other district across the Corps. Our contributions to our nation are significant; we make things happen within our district, outside of our district boundaries and overseas. Our number one continuing priority is supporting the Global War on Terror. The mission continues to need volunteers in order to support missions in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

Closer to home and the immediate future, I want to outline our priorities for the third quarter:

Our military projects continue to grow, with Fort Bliss and the Fort Sam Houston projects taking the forefront with budgets of two-plus billion dollars each. We continue to build the San Antonio team and facilities; prepare to award Recruit Housing and Training and other combinations of projects once the supplemental to the Continuing Resolution is passed. We will execute additional Fort Bliss product line task orders as directed by Army funding and prepare to award ranges contingent upon receipt of funding for unexploded ordnance removal.

We have several no-fail missions to complete. The Primary Fence 225 program by December 2008. Currently, we are posturing the Engineering and Construction Support Office for success in executing the program beginning with obtaining the required Rights-of-Entry.

At the same time, we have high priority civil works projects. We are finalizing civil works P2 schedules per the Fiscal Year 2007 Work

Plan. We are updating Fiscal Year 2008 civil works capabilities and preparing members request fact sheets. In addition, we will develop our first budget submission for Fiscal Year 2009 civil works program, and continue to remain engaged on Dallas Floodway Extension and the Fort Worth Trinity River Vision efforts.

To get ready for the fun in the sun part of the year, our lake projects are preparing and executing our summer lake safety plan and enhancing our park rangers' ability to perform their jobs with the addition of Spanish classes, GIS maps, signs and more. Nothing we do is worth losing a life. We must be vigilant and stay focused and on top of the things we have control over.

Finally, one of our biggest challenges as a district is the National Security Personnel System. Everyone should be converted by October. It is imperative that we are prepared mentally and emotionally for NSPS. We all have a responsibility to know about what's going to happen and how it affects each and every one of us. Read up and get smart on NSPS on your own. As we continue to educate everyone on NSPS. We will execute mock evaluations in April to support a mock pay pool in May.

Let's continue to focus on what's important and stay within our grassroot Army Values, and continue to abide by the Civilian and Army creeds. We get a lot of work because we do a lot and we do it right. Our reward for our excellence is more work, we have great people and a reputation of being one of the best districts and so we are in demand.

Remember to continue to keep our deployed team members in mind and enjoy yourselves and your families, and stay safe whether at work or play. 🇺🇸

Let's continue to focus on what's important and stay within our grassroots, root Army Values and continue to abide by the civilian and Army creeds ... Our reward for our excellence is more work, we have great people and a reputation of being one of the best districts and so we are in demand.

Call it in the air ... you're saved



Thomas B. Hayes, 10, of Lake Worth, plays "Throw, Don't Go!" as Lavon Lake Park Ranger James Murphy teaches him how to help someone that is drowning. Murphy along with members of the District Safety and Public Affairs Offices manned a water safety and environment awareness booth March 17 at the 2nd Annual Environmental Education Initiative Community Fair, at Fair Park in Dallas. 🇺🇸

Students take a tour of the construction at Fort Bliss

Capt. Jamie Hagio

As the clouds threatened rain on an unusually cold day, 32 University of Texas at El Paso students traveled March 23 to the construction site of the future home of the 1st Armored Division at Fort Bliss.

The Army Corps of Engineers invited the students, most of whom are civil engineering majors scheduled to graduate this spring, to see the magnitude of construction taking place at Fort Bliss, and to show them the types of work many of them could begin upon graduation.

The students first received a briefing by Col. Timothy White, deputy garrison commander for Transformation. White gave the students an overview of the growth Fort Bliss and Biggs Army Airfield will experience with the arrival of the 1st Armored Division's combined 20,000 Soldiers and 27,000 family members.

Carole Jones, Fort Bliss Directorate of Public Works master planner, gave the second briefing. She explained the \$2.6 billion of construction initiatives Fort

Bliss is undertaking to meet the growth.

The last brief, by Troy Collins, Fort Bliss Corps of Engineers program director, explained the actual construction projects such as barracks, dining and vehicle maintenance facilities, covering more than 2,500 acres of land.

After the briefings, the students visited the construction project site on East Biggs Army Airfield. Standing on a future fire water station the students were able to see the ongoing construction. Alphonso Fernandez, a project manager from Infrastructure contractor JD Abrams, and a few of his employees talked to the students about safety, scheduling work, resource management and quality control. He stressed the importance of teamwork and how each team member contributes to getting the project done on time, within budget, and with the quality specified in the contract.

The students' visit was a great opportunity for them to see the application of the concepts they were learning in class, and they were also able to get an idea of how Fort Bliss' growth will impact the City of El Paso.



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Jamie Hagio

Troy Collins, Fort Bliss Corps of Engineers program director, explains the Fort Bliss Expansion Program construction projects such as barracks, dining, and vehicle maintenance facilities, covering more than 2,500 acres of land, to 32 University of Texas at El Paso Engineering students March 23 during a tour of Fort Bliss.

In the future, there is a good chance that some of the students will be involved, in some shape or form, in the construction at Fort Bliss. 🇺🇸

Command Sgt. Maj. Robert A. Winzenried eats with "troops" at Greers Ferry

Command Sgt. Maj. Robert A. Winzenried visited two Little Rock District project offices Feb. 22 to meet the wage grade employees he represents as part of the Corps' command.

His first stop was Bull Shoals Power Plant where he toured the plant then met with the employees, then he traveled to the Greers Ferry Project Office. While at Greers Ferry he ate lunch and talked with numerous employees from around the district.

"I like getting out to the projects as this is where a lot of the work is being done, and I see you at your best," Winzenried said to his Greers Ferry audience.

His main purpose for visiting Greers Ferry was to meet with Lonnie Jarman, the president and business manager for union IBEW Local # 2219, the exclusive bargaining unit for all full-time and part-time nonprofessional employees of Little Rock District.

Jarman said that he and IBEW #2219 Vice President Joe Long met with the command sergeant major to discuss what he does and what they do.

"He explained that his job was to be the spokesperson for the Corps' federal blue-collar worker, and if we had an issue that was of real importance he would be glad to carry it forward to the commanding general," Jarman said. 🇺🇸



New tools available for water safety training

Bobber “lives” to teach water safety

Tammy L. Reed
Pacesetter Staff

With the onset of a new recreation season, many employees across Southwestern Division are ready to launch full-scale water safety education efforts, and there is something new to help them reach children -- a new cartoon and a “Bobber, the Water Safety Dog” costume so kids can meet the ‘living’ Bobber.

Little Rock’s Toby Isbell, one of Bobber’s co-creators, said it is especially important to reach children with water safety messages.

