

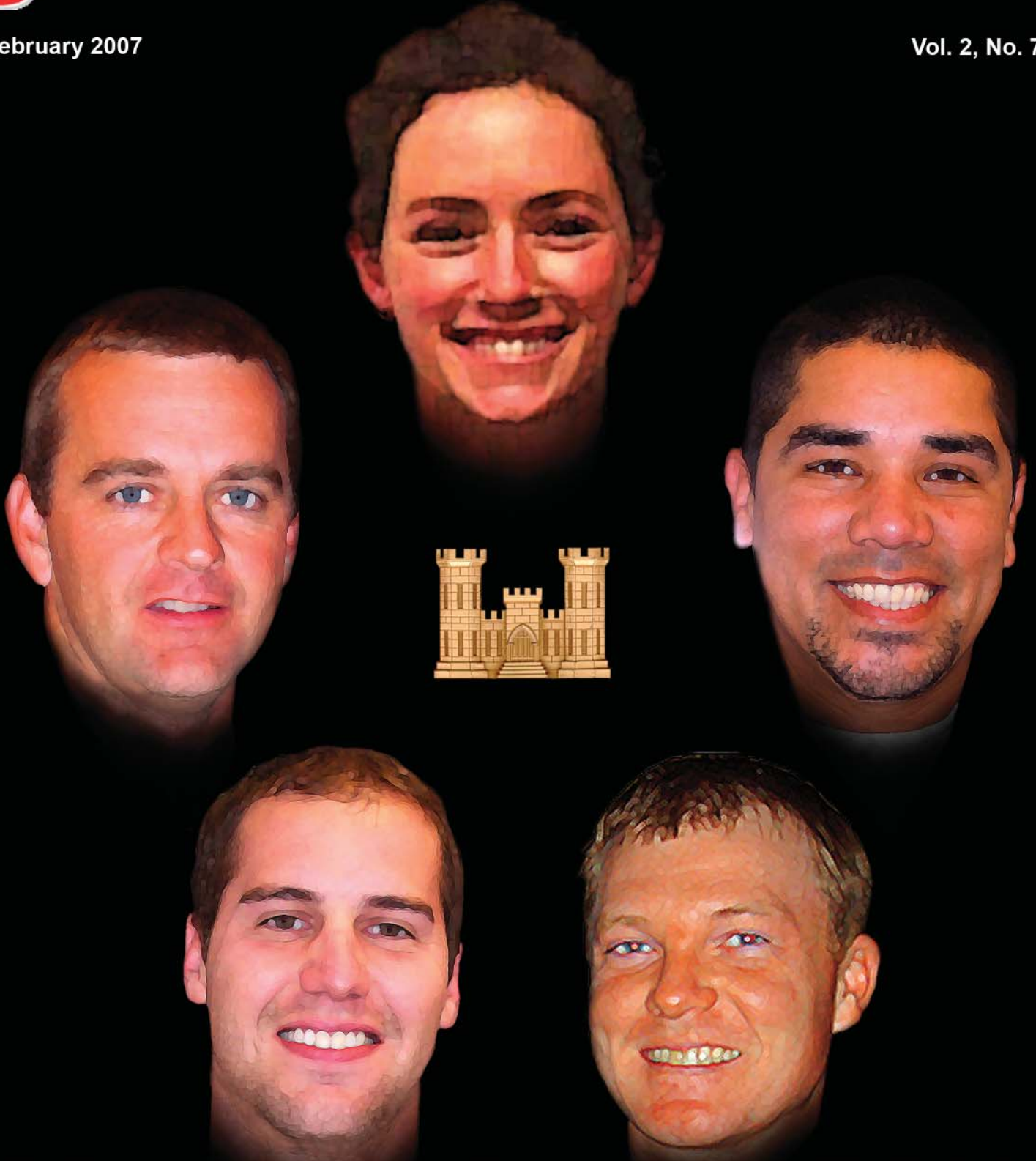
SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

R E G I O N A L

APACESETTER

February 2007

Vol. 2, No. 7



Relevant, Ready, Responsive, Reliable

Park Rangers going above and beyond; see pages 8, 11, and 24.



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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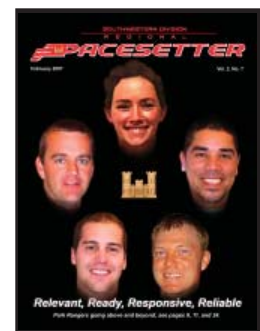


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On the cover: Original graphic illustration by Andre` Mayeaux, Visual Information Specialist, Fort Worth District. Relevant, Ready, Responsive, Reliable. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Rangers are going above and beyond the call of duty every day. On pages 8, 11, and 24 you will find stories about their exceptional efforts.

(from the top: Patty Spiller, Whitney Lake; Lionel Castillo, Whitney Lake; Christopher Alley, Clearwater Lake; Jeff Veselka, Whitney Lake; and, Brady Dempsey, Whitney Lake)





Our team continues to set the pace to meet current and future challenges

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

Thanks to you all, the Southwestern Division team remains dynamic ... and flexible ... and able to focus on today's mission accomplishment with a vigilant strategic eye toward the future.

Let me give you just a few examples.

After months of intensive preparation by some of our best and brightest folks, the Southwestern Division headquarters staff and supervisors within all four of our districts entered the National Security Personnel System, Jan. 21. There are still many details being finalized (pay setting, performance standards and objectives, aligning supervisory levels, etc.) leading up to a mock appraisal exercise which will help to further define where we need to make adjustments. Our pacesetter preparation, training and testing is due to the dedicated teamwork and diligence of our Transition Managers, Project Delivery Teams, Trainers, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center and Civilian Personnel Operations Center staff. Thanks to their efforts, and Herculean contributions by Steve Zeltner,

Jerry Sosebee and Jeff Hair, we have successfully completed our first conversion. These efforts, past and present, will provide a more seamless transition when our remaining team members enter the system.

Another challenge is the affect the Continuing Resolution Authority has now on both our Military and Civil Works programs and planning for additional impacts if it continues.

Under current CRA restrictions, on-going Military Construction projects continue but we can't award any new projects. We've just completed a Corps-wide exercise to plan for execution of the entire FY07 program in the last 6 months of this fiscal year. This would be tough but doable, assuming funds are received in April. If the CRA continues beyond April, our FY07 program will continue to slip and many awards would move into FY08.

We are also working to keep our Base

Realignment and Closure Program moving with limited funds; the CRA caps funds at last year's spending rate. Our annual BRAC plan called for greatly increased spending in FY07 versus FY06. This means we may have to slow down the BRAC program. If the CRA continues, we'll continue to optimize limited funds but new project awards will be delayed and projects will continue to slow down and in some cases be stopped, depending on guidance from the Army and the Department of Defense.

And while our field construction staff is currently funded with on-going MILCON and BRAC projects, no new awards and delayed awards could have an impact prior to the end of this fiscal year.

In addition, the CRA also affects our

"We've successfully met every challenge that has come our way, and I am confident that we'll continue to do so."

Installation Support Program. Historically, at the end of each fiscal year we execute a large number of operations and maintenance projects for the installations we support. Since those installations are also fiscally constrained by the CRA, we expect to receive fewer of these projects. A continuing CRA could mean that our installation partners will have an increasing number of critical O&M needs with limited funding available.

For Civil Works, while there are some CRA impacts, bottom line up front - if we develop good schedules and execute them, a year-long CRA could, in fact, be beneficial.

Under the CRA, FY06 reprogramming rules are in effect, but this would be the case even if the FY07 Appropriations Bill was enacted. The same is true for limitations on the use of the continuing contract clause.

Our O&M program is constrained at FY06 amounts, with the Corps' entire program

funded below the President's FY06 budget request. Under the CRA, the funding level for O&M will be about \$17 million below the President's FY07 request, and about \$15 million below the amount that would have been appropriated if the FY07 Appropriations Bill was enacted. The good news here - the amount we are to receive is about equal to the largest O&M program ever appropriated for the Southwestern Division. While we would have liked more funds, all four of our districts should have sufficient funds for critical activities.

More good news, funding levels for General Investigation and Construction General are at FY06 amounts ... a significant plus-up from the FY07 amounts the division would have received in the final FY07 Appropriations Bill. For example, for GI, that equates to about \$10 million, an increase from the President's FY06 budget request of \$3.8 million. If the FY07 Appropriations Bill had been enacted, we would have received from \$7 to \$8 million.

For CG, the amount is \$145 million; the President's FY06 budget request was \$134 million. If the FY07 Appropriations Bill had been enacted, we would have received about \$155 million.

Another positive, Congress has given the Corps the ability to determine which projects and studies are to be funded and the amounts to place on each of them. This gives us continuity for on-going activities from FY06 and the ability to reach a logical stopping point. In other words, we can position ourselves to efficiently execute the next steps if funding is provided in FY08.

The CRA has the potential to help us address some issues in the Continuing Authorities Program. For example, if the FY07 Bill had been enacted, only a few CAP projects would have received funding. Under the CRA, we are able to move some projects forward to meet our customers' needs.

See *Challenge* on page 4

Blizzard of 2007: Beautiful Disaster

Corps response warms area residents

Mary Beth Hudson
Pacesetter Staff

Will Rogers, one of Oklahoma's favorite sons once said, "Everybody always talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it." All these years later, people in Oklahoma are still talking about the weather – this time the blizzard of January 2007 – and some Corps employees are doing something about its aftermath through their emergency response roles.

Storms hit the state early each morning from Jan. 12, through Jan. 14. By the time they cleared, all of Oklahoma's 77 counties were included in a federal emergency declaration, 32 people were dead, the eastern part of the state was ravaged by crippling ice, and tens of millions of dollars of damage had been done.

The blizzard left beauty and destruction in its wake. It coated each limb, branch, leaf, and twig with layers of eerily striking, tragically heavy ice. Branches and trees were weighted down and crashed onto ice-burdened powerlines. An estimated 15,000 power poles fell, and more than 125,000 people lost electricity.

As soon as the Federal Emergency Management Agency assigned the Corps the emergency power mission, Southwestern Division's Power Response Team from Tulsa District mobilized. Some members were themselves victims of the storm, and people, and equipment from the 249th Engineering Battalion "Prime Power," and the Corps emergency power contractor, IAP Worldwide Services, had to



U.S. Army photos by Mary Beth Hudson, Tulsa District

David Hudson, right, Corps power team logistics team member, and IAP Worldwide's yard man shake hands, a ritual they repeated each time a generator left the yard.

come from several states and travel through icy areas to respond. The team was soon overseeing the installation of generators to maintain critical infrastructure.

Operations were guided from the State of Oklahoma Emergency Operations Center in Oklahoma City where state and federal agencies involved in disaster response were headquartered. There, Kerri Stark served as emergency power subject matter expert

while Kent Dunlap and Louis Holstead were emergency power action officers.

Jan Hotubbee, mission manager, and the rest of the field team deployed to McAlester, Okla., one of the hardest hit areas. A vacant building and some land immediately outside the entrance to the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant became the Federal Staging Area. Later,

See Ice Storm on page 6

Challenge

Continued from previous page

We certainly do have challenges for our daily and long-term mission execution. We'll continue to do the "right thing for the right reason." We've successfully met every challenge that has come our way, and I am confident that we'll continue to do so.

One last item of note ... Col. Chris Martin and I accompanied the Chief late last month as the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, other dignitaries and some 3,200 others gathered at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio to officially open the Center for the Intrepid. The Center is a \$50 million, 65,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation center for critically wounded military members. The facility was made possible by contributions made to the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund and those of the Fisher House Foundation. At that ceremony, I was humbled at the courage

and optimism of our Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Airmen recovering from devastating injuries ... all of them true heroes.

Our most direct connection to the opening of this world-class facility is found in Fort Worth District's utilities infrastructure support to the complex. At the same time, I was struck by all you do in supporting our Service Members, deployed and at home, and their families. Everything we do, not only in military construction, but every civil works business-line, real estate, regulatory, all manner of support for others, every job, accomplished every day, by every Pacesetter supports our Service Members and their families. It's in that context that 600,000 Americans donated the money necessary to build the Center for the Intrepid. A team like that cannot be defeated. Essayons! 🇺🇸

Developmental assignment emphasizes importance of communication

Adrienne Carter

Program Manager, Southwestern Division

Working in effective teams is crucial to the success of any project. Building effective teams requires efficient communication. My name is Adrienne Carter and I work as a program manager in the Southwestern Division. I recently completed a 120-day developmental assignment as the Little Rock District Acting District Support Team Leader. My objective during this assignment was to improve communication with one of the districts I serve as program manager. Having a civil engineering background and being a former planner and project manager, I saw the opportunity to gain closer insight into the broad spectrum of Corps interests while also gaining supervisory experience. The major role of the DST Team Leader is to be a liaison between the district, division and headquarters. The Little Rock District DST and Team Leader are located in the division office in Dallas. Supporting projects from the division level offers a challenge in being able to operate and communicate between three distinct and different cultures at the district, division, and headquarters. If communication is dysfunctional at any one level, how can this organization provide consistent recommendations, decision documents, risk communication, accurate project cost-estimates, and timelines to the Administration, Congress, or stakeholders?