“Although, the Corps has used beavers, ducks and even fish before to reach children, I wanted this character to be something new and stand out as a fresh idea,” Isbell explained.

“I thought Bobber, who’s a Labrador retriever, would be great because they love water, can perform rescues and are loved by many people, especially children.”

“‘Bobber, the Water Safety Dog’ is a nationwide program,” Lynda Nutt, of the National Operations Center for Water Safety, said. “We have costumes now that the districts can coordinate through us to use, or buy their own.”

Nutt said that the other Bobber products, which include a website and animated cartoons, as well as coloring books, flying rings and activities, do a good job reaching the intended audience. She explained that children today are very electronic and visual, and the old Corps way of educating was to lecture “here’s what can happen if you don’t do this” facts.

She labels the use of animation and other visual images ‘edutainment’ and cited earlier successes the Corps has had reaching youngsters with video productions such as “Safe Passage” targeting elementary-aged children, and “The Young and Reckless” for middle school-aged children.

“I had actually bid an animated program for the little ones, but the costs were way beyond what our annual budget



The draft version of “Bobber, the Water Safety Dog” mugs for the camera with Ozark Lake Natural Resources Specialist Rick Bradford and James Balch, son of Lt. Col. Donald Balch, Deputy District Commander, Little Rock, during a family fun day in 2006. The final version of Bobber is now available for use in Corps water safety training programs. U.S. Army photo.

could handle so those plans were quickly shelved,” she said.

“That is until we learned about this talented visual information specialist from Little Rock District who could produce animations.”

Nutt said that if you think beyond the actual fun of the Bobber program, Isbell has brought a new element of programming to the Corps’ educational outreach with animated cartoons that reach the youngest audience yet, and are easily downloaded from the Bobber website, <http://www.bobber.info/>.

The cartoons’ availability is definitely a plus, but the fact that they seem to work quite well is another reason to use them. “Bobber” (Isbell) recently received an e-mail from a mother, and he was happy to see her comments.

“Our 4- and 5-year-old girls checked out your website today after swim class. They are learning to swim but were hesitant to use a PFD when their teacher had a special ‘Safety’ lesson this week. We were thrilled to hear their responses after we viewed the cartoons, etc. on your website.”

Nutt added that the cartoons and other Bobber materials are award winners too, earning recognition during two International Boating and Water Safety Summits.

“During the recent Water Safety Summit, the “Bobber, the Water Safety Dog”

youth program received the top award for “Electronic Media Education” for the new cartoon and the trailer for the fourth cartoon, and second place for “Printed Media Education” for window clings,” she said.

“Last year, the cartoon programs also won first in the “Electronic Media” category and the associated coloring book won first in the “Printed Education” category. Considering that this competition includes entries from numerous federal, state, commercial and nongovernment organizations, these wins are pretty exciting for those of us from the Corps.”

Isbell said there are more Bobber products in the works.

“Since we’ve added Bobber’s costume, and new cartoons, we’re also working on enhancements to the website and are working on a Spanish cartoon that we hope to air next spring,” he said “Phil Martinez, of Albuquerque District, will be voicing the Spanish version of Bobber as Ranger Toro. And we’ve recently added Judy Scott of Fort Worth to voice Ranger Jane Doe, the newest deer ranger on the team. Don Harris, also from Fort Worth District, has always been a staple as he helps write the Bobber scripts, and provides most of the cartoon voices like Ranger Buck.”

See New tools on next page

Army divers assist Little Rock with Table Rock Dam repairs



Divers from the Army's 86th Mighty Beaver Dive Team, from Fort Eustis, Va., get ready to perform maintenance on Table Rock Dam in March. U.S. Army Photo.

The Army's 86th Mighty Beaver Dive Team worked with Little Rock's Table Rock Project Office to complete maintenance and minor repairs to the dam's main valve grate without impact to dam operations and hydropower generation.

In March, the Missouri Department of Conservation's Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery immediately downstream of Table Rock Dam in Missouri needed water shut off from the main fishery intake valve to proceed with a construction project.

The hatchery is undergoing a major rehabilitation and expansion construction project, and its request provided a perfect opportunity for the district and project office to schedule maintenance work needed on the main valve grate.

Jim Hill, acting lake manager at Table Rock, said this maintenance effort was a great collaboration between the Corps and the Army dive team, as the Corps received very cost efficient services and the Army dive team received important training as well. 🇺🇸

Heads or tails ...

Ronnie Bruggman, Whitney Lake manager, receives a Commander's coin at the Ham Creek ribbon cutting April 13. Bruggman joined Col. Martin, Congressman Chet Edwards, several county commissioners and many local citizens at the ribbon cutting. Col. Martin addressed the audience and the Corps staff that were present at the opening. "This is a great lake that has great traditions," he said. "Great job, I appreciate all your hard work." 🇺🇸



New tools

continued from previous page

"The National Water Safety Team has the goal of getting enough cartoons and other materials together to release a Bobber compact disc and digital video disc," Isbell added.

"Anyone can request a Bobber-themed Water Safety presentation for their organization by contacting their local Corps Water Safety Representative or the National program to find a local representative," Isbell said.

Division water safety educators can find their local representative and many more water safety teaching tools on the Corps' National Water Safety Program website, <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/>. 🇺🇸

Army transformation work nets award for contract team

Tulsa District's Project Delivery Team of the Quarter for the fourth quarter is the team associated with a Military Construction Transformation Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contract.

This IDIQ contract is for Design-Build Services, Southwestern Region, Tactical Equipment Maintenance Facilities, and Task Order 0001, Fort Bliss BRAC program.

Although the contract was a major task for the Tulsa District; it was successfully awarded under budget and completed ahead of schedule. The contract, not to exceed \$165,000,000 for three years, is set to support MILCON Transformation and provide product line support to Fort Worth District's Fort Bliss and Tulsa District's Fort Sill BRAC programs.

In November 2005, the team started with a draft of a headquarters' model Request for Proposal which was not complete when the Scope of Work needed to be developed and was not formatted for an IDIQ contract. To develop the SOW, team members had to become familiar with the intent of MILCON Transformation, throw out the old way of doing business and adapt to the new, Army Transformation way.

The award of the Basic IDIQ Contract was scheduled for August 2006 with Task Order 0001 scheduled to follow in September 2006. To meet this goal, Fort Worth District turned to Tulsa District to provide the TEMF product line for the BRAC

program. Product line work was coordinated across six districts, making communication a big challenge.

During the first part of August, Fort Worth was directed to have the basic IDIQ awarded by the end of the month to make early obligation of BRAC funding, including the first Task Order.