Several activities, such as participating in the Little Rock District Command Assistance Program, the division Operations office, the Way-Ahead Conference and attending the Civil Works Review Board meeting in Washington, D.C., at the headquarters office for the May Branch Feasibility Report allowed me the opportunity to learn and contribute to the relationships. As a supervisor, I also had responsibilities for managing the time, assignments, and performance for employees within the DST. One key assignment that enabled me to build relationships was the tracking and updating of the district's Weekly Significant Activities Report. Within the first two weeks of beginning the assignment, I met with project managers and supervisors, introducing myself and getting to know more about district projects. Having a four-month window, I decided to concentrate on major product deliverables due within that timeframe and see as many projects within driving distance of the district office. My trips to Montgomery Point Lock and Dam, Arkansas-White Cutoff, Greer's Ferry, and Table Rock Lakes allowed me to see features that could not be adequately captured in a fact sheet or member's request. While visiting Greer's Ferry Lake, the lake manager, Tommy Park, ensured that I saw essential park operations and even provided a film showing how the different business lines affect lake operations. Brinda Jackson, acting lake manager at Table Rock Lake, provided me and Rhonda Pledger, a district Budget Analyst, a tour of the hydropower plant and other pertinent features of the beautiful blue reservoir. After seeing the view from the Corps and Visitor Center offices, I asked my permanent supervisor if I could spend a couple of weeks there to



Adrienne Carter, Program Manager, Southwestern Division

straighten up and improve my performance. Of course he said, "No." Visiting the field offices gave me a deep regard for the district's decisions on operations and maintenance. I remember visiting field offices 10 years ago when we had more equipment and personnel. Now, the large warehouses that once held equipment are empty and the number of employees has dwindled.

In building relationships, I didn't stop with just Little Rock District. I was also able to improve communication with the Regional Integration Team at headquarters. Participating in the bi-weekly DST/RIT teleconference, attending the Civil Works Review Board, and coordinating a division/headquarters response letter in person helped to foster improved communication.

Relationships at division were also strengthened between operations, planning, and programs as we coordinated with the district for the future direction of several projects, which will continue to be a work in progress. I accomplished some fun things like instituting "Fellowship Friday" in operations, where we had breakfast and discussion on hot topics and projects. I also had the opportunity to sew project management seeds by scoping and negotiating with a consultant to provide a fundamental course in division that was also made available to other districts through video-teleconference. The Project Management Professional crash course was also given during the detail with several passing the PMP exam to gain their certification. I gained a great sense of accomplishment in possibly opening the door of project management to those who may not have originally considered it in their career path.

The RIT and DST are evolutionary and relatively new

See ***Developmental*** on page 8

Worth Remembering:

The birth of the Tulsa District

Judy Bullwinkle
Pacesetter Staff

In 1907, as Oklahoma was earning its statehood, businessmen were already working to prove that Oklahoma's part of the Arkansas River was viable for navigation.

Six members of the Muskogee Chamber of Commerce financed a steamboat in 1905 to transport freight to and from Fort Smith, Ark. The operation continued for 16 months and carried 35,000 tons of freight. However, when another steamboat tried the same route in 1908, it ran aground on a river filled with sand. Offering increasingly lower rates, railway transportation quickly won as the best method of transport.

Still, water development and navigation continued to interest the business community. Beginning in the 1920s, numerous civic groups studied and recommended river improvement. These groups promoted water development along the Arkansas River and the Red River Basin that ran into Texas.


National interest in water resources development also heightened during the 1920s. The debate over hydroelectric power caused Congress to approve House Document 308 (69th Congress) which charged the Corps with surveying more than 180 rivers and tributaries. Congress funded the surveys through the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1927. The Corps completed the studies (308 reports) in 1935, but decided that building reservoirs would not be cost effective.

The surveys, the flood of 1927, the Corps policy reversal on building reservoirs to help public work relief during the Great Depression, and the passage of the 1936 Flood Control Act encouraged those early navigation boosters.

The legislation created significant change. It mandated that flood control was a "proper activity for the federal government." It also assigned the Chief of Engineers the mission and authorized 211 flood control works in 31 states. Flood control was to be enhanced by building reservoirs, and Oklahoma was one of the 31 states.

Those same boosters saw a new opportunity to champion multipurpose developments along the Arkansas and other rivers. In early 1937, Little Rock District was re-activated and the Southwestern Division (then also located in Little Rock) was created. With portions of the White, Red, and Arkansas basins, Little Rock covered seven states with the mission of designing a series of reservoirs. When construction began, the Corps decided to create new districts closer to the construction sites.

As the Corps began to carve out new districts to construct the reservoirs, its leadership began to tour the area. Newton Graham, Tulsa newspaperman and banker who dreamed of navigation on the Arkansas, had developed relationships in both Congress and the Corps of Engineers. He accompanied the Chief of Engineers on his first official visit, promoting Tulsa as the site for a district office.

In 1939, by General Orders 3 and 4, the Tulsa District and its boundaries were established. Graham became known as the "Father of Tulsa District." 

Ice Storm

Continued from page 4

a Deployable Tactical Operations Center from Fort Worth arrived to provide satellite communications for the operation.

Soldiers from the 249th Engineer Battalion, headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Va., arrived as did more than 100 generators from the FEMA logistics center in Fort Worth, and workers, trucks, and equipment with the Corps contractor, IAP Worldwide Services.

Following priorities set by the state, "Prime Power" Soldiers made electrical assessments. Then, contract employees placed and powered up generators at water treatment facilities, sewage plants, community centers, distribution points for water and food, nursing homes, shelters, etc. Three were placed at the ammunition plant itself to allow a critical munitions shipment to be met. Once the generators were installed, daily maintenance visits were made to assure reliable fueling and service.

At the Pittsburg County Health Department, where formula and vaccines must be kept at certain temperatures and where services needed to continue through the weekend, the district nurse manager

said, "I can tell you that the response was excellent. They came out and did an assessment of the building one evening. The next day, they brought the generator. We appreciated it so much. I was impressed that it came with fuel and an electrician. They off-loaded it; they wired it. They came back every day. They were so nice; they bent over backwards to make the thing work for us."

Just up the street, another FEMA generator powered the First Baptist Church where a shelter was established. The




Laura Long, mission specialist, works with one of the "Prime Power" Soldiers. Long was in charge of the power database in ENGLINK.

building was housing 40 people full time, and church members were feeding 700 people a day.

The units are scattered throughout the storm-damaged area powering crucial services to sustain life and health.

Pete Navesky, chief of emergency operations for Tulsa District, said, "This event occurred as the equivalent of a no-notice event, so none of the emergency power resources were pre-staged as would typically occur prior to a hurricane landfall. As a result, the mission was under a great deal of scrutiny and political pressure until generator installation began in earnest on Jan. 17. However, the results were very much appreciated by the impacted citizens."

It may be impossible to do anything about the weather in Will Rogers' home state, and when people talk about the blizzard of "aught seven," they might not mention the Corps. But those who responded will never forget and those who were warmed and fed, thanks to the power provided by the generators, will know that that federal responders made a big difference in the aftermath. 

BRAC, the Corps and \$2.3 billion

Clay Church
Pacesetter Staff

Large dollar amounts normally get people's attention. This was the case when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence hosted an Industry Day in San Antonio this past August. The dollar amount is \$2.3 billion and represents numerous projects to be constructed at four separate San Antonio military locations over the next five years in order to implement the impacts from the Base Realignment and Closure 2005 decision. These impacts cross numerous infrastructure, design and construction disciplines affording numerous business opportunities. The installations are Fort Sam Houston, Lackland and Randolph Air Force Bases and Camp Bullis.

BRAC 2005 will affect how the Department of Defense trains and cares for its members and how the military medical system is operated. The impact on the San Antonio area installations includes: the consolidation of in-patient care from Wilford Hall Medical Center to Brooke Army Medical Center; converting Wilford Hall to an ambulatory care clinic; realigning enlisted histology training and Army and Navy combat casualty care research to Fort Sam Houston; realigning enlisted basic and specialty medical training from Sheppard AFB, Naval Station Great Lakes, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, and Naval Medical Center San Diego to Fort Sam Houston; and realigning Air Force Medical Support Agency, Air Force Medical Operations Agency, Air Force Element Medical Defense Agency, Air Force Element Medical-DoD, and Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence, from Brooks City Base to Lackland AFB. Other areas impacted are the relocating of research and development and administrative missions from Brooks City Base, relocation of the Installation Management Agency and field agencies to Fort Sam Houston and revitalizing the Air Force basic training campus on Lackland AFB.

The enormous dollar amount involved and the scope of work to be accomplished in a relatively short period of time will require the Corps of Engineers to use the full array of contracts, construction methods and procurement methods available in their arsenal. The Corps designs and manages military facilities construction for the Army, Air Force, Navy and Tricare Management Agency in the San Antonio area. The facilities involved in the BRAC 05 program at the four San Antonio installations will include hospitals, clinics, labs, research and development facilities, dormitories, class rooms, maintenance facilities, administrative offices, dining facilities and miscellaneous vertical and horizontal construction projects. The Fort Worth District of the Corps of Engineers will use procurement methods and contracts to include stand alone, single and multiple award task order and indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts. The project teams will also look at using regional product line contracts for standard type facilities such as parking, dorms, dining facilities and youth centers and already existing AFCEE IDIQ contracts.

Numerous opportunities will be available for large, small, social economic and disadvantaged firms to be involved in the implementation of the BRAC 2005 initiatives. Companies that are already registered with the government at www.ccr.gov have already made the first step. Keeping the profiles updated with any changes or new capabilities could help with obtaining a winning bid. Registration for the FedBizOpps Acquisition Notification Service and keeping abreast of announcements, solicitations and synopsis may also help in obtaining a contract. Those companies eligible for assistance from the Small Business Administration would be wise to take advantage of the expertise and Chambers of Commerce are always an invaluable resource.

Additional information can also be obtained by visiting the Fort Worth District Contracting web site at <http://ebs.swf.usace.army.mil/> . 



Clearwater Lake park ranger earns Humanitarian Service Award

Tammy Reed
Pacesetter Staff

Clearwater Lake Park Ranger Christopher J. Alley recently received the Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service for an act of bravery that saved the life of a U.S. Geological Survey employee. Alley, of Van Buren, Mo., received his award and medal Jan. 30 at the Clearwater Project Office where he has worked since 2003.

In January 2006, Alley was working near Highway K Park when he noticed two USGS employees collecting water samples near the Black River Bridge. He stopped to talk to them. One man, who was wearing neoprene chest waders and a life jacket, stood in the water about 50 feet from the bank to collect his samples, while the other man monitored him from the shore.

Because of rainfall and releases from Taum Sauk Dam upriver, the water was deeper and the currents stronger than normal. As the three talked, the current swept the man in the water off his feet and began to carry him downstream. The waders caused his feet to rise and his head to sink. His life jacket bobbed his head back up out of the water. Each time he

struggled to regain his footing, the movement caused his head to sink again. He began inhaling water, and it was obvious he was beginning to panic.


Alley called to the man and told him to remain calm and grab a sapling that he was headed toward. As the floating man grasped at the limb, his head again submerged,

causing him to inhale more water. He began to cough. He lost his grip and yelled as he was washed further downstream.

It was at this point the man's partner told Alley that the stricken man could not swim, and Alley realized he wouldn't be able to rescue himself. The park ranger grabbed a long branch, darted downstream of the distressed man and ran into the water to intercept him. There, the park ranger reached out with the branch, and the man grabbed hold. Alley reeled the man in close enough to grab his life jacket and help him to shore, where his co-worker helped him onto a log.

Alley's award citation said the actions he exhibited in this heroic act prevented what would have certainly been a fatality and that his actions are a credit to the Corps and the Department of the Army.

Clearwater's Chief Park Ranger, Randy Devenport, agrees.

"Chris' decisive actions, his quick thinking and his ability to remain calm in the situation at Highway K are no surprise," Devenport said. "He is a hardworking and conscientious employee, and he relates well with the public. He has always been the type to jump in and help." 



Clearwater Project Operations Manager James Beard recently presented a Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service to Christopher J. Alley, Clearwater Park Ranger, for his efforts in rescuing a USGS employee from the Black River.