The solicitation for the basic IDIQ contract was revised from

having a Sample Task Order for proposal purposes to include the actual first Task Order for the TEMFs associated with the Fort Bliss BCT-1 project. This involved considerable rework of the solicitation and coordination with users located in Europe and Fort Bliss. The selection process was accelerated to include the award of the Task Order 0001 at the same time as award of the basic contract.



It was accomplished by Aug. 30, 2006, ahead of both the original and shortened schedules.

The early award was not only a feather in Tulsa District's cap but also the Army's in showing that it could execute the intentions of the BRAC program. Key team members were Kevin Weber, Tim Peasley, Subra Kunapuli, Frank Ostrowski, Colleen Diven, Ken Lehman, Denise Henderson, Randall Lewis, Daniel Foyil, Keith Rice, Tom Skelton, Jane Noble, Leviene Hearne-Fleming, Rory Wale, Dennis McCants, Steve Harmon, John Weatherly, Cindy Doan, John Sturges, and Brad Hartell. 🇺🇸

Hey batter, batter ...



Col. Christopher Martin, Fort Worth District commander, threw out the first pitch at the Texas Christian University versus Air Force baseball game at Lupton Stadium March 16 during Military Appreciation Weekend. 🇺🇸

Trinity River treasure

Amy Hill

The following article is reprinted from the January/February 2007 newsletter of the Waterborne Education Center.

The mission of the Waterborne Education Center is to foster appreciation and stewardship of coastal resources, heritage and culture by providing hands-on, waterborne education services. This is accomplished through scientific training in the natural environment on the water and in the marsh. Participants have included public and private schools, universities and colleges, industry and other groups interested in learning more about the ecology, history and economic productivity of the Texas coast. The WEC is a nonprofit organization.

Field labs are conducted aboard two 45-foot renovated Coast Guard buoy tenders. These vessels are Coast Guard certified and are operated by a licensed crew. Each vessel has an operating lab below deck. Gangplanks mounted on each vessel make for easy loading and unloading from shore or in the marsh. Passengers are encouraged to disembark and engage their senses in the exciting wetland environment

Just upriver from Anahuac Harbor, past the bends and river cabins, is a little-known treasure that serves nature enthusiasts, history buffs, fishermen and the WEC alike. The sign from the road reads "Trinity River Island Recreation Area," but you may know it better as the Wallisville Locks, or the Wallisville Lake Project.

The WEC and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers partner to enhance each other's programs and better serve the public. The Locks, as this facility is familiarly known, are a regular stop for our field labs. It's not uncommon to hear even local passengers say, "I didn't know this was here!" when our vessels stop over in Wallisville. But it most certainly is right here on our river and welcomes visitors of all varieties.

The visitor center boasts more than clean restrooms, but an informative history display, a model of the Trinity's mouth and tributaries, and ecological exhibits. Rangers Ruth and Russell are on hand to give tours of the center and demonstrations of the lock operation.

The surrounding lands of the little island have inviting picnic tables overlooking the river, as well as boat launches. The drive in from historic Wallisville is also a great wildlife viewing opportunity.

But the Locks are more than a recreational facility. The saltwater barrier protects freshwater supplies of the area - water that will be used for Chambers and Liberty counties farm irrigation. According to their website, the locks act as a salinity



Moss Bluff docked at the back of the Locks waiting to load a group of passengers.-- photo by Amy Hill.

control to "keep the salt water out in the bay where it belongs." This helps maintain the balance required to protect many of the area's natural wildlife and other valuable resources.

Every September, Wallisville serves as the National Public Lands Day location for the Corps' Galveston District. On this day, area volunteers work to clean up the river and surrounding public spaces from trash that washes downstream or is left behind by careless river patrons. This is a great opportunity for individuals to take care of their public lands. And the hot dog luncheon that follows is a nice treat for all participants. The Wallisville Lake Project partners with area groups other than WEC, including the Chambers-Liberty Counties Navigation District, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory and Houston Wilderness. For more information about this facility, visit the website at:

www.swg.usace.army.mil/Wallis/default.asp

Aerial photos of the Wallisville Locks and picnic area.



Ruth gives a presentation at the visitor center.--photo by Kenneth Hill.

Beaver Dam mechanic saves Corps money

Teaches Crane Operator Safety Course throughout the districts

Tammy L. Reed
Pacesetter Staff

“Man, we don’t rig it like that,” Greg Schwerman said from the controls of the crane he was about to use to lift a powerhouse generator cooler. “It looks like it could shift. I’d feel better if they rigged it with a couple of shackles like we do it at Dardanelle.”

“Well, if you don’t like it, Will said you can change it,” replied his cab mate and co-worker George Jones. Schwerman did just that, and within minutes he was confidently lifting the load. Knowing you can and should talk to your crew to change

something you are not comfortable with is one of the many lessons instructor Will Remar stressed during a Crane Operator Safety Training course he taught recently at Little Rock District’s Table Rock Lake.

Some of the other things taught during the class included knowing the roles of your crewmembers, knowing how to properly rig a load, and how to properly communicate with your crewmembers to keep your lift and the surrounding area safe.

Remar, a senior mechanic at Beaver Power Plant, has been teaching a Corps-required 24-hour

Crane Operator Safety Certification Course, as well as the 8-hour yearly refresher course, to Little Rock and other districts’ personnel for three years now.

“I’ve done maybe a dozen of these classes,” Remar said. “I used to do them at each power plant, but then I found it was better to do it at one plant and have nearby plants send their workers to me to have bigger groups.”

Stan Jones, chief of hydropower at Table Rock Lake, said having those bigger groups and having a Corps employee give mandatory annual training saves money and time.

He said the Corps safety manual requires the training, but throughout the years it had not been done as often as it should have because it was too expensive to send everyone out of the Corps to get it.

“Having Will do the training started when a former supervisor at Bull Shoals, Miles Waldron, and I were talking about getting Occupational Safety and Health Administration industrial safety

Occupational Safety and Health Administration industrial safety training,” Jones said. “With that we were wondering if we could send someone of our own to learn to train everyone else, and we realized that we should look into doing the same with the crane safety training.”

“We checked it out and realized that the cost of training one of ours to train others would soon be offset by him training the rest of our personnel.”

Jones explained that it cost about \$3,000 to send one Corps employee to Florida for the safety training. “Will has a class of 29 students scheduled in May in Tulsa. His travel and per diem is usually \$300 to \$500 depending on if he can drive a government or personal vehicle, etc. The booklets he supplies are about \$10 each and are reusable and charged to a revolving fund.

“It’s really most cost effective to have him do the traveling and training than to have 29 come to us, or go down to Florida.”

He added that Remar teaches the 10-hour OSHA Industrial Safety course, as well as the Crane Safety Course.

“Will’s always been my ‘go-to-man’ when it comes to safety,” he said. “He’s always been interested in it, and he kind of fell into the role of trainer. He’s in a small plant at Beaver and it was a good fit to add this to his plate. He was willing and we had a need.”

The districts of Southwestern Division are not the only ones needing

the crane safety course Remar teaches, as three students of the eight in his class at Table Rock came from Kansas City and St. Louis Districts.

Travis Arch, from St. Louis’ Clarence Cannon Dam needed this class, and all his district had to pay was per diem. “Any time you have Corps training at another Corps facility you definitely save money, and now there’ll be one more certified to use the crane at Clarence,” he said.

Remar added to that by saying that any time you do training across districts you are also open to learning new ways of doing things.

“I’ve been at this for over 30 years, and I’m still learning new things from people all around the Corps and passing it on through this class and my contacts with so many people,” he said.



Will Remar, right, watches his students guide the crane, watch for safety hazards, and rig the load during a recent Crane Operator Safety Training course he teaches. U.S. Army Photo by Tammy L. Reed, Little Rock District.

See **Crane safety** on next page

Some crane operator safety points to remember

Crane safety

continued from previous page

Unfortunately, those 30 plus years are working against Jones and his “train-the-trainer” goals because Remar is eligible for retirement.

“Will doesn’t seem interested in retiring any time soon, but as a manager, I need to be ready for it,” Jones said.

“I am looking for volunteers to continue Will’s work as he does provide a great service for the Corps.” 🇺🇸

Here are some of the responsibilities of a safe crane operator:

1. Know the capacity of your crane and the weight of your lift,
2. Know the responsibilities of each crewmember, and how to communicate with them,
3. Work out a lift plan before you start working to lift the load – what are you lifting, where are you putting it, who is doing what, safety procedures, etc.
4. Know how to properly rig the load to be moved.
5. Always remember – Anyone can stop a lift if they see a dangerous situation about to happen, and the operator can refuse to perform a lift if not comfortable with its setup. 🇺🇸



George Jones
Dardanelle Lock and Dam

Basket versus choke?

From left to right: Kansas City District’s Ryan Chism and Josh Logan, Little Rock District’s Doyal Eddings (flannel) and St. Louis District’s Travis Arch, take notes on types of rigging used, such as basket versus choke, as Beaver Powerhouse Senior Mechanic Will Remar teaches Crane Operator Safety Training at Table Rock Dam. U.S. Army Photo by Tammy L. Reed, Little Rock District.



It’s just another day on the river ...

Little Rock’s Chief of Navigation Branch John Balgavy said a work crew gathered Feb. 27 at Murray Lock and Dam to pull a sector gear and replace a failing bearing. The job seemed straight forward enough. Nothing is “normal” on the river though. The bearing race seized in the hole, maybe due to rust or to the race moving and “welding” itself in. So instead of just pulling the bearing, it had to be cut and taken out in pieces. 🇺🇸



Tenkiller park ranger

Safety training helped save truck driver's life

Dick Devlin

Debra Christie, a park ranger at Tulsa District's Tenkiller Ferry Lake in Oklahoma, received the Department of the Army Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service recently at the Army Corps of Engineers' Louisiana Recovery Field Office in New Orleans.

Michael Park, LA-RFO director, presented the award, which is equivalent to the Department of Defense's Humanitarian Service Medal used to recognize military members for life and property saving actions.

Christie was working as a quality assurance supervisor for the Corps' debris removal and recovery activities following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in Louisiana. Her attention to detail and quick reaction on May 4, 2006, combined with those of three co-workers, saved the life of a truck driver who suffered a heat stroke while delivering debris to the Wilkerson landfill in Cameron Parish in southwest Louisiana.

According to on-scene medical personnel, without immediate action by Christie and

her co-workers to treat the driver on site, he would certainly have perished. The victim had stopped at the control tower after changing a flat tire in the dump when the tower monitor team noticed he was exhibiting the signs of heat stroke.

The group immediately wet down paper towels with ice and ice water from one of their coolers to help cool him. They provided available fluids and asked about medications and medical conditions. After being treated by on-scene and hospital medical teams, the driver was released to go back to work two days later. He made a complete recovery.

Christie had just completed safety training



that week in which heat-related conditions, symptoms and actions to be taken were taught by the Corps' Safety Office. A heat stress fact sheet and OSHA quick card had been stapled to the wall of the tower.

Christie was deployed to Louisiana for nearly six months during 2006. She is now back at Tenkiller Ferry Lake. 🌍

Seeing green



U.S. Army photo by Melanie Ellis, Fort Worth District

Russel Meier, Somerville Lake, aims for the green at the annual Fort Worth Commander's Golf Tournament at Tour 18 on March 30. Golfers competed for the coveted wooden castle plaque awarded to first, second, and third place teams, as well as prizes for longest drive and closest to the pin. 🏆

Personnel changes at Galveston's Engineering Division



Tony Batey, who has been acting chief of the Engineering Division, receives thanks and the Commander's Award for Civilian Service from Col. David Weston, commander of Galveston District. Batey, whose home district is Little Rock, returned to wife, family and his position as deputy chief of the Little Rock Engineering Division Feb. 22 after a 120-day stay in Galveston District. John Curtis becomes acting chief until Terry Bautista returns from Iraq. Harrison Sutcliff moves into the post left open by Curtis' temporary assignment. 🌐

Congressional staffer tours Galveston District



Legislative staffer, Stoney Burke, far right, spent two days in Galveston District learning about the projects and the challenges found in a district whose mission deals with coastal navigation. From left to right are Johnny Roszypal, Operations chief, Arthur Janecka, Programs and Project Management chief, Col. David Weston, District Commander, Mike Fallon, Director of Programs, Southwestern Division. Burke toured projects from the Louisiana border to Brownsville Feb. 20 and 21. Burke is on the staff of Congressman Chet Edwards. 🌐

Corps project provides scenario for police training

Bill Krampe

Addicks and Barker Project Office

Sergeant Arthur M. Oates of the Houston Police Department's Tactical Operations Division Dive Team commanded a "swift water" orientation and refresher training session in Buffalo Bayou, just 400 feet downstream of the control structure of Barker Dam, March 14. Due to recent rains in the area, plenty of water was impounded in Barker Reservoir, a normally dry flood damage reduction facility on Houston's west side that is managed by the Galveston District.

Cooperation between Engineering Division's Hydrology and Hydraulics Section and Operation Division's Addicks Field Office made the session workable on short notice. According to Officer Mark R. Janson, the dive team coordinator, the location and control of the water made for a near-perfect

training scenario.