Developmental

Continued from page 5

concepts introduced by the Corps 2012 Reorganization Plan less than 3 years ago. Having experienced the challenges first-hand, I believe opportunities to further improve or refine Corps' business processes will be gained through the successful relationships and effective communication between districts, divisions, and headquarters.

In the Civil Works program, projects compete nationally through eight business lines for funding. The performance metrics for this competition pits the economic and environmental benefits of projects against one another to receive funding. As funding for the agency in Civil Works becomes tighter, technical and human resources will continue to be cut for efficiency. Smaller budgets and changing roles and responsibilities are forcing the issue for better communication throughout the


organization. Remaining relevant, ready, responsive, and reliable remains the focus behind all that we do as project managers, product delivery teams, program managers, DSTs, RITs, Communities of Practice, and Centers of Expertise. Behind all of these teams are people who must communicate to solve the nation's water resource problems in the Civil Works arena. My overall lesson learned from this experience was that as change becomes a constant, the importance of building relationships and establishing effective communication becomes paramount in continuing to achieve organizational vision, missions, and goals.

Lessons learned from 120-day detail to SWL DST:

- Corps direction should be established from within the organization and followed. It

should not appear to change because someone has written a letter to the Chief of Engineers.

- DST team members should be involved on studies/projects within their technical areas to resolve issues (from PMP to draft/final report) before they become a bottleneck.
- Communication is the key to building trust within a changing organization.

Organizational lesson learned: Starting as a Planning Study Manager, I wish that I had a better understanding of programs management before becoming a project manager. I believe that every Corps employee should know how the Corps obtains its funding and be educated in key project management business processes. 

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completes \$2.4 million in living support

Taking care of the troops (with help from Frank Garcia, Galveston engineer)! The following is reprinted from The Northern Exposure. Word is that Francisco T. Garcia, Jr., has accepted a six-month additional TDY assignment with USACE, Gulf Region Division, Northern Iraq, as a supervisory civil engineer, effective Jan. 21, 2007. He is in GRN working on a TDY tasker. This action is a temporary promotion for him. He will have the option of staying six months longer as this assignment draws to a close.



Frank Garcia in Iraq. Frank's job in the district is in Operations Division as project manager.

Polli Barnes Keller



One thousand troops will relocate from tent city to hard structures on Contingency Base Speicher before winter sets in.



Included in each bedroom is a desk, air conditioning/heat, closet and a bed. The kitchenette comes with a sink, microwave and small refrigerator.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers supports the mission of our deployed troops by completing the \$2.4 million Living Support Area #20 on COB Speicher.

“Even though we are in an expeditionary type of environment, we should give our Soldiers the best we can,” says Frank Scopa, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers area engineer.

“Social amenities make their life easier which helps them to focus on what is important and that is part of our mission. Having to walk through the mud and rain to get to the shower and latrine facilities is not good. There is no reason why our troops have to live uncomfortably.”

Living Support Area #20 consists of 36 dormitory buildings, complete with electricity, sewage and running water. Each dorm is designed with two bedrooms on each end, divided in the middle by a kitchenette and bath. With 504 bedrooms, two people per room, the military plan will house more than a thousand soldiers.

Frank Garcia, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers resident engineer says of the new living area, “Soldiers are the backbone of the success in Iraq and their quality of life is paramount. Moving Soldiers from temporary tent structures to hardened facilities before the cold weather comes will enhance their ability to complete the mission. We have a duty to care for our Soldiers.” 🇺🇸



NSPS: Know the rules to win the game

Col. Christopher W. Martin
Commander, Fort Worth District

Now that we are well into 2007, I want to commend all of you for stepping out smartly and continuing to set the bar for hard work and dedication to our military and Nation.

I recently sent out my perceptions of the feedback I received on the organizational climate survey that many of you participated in. I thank all of you who took the survey and for the feedback you provided, especially the written comments which add more substance than the scores alone. After reading your comments, I realized that there is a great deal of concern about the National Security Personnel System.

As most of you know, supervisors converted over to the NSPS several weeks ago and everyone else will convert over to the new system in early October. Supervisors were trained prior to the holidays and team members should get their training this spring.

Lt. Col. John C. Dvoracek, deputy district commander, and Robert Geiger, chief, Resource Management Office, are the district Transition Managers and have both done a great job of guiding the district through the initial implementation of NSPS. In addition, the following team members are also trained NSPS instructors; Hyla Head, chief, Real Estate Division; Tom Fleeger, chief, Operations Division; Charlie Burger, assistant chief, Operations Division; Bill Collins, chief, Natural Resources and Recreation Branch; Mark Simmons, chief, Environmental Design Branch; and Marie Vanderpool, chief, Hydrology and

Hydraulics Section. I have asked all of them to share as much information with you as possible so we can all learn about the system.

Through various pilot programs and by adopting lessons learned, I believe NSPS to be a fundamentally sound system that will work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. One of the most important things is for everyone to learn as much about NSPS as possible in order to understand how it works and what the individual roles and responsibilities will be.

Mark Simmons, chief, Environmental Design

monitors performance, rates employees, and recommends rating, shares, and distribution to the second level reviewer and pay pool panel.

The second level reviewer, the manager above the supervisor, reviews and approves performance plans, adds bullet comments, and addresses employee potential during the annual appraisal process. In addition, this individual reviews and adjusts recommended ratings, shares, and distribution from rating official(s).

These are just a few facets of NSPS. Success of the program will rest on individual discipline—employees keeping track of their accomplishments on a monthly basis as well as supervisors being disciplined to give honest ratings based on the tenets of NSPS. It is important that each of you understands it to ensure you are successful; and by extension, the Corps, the Army and the Soldiers succeed.

Accompanying this article are a few commonly asked questions on NSPS. Take the time to go over them or visit the following websites for more information.

“It is important that each of you understands it to ensure you are successful; and by extension the Corps, the Army and the Soldiers succeed.”

Branch, recently held an NSPS Lunch and Learn for members of the Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division. He covered general rules, pay bands, ratings and rewards. He also talked about roles and responsibilities.

Employees are responsible for keeping track of accomplishments and providing information to the rating official and assisting in establishing job objectives. The rating official or immediate supervisor establishes job objectives and performance expectations,

NSPS website:

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/>


Army NSPS website:

<http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps/>

Army NSPS training website:

<http://www.chra.army.mil/NSPS-training/index.htm>

SWD CPAC website:

<http://www.swf.usace.army.mil/swd-cpac/NSPS/PerfAppraisalResources.asp> 



Mark Simmons, chief, Environmental Design Branch, answers questions concerning the National Security Personnel System during a Lunch and Learn Feb. 8. He covered the general rules of NSPS, pay bands, ratings, rewards, roles, and responsibilities.