The flow rate was dropped from the normal flood discharge rate of 1,000 cubic feet per second and a depth of over six feet, to a flow rate of approximately 600 cubic feet per second and a depth of four feet to facilitate the training. Even at a depth of only four feet, the team could not maintain their

footing in the swift currents found below the dam leading to ideal training conditions.

The 15-man team practiced rescuer safety, strong swimmer rescue, rope bag rescue, tethered swimmer rescue and "Nantucket Sleigh ride," a rescue method using ropes to positively control the rescuers movements and position in swift water. 🇺🇸



The swift-flowing water at the Barker Outlet provides a perfect area for the Houston Police Department's Search and Rescue team's training efforts.



The team arrives.



The training was so successful that it may lead to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Corps and the Houston Police and Fire departments.

Celebrating safety

Canyon Lake contractors celebrate safe, early project completion

Melanie Ellis
Pacesetter Staff

Handshakes and ‘Thank You’ highlighted the safety luncheon held in Potters Creek at Canyon Lake, March 1.

The Fort Worth District, Vanguard Contractors, and employees of Backhoe Bob’s Excavation, gathered to celebrate not only the early completion of the Canyon Dam Spillway Crest Improvement project, but also its safe completion.

The project was completed two months ahead of schedule with zero reported accidents. Tom Lynch, Vanguard Contractors project manager, was very pleased with the progress and execution of the project.

“Backhoe Bob’s crew did a great job on this project,” he said.

Vanguard Contractors, of Paducah, Ky., served as the primary contractor for the spillway head-cut repair at Canyon Lake, a project that involved several potential hazards for the workers and took a great deal of planning and execution. Backhoe Bob, the subcontractor, made sure employees were aware of those potential hazards and how to work safely. “Daily reminders and safety tips were a part of Backhoe Bob’s program, as well as weekly toolbox safety meetings,” said Leo



Backhoe Bob’s Excavation contractors prepare to start filling the trench with concrete. The trench measured 20 feet deep, three feet wide, and 1300 feet long. The crew finished the job two months ahead of schedule and with no lost-time accidents. Backhoe Bob’s Excavation received the Fort Worth District’s 1st Quarter 2007 Subcontractor of the Quarter Award.

Sandoval, Central Texas Area Office.

“We are a family,” said Kathy Whitehead, owner of Backhoe Bob’s Excavation. “We wanted everyone to make it home every night.”

Backhoe Bob’s Excavation educated their employees on working safely and also empowered them to correct unsafe practices when they saw them. “I told the men that if they saw a safety problem, they should take care of it; and, if they couldn’t take care of it, to find someone who could,” said Whitehead. “That’s why we didn’t have any accidents, not even a scratch.”

The mission was to create an underground reinforced wall that would provide protection to communities downstream. The task was a direct result of the 2002 floods that over-flowed the spillway and flooded many communities downstream of Canyon Lake. The project involved excavating a trench that was 20 feet deep, three feet wide, and 1300 feet long in limestone rock. Once the trench was completed, the crew would then reinforce it before filling it with concrete. Backhoe

Bob’s crew accomplished the mission and impressed many along the way.

“What impressed me the most is the teamwork it took to get this work done,” said Sandoval. “It was as if they could read each other’s minds, they were so well trained at their tasks, it was just a matter of performing the work.”

Madeline Morgan, chief of safety, also attended the luncheon celebration and was impressed by the steps taken to ensure personal safety on the job site. “By promoting teamwork and using safe behaviors by both the Corps and the contractor’s people working together, we reached our goal to have all our team members return home to their families safely,” she said.

Since the luncheon, Backhoe Bob’s Excavation has been awarded the Fort Worth District 1st Quarter 2007 Subcontractor of the Quarter Award.

“We appreciate it when people make that extra effort to keep others safe on the job,” said Sandoval. 🌟



Backhoe Bob’s Excavation employees review the photo book they received at the luncheon from Vanguard Contractors. The book captured the project from start to finish.

Engineering firm wins award for Montgomery Point design

Little Rock lock and dam design has earned multiple awards

Tammy Reed
Pacesetter Staff

A Chicago engineering firm under contract for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the design of the Montgomery Point Lock and Dam in southeast Arkansas recently earned the top design award from the Illinois Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies.

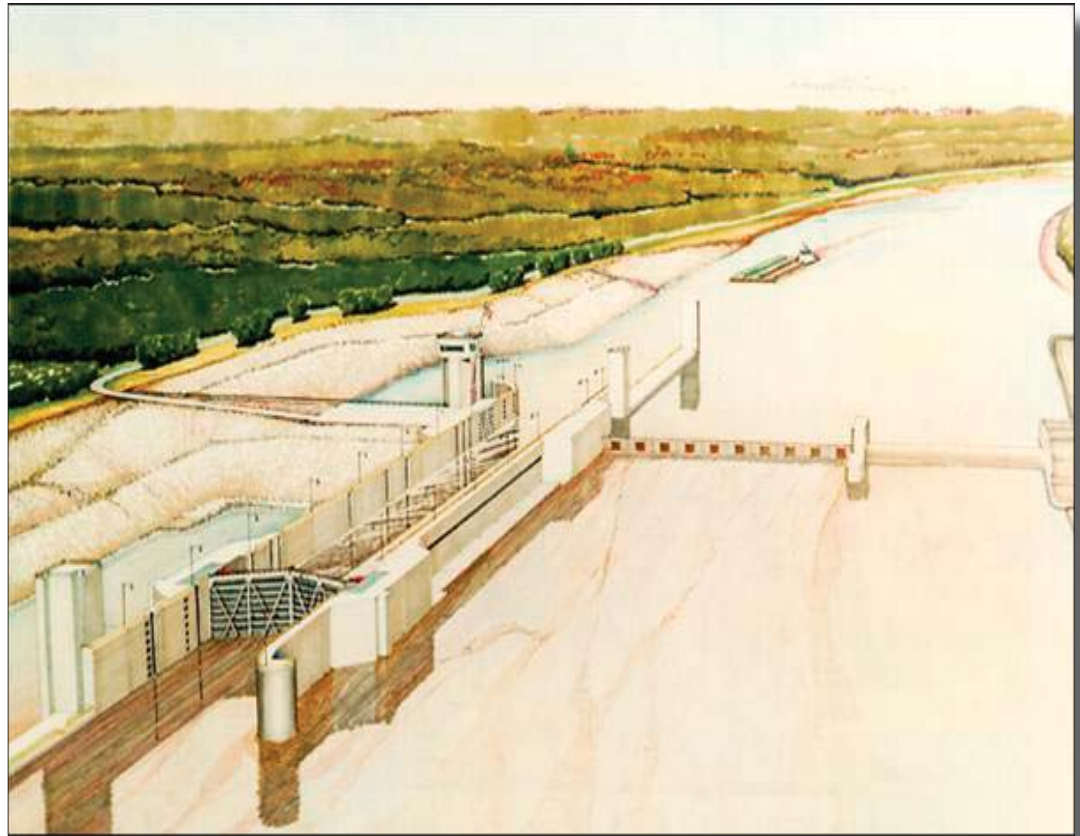
MWH Americas Inc. earned the Eminent Conceptor Award for its work on the lock and dam, which improved navigation conditions on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The presentation took place in Chicago at the Illinois ACEC's 36th Annual Engineering Excellence Awards Program.