Relevant, Ready, Responsive, Reliable

Park Rangers demonstrate selfless service

Melanie Ellis
Pacesetter Staff

On their way home from the Southwestern Division National Resources Workshop in Branson, Mo., four park rangers from the Fort Worth District faced a new mission head on. It presented itself suddenly and they responded without hesitation.

“As we were driving just south of Durant, Okla., on Highway 69, there seemed to be a multi-vehicle accident on the highway,” said Lionel Castillo, Whitney Lake Park Ranger. “The accident had just occurred because some of the debris on the highway was still moving.”

Castillo, along with Patty Spiller, Brady Dempsey, and Jeff Veselka, all park rangers from Whitney Lake, pulled over and exited the vehicle to provide immediate assistance.

“Jeff Veselka knew to turn on one of our blue/red flashing lights to warn oncoming vehicles of the emergency,” said Castillo. “All the rangers in the vehicle just knew what to do,” said Castillo. “I was very impressed.”

Since the accident involved multiple vehicles, the park rangers went to the aid of the victims. “We’d had first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation training and one of the things we learned was that as a first responder, we should always check the scene to make sure it’s safe,” said Castillo. And that’s exactly what they did.

While Dempsey helped one victim,

Spiller and Veselka checked on the others.

“The individual that I assisted was semiconscious but less seriously injured than the others involved in the accident,” he said. “I mainly just kept him calm and got him to sit away from the car.”

There were two victims that the rangers could not reach immediately because of the extensive damage to their vehicle. “The mother and son were in such a badly damaged vehicle that they were beyond any help we could give them,” said Dempsey.

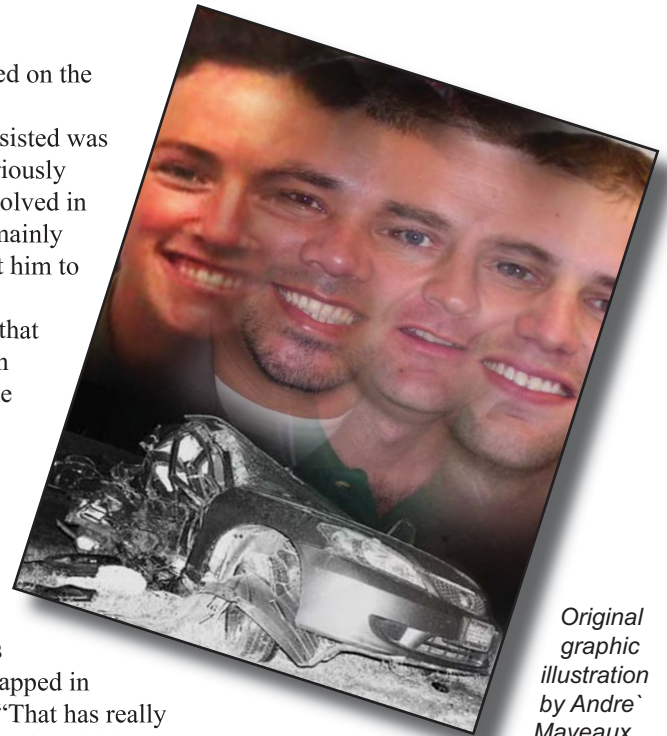
Unfortunately, there was one fatality. The mother trapped in the car with her son died. “That has really bothered me because I care about kids and have several small ones myself,” said Dempsey.

“After the local law enforcement and medical staff arrived, we left the situation to the professionals and continued on our way back to Whitney,” said Castillo.

“I think the thing that stuck out to me most was that nobody asked if we should stop, and help, or anything. Everyone just went,” said Dempsey.

“I am so proud of these folks. Rangers get involved in this type of thing routinely at our lakes but that’s their job,” said Tom Fleeger, chief of Operations Division.

“Many people would have passed up this accident on the public road but our people



Original graphic illustration by Andre` Mayeaux.

couldn’t. I just think their Army values kicked in and they had to stop.”

It was a tragic accident but “all the people in our vehicle did a great job and without hesitation did what was needed,” said Castillo.

“It made me proud of the rangers I work with. They are just good, ready, reliable people,” said Dempsey.

“They were tired, it was late and dark, but they did what they were trained to do and did it well,” said Fleeger. “They’re heroes in my book.” 🇺🇸

Show me the money



Col. Martin poses with the Combined Federal Campaign volunteers at the Quarterly Awards Ceremony. Fred Jensen, Fort Worth District campaign coordinator, set a goal of \$35,000 but quickly exceeded that goal and collected a record breaking \$57,597. More than 47 Fort Worth District employees contributed over \$520. “We had outstanding participation in which 175 out of 585 employees contributed to this record year,” said Jensen. “We hope to exceed our goal again next year.” 🇺🇸

Fort Worth District, Air Force cut ribbon on environmentally friendly student dorms

Ed Rivera
Pacesetter Staff

On the gridiron, the Army and Air Force are on opposite sides of an academy rivalry. But, when it comes to building facilities for Airmen at Laughlin AFB, Texas, to live and train, both services combined to build a student pilot dormitory, with benefits to the local community as well.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony held Jan. 11 was for a 56-room dormitory, the first of a two-phase project. The second phase, currently awaiting approval from Congress, will add an additional 64 rooms, and will be modeled after the new dormitory.

The primary tenants will be 47th Flying Training Wing student pilots in their first year of pilot training. Prior to the construction of the dorm, many of the student pilots had to commute to the base from off-base housing several times each day. Student pilots are the primary product of Laughlin AFB and the base maintains three active runways that are in use 24 hours a day with the exception of a two-week holiday break.

According to Kendall Waldie, the program account manager, Fort Worth District, one of the goals of the Laughlin AFB leadership was to ensure the dorm was environmentally friendly and cost effective for the taxpayers. The facility contains a new system equipped with ground source heat pumps. With 58 wells located around the building, drilled to a depth of 350 feet, water is pumped through the wells to help with heating and cooling. This geothermal process will save taxpayers money in the long run.