The Eminent Conceptor Award, ACEC's highest, recognizes engineering achievements that demonstrate high degrees of merit and ingenuity, contribute to private engineering's advancement and enhance the general public's economic and social welfare.

"MWH joined our design team in October 1993 when their name was Harza," Tom Clement, the Corps' technical manager for the project, said. "They were full members, and the cooperation and communication between them and our in-house designers was exceptional.

"Harza took our torque-tube gate design concept and made it a reality," Clement said. "The project had numerous challenges and required first-of-its-kind designs in several areas. The result is a truly remarkable project."

He added that the



Montgomery Point project has gone forward to compete for a national ACEC award.

The project's features have earned other awards as well. In 1995, the design team earned the Project of the Year Award from the Arkansas Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers for the Montgomery Point Feature Design Memorandum.

The Corps' project delivery team also received the Corps' 2004 Project Delivery Team Merit Award.

Montgomery Point Lock and Dam, located in the White River Entrance Channel, is the McClellan-Kerr system's gateway to and from the Mississippi River. The dam solves a recurring low-water problem that, at times, forced restrictions or even halted commercial navigation in the entrance channel for varying periods of time, thus

hampering the navigation system's reliability.


The structure features a dam with a unique gated navigable pass, an un-gated overflow spillway and a navigation lock. The navigable pass includes 10 hydraulically-operated hinged gates, placed side by side. The gates set Montgomery Point apart from other locks and dams.

When Mississippi River stages are above elevation 115, the gates lie flat in the riverbed, and vessels pass over them as if there was not a lock and dam there. As stages fall below elevation 115, the 13-foot-high gates are raised at the push of a button to maintain navigable depths behind the dam. With the gates raised, vessels use the lock chamber.

The entire lock and dam, except the control tower, is below the top of the

riverbanks. This enables the structure to maintain a smaller footprint in this environmentally pristine and sensitive area.

The structure also eliminated more than 90 percent of dredging needs in the entrance channel, another environmental plus. During high water, the entire dam is under water except the control tower.

More information and photos of Montgomery Point Lock and Dam are available on the Internet at <http://www.swl.usace.army.mil/projgmt/montpoint.html>. 



Right: Pat Agee, Black Employment Program manager, Galveston District, talks about her heritage on Personal Heritage Day. Above: Paul Cox receives an award from Lt. Col. Richard Hansen for reading the "Letter from Birmingham Jail." The Black Employment Program celebrated Black History Month in February by arranging special activities throughout the month. The celebration began with Lt. Col. Hansen reading the President's Black History Month Proclamation. Another event was a Personal Heritage brown-bag luncheon where employees shared their heritage with the other participants. Ending the month was Dr. Judy Perkins, Department Head of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Prairie View A&M University, who spoke about the history of black men and women in the military. 🌍



Left: Lt. Col. Richard Hansen and Roseanne Theobald cut a ribbon that symbolizes the beginning of Women's National History Month as part of the Federal Women's Program at the Galveston District. Above: The cake that follows the theme of the celebration. During the month of March the program started off with a reading from "Generations of Women Moving History Forward." Other events that followed were two brown-bag luncheons featuring two movies "Belles on their Toes" and "A Few Good Women," and three speakers including Ms. Georgia Brown, Houston Chapter of Federally Employed Women; Mrs. Christine Hansen, an ex-major in the Army; and Ms. Sandra Hansen, a historical performer. Grace Procter is the program manager for the Federal Women's Program. 🌍

Little Rock's Greers Ferry Project Office hosts water management training

Tammy Reed
Pacesetter Staff

When the Corps trains its personnel, it doesn't often invite local elected officials, emergency management agencies or levee board members. But there was an exception in February at Little Rock District's Greers Ferry Lake in Arkansas that proved very beneficial and that one attendee described as "long overdue."

The Greers Ferry Project Office and Little Rock District hosted water management training that focused on the Corps' responsibilities during emergency responses to high water, and it included local officials as well as Corps field response personnel.

"To my knowledge this is the first venue of this type to be conducted in this district," said Tommy Park, the operations project manager for Greers Ferry.

Throughout the day, training focused on Corps' reservoir management practices and authorities during high water. It concluded with a hands-on look at new flood fighting technology staged in the parking lot.

Park explained that Greers Ferry personnel are responsible for flood response over a 4,000-square-mile area, from Sylamore to Augusta on the White River, and the Little Red River to its confluence with the White, an area that includes eight levees, a flood wall and a channel project.

"We invited representatives from all of those," Park said, "then encouraged each of them to ask questions and share concerns so we could



U.S. Army photo by Tammy Reed, Little Rock District

From left: Greers Ferry Natural Resource Specialist Benny Rorie describes how the Hesco Bastion Concertainer units are used in fighting floods. (The units are what everyone is leaning on.) Listening and asking questions are Greers Ferry Lake Manager Sean Harper, Pine Bluff Operations Project Manager Mike Hendricks, Little Rock Technical Specialist for Water Management John Kielczewski and Newport Levee Board Members Jeff Ellis and Kaneaster Hodges. The Hesco Bastion and a Portadam were loaned to Little Rock District by Rock Island District for recent training.

learn from their input."

Park opened the day's training by explaining to participants the need for part of the training evolved from the many inquiries he receives from people asking why the Corps is, or is not, releasing water during high water.

"Sometimes it's hard to describe the big picture as often folks are looking just at their individual area," he said. "For example, folks on the White may wonder why we are not lowering the river level when there is still flood storage in the lake, while others directly below the dam located in the flood zone, wonder why we generate when the river is rising

and they are in jeopardy of flooding," Park said. "Of course, the marinas and recreation interests on the lake can't understand why the lake doesn't just stay the same level. The Corps must balance water issues, and we operate from a proven and approved water control manual." John Kielczewski and Jan Jones from the district's Hydraulics and Technical Services Branch told the group how Corps reservoirs are managed in "the big picture."

Kielczewski discussed such issues as firm power, mandatory flood releases and how Greers Ferry is managed as a system with the five other Corps lakes in the White River

Basin. He also described how the growing seasons affect managing water in the reservoir.

"As you come away from a river you will see different usages – close in you'll see wetlands and marginal cropland, then flood prone areas, and finally prime croplands," he said.

"During summer, soybeans and rice are planted in marginal farmland, and we try to keep the river at a certain stage to prevent flooding those crops. During winter, we use a higher stage as there is more rain and fewer crops."

See **Water management** on page 31

Found balloon ... and a new way to teach water

Greetings!

January 27 through February 3 is Catholic Schools Week. As part of our celebration, St. James Catholic students sent balloons flying across the sky. We would like to know where you found this one. Please return this card with your name, location and where you found it. The balloon that travels the farthest that is returned will receive a prize.

Thank you for your help.

St. James Catholic School
1010 Belmont Ave
Augusta, Kansas 67010

Student Logan

Grade 3rd

On March 13, while patrolling the primitive areas that surround Clearwater Lake, I came across a balloon with this note hanging in a small tree along the banks of Logan Creek, which is in Reynolds County, Mo. The balloon traveled about 400 miles from Augusta, Kan., to its final resting area. I thought it was pretty cool that the student's name was Logan and that it came to rest along the banks of Logan Creek.

The good part was that I sent Logan a coloring book, posters, etc., promoting water safety, which I hope will be shared with fellow classmates. I found it great to use this opportunity to promote our important water safety messages with a class of third grade students nearly 400 miles away.

-- Don Henson, Clearwater Park Ranger

Water management

Continued from page 30

Donald Roberts, president of the Massey-Alexander levee board, asked Kielczewski how these stages can be updated and reviewed again, as different crops are going in earlier now in addition to the ones he talked about.

Jones told him that any change to the water control plan, such as changing regulating stages, has to go through a prescribed process, which includes public review. Newport Levee President Kaneaster Hodges told the group that making changes to a water control plan can become a long process because everyone has competing interests and differing opinions on how the water levels should be managed, and they all come out in the meetings.

His comments brought on a discussion of Park's earlier statements about why reservoir management issues were important to this training. It was again stressed that the Corps must balance all of the water usage issues that some people possibly do not realize exist.

Next up, Charlie Tobin, the district's chief of Emergency Management, discussed what the Corps can and cannot do in response to high water. He stressed that assistance from the Corps is supplemental to state and local efforts and must be requested. Throughout his talk he highlighted the fact that the Corps'

main interest is to make sure people stay safe and alive.

Tobin also touched on the emergency response responsibilities of the locals, (i.e., the city, county, and levee boards) during a high water event. He reminded levee board personnel that it is their responsibility to protect the lives and property of the people behind their levee. "Before a catastrophic event, one of the things you need to make sure you have at your levees is enough borrow material, enough sand, to rebuild levees and fill sandbags during the event," Tobin said. "I've talked to other districts that showed up to help and provide technical assistance, and the people had the equipment and supplies but no sand for the bags."

Lt. Timothy Martin of the U.S. Coast Guard followed with a brief overview of how his unit can help in emergencies. Scott Hodge, a district civil engineer, and Benny Rorie, a Greers Ferry natural resource specialist, ended the training that included non-Corps personnel with a presentation focused on the pros and cons of four types of flood fighting structures they had compared recently. Two of the structures, the Portadam and the Hesco Bastion Concertainer Units, on loan from Rock Island District, were set up in the parking lot for attendees to look at after


the presentation.

Hodges and fellow Newport Levee Board Member Jeff Ellis talked to Rorie extensively about the Hesco Bastion's system of interconnecting lined wire baskets.

"Kaneaster and Jeff were really interested in possibly getting one of these systems for their levee," Rorie said. "They wanted it to be there at a moment's notice."

Being ready at a moment's notice was a main point of the last session of the day, which focused on training Corps employees to be ready to respond to emergencies. Park led the session by handing out a High Water Plan of Action that included a list of items to bring when responding.

"The first time I had to respond to an emergency I just grabbed some stuff and left," Park said. "I was gone for quite a while and, needless to say, I didn't have all the things I needed for the emergency or for that time away. This list will help."

After the training, Park received encouraging feedback from an attendee. "Former U.S. Senator Hodges told me the training was extremely beneficial and long overdue," Park said. "He said he expressed the sentiments of many of the attendees in thanking the Corps for hosting the day." 

Formalized listening brings results

The second Lake Eufaula public listening session held by Tulsa District in March was attended by community members who had expressed concerns about low water levels and the operation of the lake.

Col. Miroslav Kurka, commander of the Tulsa District, hosted the session. In his opening remarks he said that Lake Eufaula was below normal pool due to the drought for about a year and a half.

“But, this past winter, the Lake Eufaula watershed was able to provide enough water to actually put the lake three feet into the flood pool.”

Kurka added that the region also benefited from the additional inflow with increased power generation.

One of the questions from the first listening session concerned



the amount of sedimentation in the lake that might affect recreation and take away from the lake’s useful

life.

Kurka pointed out the results of a recent sedimentation survey that shows Lake Eufaula is filling with sedimentation at a rate much slower than had been predicted during its design phase.

“After 40 years, the sediment has only filled about 25 percent of what had been predicted,” he said.

Joe Ward, president of the Lake Eufaula Association, commented on the latest listening session and complimented the Corps on its willingness to respond to the concerns of the community.


See **Listening** on page 33

Overstreet recognized for superior performance



Debra Overstreet, a paralegal in Office of Counsel, received a visit recently from Sheldon J. Sperling, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Oklahoma. Sperling came to the Tulsa District headquarters to present Overstreet the United States Attorney’s Award for Superior Performance as a Paralegal Assistant.

The award, dated November 2006, was for her outstanding contribution as a trial team member in the capital prosecution of U.S. versus Kenneth Eugene Barrett. On Sept. 24, 1999, Barrett shot and killed Oklahoma Highway Patrol Trooper David “Rocky” Eales and wounded OHP Trooper John “Buddy” Hamilton. At his 2005 trial, Barrett was sentenced to death and was also sentenced to life imprisonment without possibility of release.

Overstreet worked in U.S. Attorneys’ offices in Tulsa and Muskogee in both the criminal and civil divisions before coming to the Corps last year. John Roselle, chief counsel, said, “As evidenced by the award received from the United States Attorney, Ms Overstreet has demonstrated a history of being a valued public servant who can deliver quality legal support services on very important matters. We are happy that she decided to come to work for the Tulsa District Office of Counsel!” 