“We did the life cycle analysis that proved they would provide energy efficiency over the traditional systems in the Del Rio



Photo by U. S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Austin M. May
Participating in the ribbon-cutting for the new 56-room student pilot dormitory on Laughlin AFB are from left to right: Col. Mike Minahan, commander, 47th Flying Wing, Maj. Gen. Irving Halter, commander, 19th Air Force, Lt. Col. John Dvoracek, deputy commander, Fort Worth District, and Gary McClure, President of Templeton Construction.

area,” said Waldie. “Geothermal heat pump performance and cost are dependent upon the local soil conditions, but Texas soil is good for this method.”

In addition to the geothermal heat pumps, the 47th FTW required the project to be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certifiable. The use of recycled materials during building construction, energy efficient lighting and day lighting were a few items that allowed for the Laughlin student dorm to be LEED certifiable.

As defined by the green building council, LEED is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green

buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings’ performance. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

As both the Air Force and Army Corps of Engineers await Congress’ green light for the next phase, the two services continue to build on the success of the new dormitory and prepare for the future groundbreaking of the next dorm. 🌱



U.S. Army photo by J. Harvey, Fort Worth District

What are they doing down there ...

Crews at Canyon Lake work to prepare to pour concrete to re-enforce the spillway. The construction consists of a three-foot-wide trench that was cut across the spillway to a depth of about 20 feet. Rebar is then placed in the trench, then concrete. This will result in a subterranean wall that will stop erosion.

Have you seen us, lately?



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

The Fort Worth District's focus on its deployed team members is now captured on a display on the third floor of the Fritz G. Lanham building in Fort Worth. The boards will help team members in the district keep up with those who are away serving the needs of others. It also allows deployed team members the opportunity to send messages to their fellow teammates. 🌐

Clark Design/Build wins top honors for 2006

Melanie Ellis
Pacesetter Staff

The Temporary Unit of Action Facilities Project at Biggs Army Airfield at Fort Bliss was recently recognized by Texas Construction for its 2006 Best of Infrastructure Award. Clark Design/Build, LLC, executed the contract that consisted of three phases of construction. The project involved the installation and completion of more than 500 buildings for turn-key occupancy in just seven and a half months.

The \$171 million project will accommodate approximately 3,800 of the 20,000 additional troops that will call the El Paso area home under a military realignment plan. The project supports a brigade being formed under the U.S. Army's Modular Force transformation program and included 412 barracks, 13 laundry facilities, 20 storage buildings, 13 dayroom facilities, 64 concrete air-conditioned arms vaults, 16 canopy structures, one conventionally constructed electronic switching facility and 65 administration buildings. The project also included a 26,000 square-foot dining facility; five 10,000 square-foot tensioned-

fabric structures to house combat vehicle maintenance; and five 7,500 square-foot, pre-engineered steel wash-rack buildings with overhead bridge cranes.

During its execution, this project was the highest value construction contract under way in the Fort Worth District and is the highest value construction contract awarded in the continental United States since 1992. Construction placement was occurring at the rate of over \$1.4 million per day, seven days a week. The entire project was completed with over 517,000 man-hours of labor without a lost-time accident.

The Army Defense Artillery Center of Excellence is located at Fort Bliss. It is responsible for air defense artillery training of U.S. Soldiers and many allied nation Soldiers. 🌐



History reveals itself at Grapevine Lake

Dale King
Conservation Specialist

Just when you are catching up with current affairs, the past reaches out to slow you down. Recent low lake levels have once again exposed several reminders of the past; pre-history, that is. This summer, visitors observed fossilized tracks left by Hadrosaur dinosaurs around 100 million years ago. These tracks are located just below conservation pool in sandstone. They are subject to damage from wind and water erosion, as well as vandalism ... the tracks became big news after being broadcast on several television and radio newscasts and although we tried to keep the location secret, several hundred people located the site and came to see the tracks. Some tracks were damaged by visitors inadvertently walking on them; however, some were severely damaged by vandals attempting to dig the tracks to steal them.

Although we would have liked to allow visitors to view these tracks, we also wanted to preserve them until funding allowed us to create an interpretive display. Of course, funding was not currently available, so we had to develop a way to protect them until we were able to develop the display.

In the short term, rangers were diverted from their current work to patrol the site and ensure that the tracks were not damaged. This required them to refrain from park patrols on weekends to patrol this site during daylight hours for several days. While this gave project staff the time to devise a way to protect the tracks, park rangers fell behind with their other more routine duties, such as park patrol, encroachments, etc. We diverted some money from park maintenance to hire a contractor to cover the tracks with soil to protect them from further damage. In the near future, staff will determine a more permanent method of protection and at the same time display them. 🇺🇸

Got an idea for the Pacesetter?

Do you have an interesting story or picture? Share it with your fellow Corps team members. Simply submit your story idea, written article, or photo with caption to your local Public Affairs Office by the 1st of each month.

Fort Worth District, TxDoT tackle haul route issues at Fort Bliss

Ed Rivera
Pacesetter Staff

As the Army transforms and Fort Bliss, Texas becomes a hotbed of construction, partnerships between the Corps of Engineers and contractors has been key to the transformation of how the Corps handles military construction. In addition, forming solid relationships with other state and local agencies has paved the way for a team that can tackle any obstacle that may arise.

Corps and Garrison representatives, the Fort Bliss Expansion Program Land Development Engineer and Texas Department of Transportation recently got together and held a Kick-Off Meeting to gather information on contractor access to construction sites.

According to Michael C. Bormann, Infrastructure Program and Project Manager, all stakeholders provided valuable input in order to proceed with the new requirement to design and construct access ramps from Loop 375 in order to accommodate construction vehicle access to the air field construction site.

“The access ramps will allow easier access to the Biggs Army Air Field construction site allowing for a faster construction period which will benefit the Expansion Program as a whole,” said Bormann.


Having a short design time frame and a requirement to quickly complete the access ramps has brought up a few concerns, mostly environmental.

According to Bormann, the cooperation

between the Corps and TxDoT has been a team effort, working together to achieve a common goal of ensuring access of all construction contractors to the site.

In addition to working together on the access ramps, cooperation between the Corps and TxDoT has made for great progress on the Tactical Vehicle Bridge which will be the main route used by units

going to the field for training and normal traffic flow between the main post and Biggs AAF.

“The Tactical Vehicle Bridge at Haan Road spans Airport Boulevard, a major city artery that separates Fort Bliss motor pool areas from the sites of the proposed air and rail deployment facility complexes,” said Bormann. 