Pacesetter Points

Congratulations

On March 11, **Jane Balgavy**, wife of **John Balgavy** of the Little Rock District, a Cabot High School, speech and drama teacher received the Golden Apple from Today's THV, a news program in Little Rock, Ark. The station said Balgavy inspired students to pursue careers in entertainment and speech, and helped them obtain scholarships for advanced studies in schools on both coasts. Her enthusiasm for education allows her to ignore undue criticism of Arkansas' education system.

The "**Bobber, the Water Safety Dog**" youth program received the top award for "Electronic Media Education" (new cartoon and trailer for the fourth cartoon) and second place for "Printed Media Education" (window clings), during the recent International Boating and Water Safety Summit, in San Antonio, Texas. This is the second year in a row the Bobber program has received such high recognition at the summit; last year, the cartoon programs also won first in the "Electronic Media" category and the associated coloring book won first in the "Printed Education" category. This competition includes international entries from numerous government, non-government and commercial organizations.

Rod Garner, an assistant area engineer for the Central Arkansas Area Office, was named Little Rock District's 2007 Engineer of the Year during the District's Engineers Week Program Feb. 20.

Matthew Moix started working Feb. 4 for Little Rock's Hydraulic and Technical Services Branch as a hydraulic engineer. He left U. S. Geological Survey to work for the Corps.

Condolences

James D. "Jimmy" Adkinson, 68, Southwestern Division headquarters retiree, passed away April 2, in Fort Worth, Texas. He retired after 41 years of service with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Mike Braggs' nephew, **Matthew Reed**, 23, died in an oilfield accident on March 26. Mike is a project engineer in the Project Management Branch at the Galveston District.

Oral T. Brewer, 91, of Russellville, Ark., died Feb. 6 at St. Vincent Infirmary in Little Rock. Brewer had a long career with the Corps, and he retired as reservoir manager of Lake Dardanelle. He also did surveying and mapping in development of Bull Shoals, Table Rock, Beaver and Greers Ferry lakes.

Eliseo "Brother Alex" Cadena, 74, passed away March 17. Eliseo had retired from the Southern Area Office in 2004 where he worked as a technician.

Robert C. Cox, 73, of Sallisaw, Okla., died Monday, Feb. 12, in Fort Smith, Ark. He worked for the Corps of Engineers for 35 years, retiring as crew supervisor from Tulsa District's Robert S. Kerr Lock and Dam.

Listening


Continued from page 32

"I have really been impressed by the Corps' efforts to listen to our questions, then go out and get the answers."

Jeff Knack, manager of Tulsa's Lake Eufaula office, was encouraged by the tone of the

evening.

"It seems that in this past year, everyone has come to a better understanding of how the lake is managed in accordance with its original authorization by Congress," he said.

Karen Welden, chairman of Save Our Water Lake Eufaula, agreed. "It was a long year," she said, "but now we are looking for opportunities to work together in the future." 

Simon DeSotos' sister, **Carlene Rose Griffith**, passed away March 24. DeSoto is the Lock Master at the Colorado River Locks.

Pauline Greenfield, mother of Blue Mountain Lake Park Ranger **Tommy Greenfield**, died March 3.

Jim L. Mathias, 59, brother of **Pam Wellman**, Office of Counsel, Southwestern Division headquarters, passed away Feb. 10, in Tulsa, Okla.

Steven Ray Sanders, brother of **Bill Sanders** of Little Rock District's Hydraulics and Technical Services Branch, passed away March 10.

Elizabeth Ann Yates, mother of **Tim Updike**, passed away March 27 in her home with her family at her side. Updike is a lead civil engineering technician at the Galveston District Bay Area Office.

Family Matters

Misty Cox, an administrative support assistant at Little Rock's Millwood Tri-Lakes, gave birth to Jacob Charles, Jan. 27.

Little Rock District held a baby shower March 7 for Resource Management's **Melissa Jackson** who is expecting a girl.

Army Reservist **Staff Sgt. Brian Raley**, son of **P.J. Spaul**, Little Rock District's public affairs officer, safely returned home March 13 after serving one year in Afghanistan.

Promotions

Congratulations to **Paris Embree**, Programs Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters, on her promotion and recent selection as the Little Rock District Support Team Leader.

Congratulations to **Denver Heath** on his promotion and selection as Chief, Regional Contracting, Southwestern Division headquarters.

Congratulations to **Kenny Jaynes** on his recent promotion to Chief, Compliance Section, Regulatory Branch. Kenny was previously serving as a project manager, Enforcement Section, Regulatory Branch at Galveston District.

Orlando Rosas has been promoted to acting chief, Real Estate Division, Galveston District, for 120 days following the retirement of Rick Harrison.

Congratulations to **Ray Russo** on his promotion and selection as Chief, Civil Works Integration Division, Programs Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters.

Reassignment

Sean Wachutka, Corps headquarters, was recently reassigned to the Regional Business Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters, as the Engineering and Construction Office Liaison with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, with a duty station in Washington, D.C.

See **Points** on page 34

Summer's coming



Boater's using the new Ham Creek boat ramp at Whitney Lake will have a last minute reminder to wear their life jackets. The safety campaign consists of stenciling "Please Wear It!" safety reminders where recreators can easily see them and will hopefully heed the advice. The campaign will also consist of strategically placed posters in Corps parks reminding visitors to enjoy their time at Corps facilities while playing it safe.

Points

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Retirements

Phyllis A. Bledsoe, chief of Public Affairs, Galveston District, retired March 30 with 23 years of service. Her career began in 1964 as a filing clerk for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In 1985, after a break in service, she resumed her federal career at Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark., as a temporary GS-3 clerk typist. At the arsenal, her career progressed and in 1993 she was selected as its GS-12 Chief of Public Affairs. She served in that position until she joined Galveston District in 2000 as its Chief, Public Affairs.

Larry Crownover retired March 3 from Little Rock District's Construction Branch after 27 years of service.

Richard "Rick" Harrison, chief of Real Estate Division, Galveston District, retired March 30 after 30 years of service. He served in Fort Worth District from March 1977 until October 1980, when he moved to Galveston District to serve as its only Real

Estate attorney. In that position, he served on task forces to draft the Water Resources Development Act of 1986. He left the Corps in 1987 to join the Department of Justice's U.S. Attorney Office, Miami, Fla., as a trial attorney. In 1992, he returned to the Corps' Los Angeles District, with a duty station in Phoenix, Ariz., serving as a Real Estate attorney. He returned to Galveston District in 1994, becoming its Chief of Real Estate in 1996. He was named the district's Employee of the Year in 2000.

Laura Hays retired Feb. 8 after 23 years of service with Little Rock District.

Ron Timmermans, Outreach and Strategic Planner, Regional Business Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters, retired March 30, following more than 34 years of service. 🇺🇸