The Tactical Vehicle Bridge at Haan Road spans Airport Boulevard, a major city artery which will connect Fort Bliss and Biggs Army Air Field. Inset: Michael C. Bormann, Fort Bliss Expansion Program, Infrastructure Program and project manager, and Sanford Case, deputy design director for the Land Development Engineer, discuss the new requirement to design and construct access ramps from Loop 375 to accommodate construction access to the Biggs Army Air Field construction site with Texas Department of Transportation representatives and other stakeholders.

Army leaders visit Fort Bliss infrastructure projects

Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey is briefed by Col. Christopher Martin, commander, Fort Worth District, Jan. 10, on the Fort Bliss Expansion Program at Biggs Army Air Field.



U.S. Army photos by Judy Marsicano, Fort Worth District



Gen. Peter Schoomaker, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (right), is briefed by Col. Christopher Martin, commander, Fort Worth District, and John Moreno, Fort Bliss Program Office manager, Jan. 9, on the Fort Bliss Expansion Program at Biggs Army Air Field.



First impressions!

**Col. David C. Weston
Commander, Galveston District**

As I type this message, I am watching the ships transit the Houston/Galveston ship channel outside my office window. Life is good! My short time in the district has been a whirlwind tour, visiting the numerous ports, flood control projects, sponsoring agencies and local government officials up and down the Texas coastline. It has reaffirmed my initial assessment, that it is indeed a great honor to serve as the commander of Galveston District! It is readily apparent that this is going to be one of the most interesting and exciting assignments of my career. Though I have only been here a short time, I have already learned that it's the people who make up our ranks that make this organization special, not only in my eyes, but in the eyes of our sponsors and customers.

As I have traveled across our district area of operations, the quality of our organization has been a constant theme that has surfaced in my meetings with the various entities that we serve. Without exception, they laud the tremendous work ethic, sense of partnership, and professionalism that Galveston District brings to the table. This is clearly attributable to the consistent efforts put forth by our entire district team, working alongside these organizations, to solve the myriad complex challenges that present

themselves in the daily execution of our mission.

We can gain great perspective on the importance of our mission simply by looking at the impact of our work on the Texas coastal region. It is clear that we are responsible for safeguarding vital national, regional and local interests. From navigable waterways

that ensure the free flow of literally billions of dollars of commerce through the gulf to the heartland of our nation; to flood damage reduction projects that safeguard billions of dollars in real property, numerous population centers, and the economic prosperity

“It is exciting to think that every day each of us can impact this region on a grand scale.”

of the region; to efforts to protect and sustain the unique, vibrant environment of the Texas coastal region; it is abundantly clear that what we do every day is of great importance. What you do every day matters!

It is exciting to think that every day each of us can impact this region on a grand scale. I am proud to lead this fine organization. I know from the quality of your work that you are equally proud to be part of this great team. Together, and alongside our partners and sponsors across this great state, we will continue to make a difference. 🌍

Randolph opens new \$13.9 million Rambler Fitness Center



The new \$13.9 million Rambler Fitness Center opened to the Randolph community after a special ceremony Feb. 2. Special guests of the ceremony included Gen. William Looney, Air Education and Training Command commander; retired General Donald Cook, former AETC commander; Tony Jasso, representative of Senator K. Bailey Hutchison; Walter Parker, the sole survivor of the Randolph Rambler football team that tied the University of Texas in the 1944 Cotton Bowl; and Thomas Lein Weber, who is representing his deceased father, another member of the 1944 Randolph Rambler team. The fitness center is named after the legendary base football team. The new facility includes a 12,000 square-foot cardiovascular and strength training room, 20,000 square-foot main gym with two basketball and volleyball courts, three racquetball courts, a climbing wall, indoor elevated running track, group exercise rooms, men's and women's locker rooms with a total of 490 lockers with digital locks, a family exercise room with four cardio machines, massage therapy room and a 4,700 square-foot health and wellness center. The new facility also includes \$1.9 million worth of new equipment and a \$198,000 audio-visual system. 🌍

Wrap-up: 18 Months Later

Rita results show Corps' effectiveness



This is not the preferred way to get rid of the debris! Spontaneous combustion lit fires in the piles of debris at the Beaumont Airport debris site.

Kimberley Benavides
Pacesetter Staff

On Sept. 24, 2005, Hurricane Rita, a Category 3 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Scale, made landfall over Louisiana and southeast Texas. As a result, the President declared a major disaster for the State of Texas, designating 27 Texas counties as eligible for federal assistance.

The Corps' response team consisted of 631 Corps employees representing 37 Corps organizations, 80 from the Department of Interior, nine from the Army Material Command, and 400 contract positions. Of the 631 Corps employees, 177 were from the Corps' Galveston District. The Corps' response team also included over 4,000 people working under Corps contracts, with a peak of 1,500 at one time.

Galveston District began its emergency response mission with the surveying and damage assessment of 12 federal navigation projects along the upper Texas coast. The surveys investigated potential channel shoaling and sunken vessels, and damages to placement levees, jetties, and related infrastructure. The Corps teamed up with the U.S. Coast Guard and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to survey and clear 11 of the projects, including the Houston Ship Channel, within 48 hours of landfall. The most impacted project, the Sabine Neches Waterway, was cleared within six days of landfall. While damages were not enough to close the projects, Congress approved an emergency supplemental request to help

See **Rita** on page 18



At the Orange County debris site, Capt. Mike Raymo can't reach around the huge stump.



Debris along streets in Beaumont and the surrounding areas was loaded by Corps contractors.

In addition to its navigation role, the Corps provided significant engineering and public works support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency under the National Response Plan. The Corps received 40 missions from FEMA, varying from providing emergency supplies of ice and bottled water, providing emergency generators, installing temporary roofing on damaged homes, clearing storm-generated debris and demolition of severely damaged structures.

Under FEMA’s emergency ice mission, the Corps delivered 3 million pounds of packaged ice. The ice delivered was equivalent to 1,193 truck loads. The emergency water mission saw the Corps deliver 4.5 million gallons of water. Water deliveries were equivalent to 1,370 truck loads. FEMA’s \$11 million emergency generator mission had the Corps installing 289 generators, which was the largest single generator mission in FEMA history.

One of the Corps’ larger missions involved installing temporary roofing (blue plastic) to hurricane-damaged homes across 22 southeast Texas counties. FEMA authorized the Corps \$44 million to accomplish this mission resulting in 27,329 requests for roofing assistance and 20,871 completed roofs. Also, in support of FEMA’s Individual Assistance program, the Corps received \$3.5 million to inspect and lease 3,642 travel trailers for use as temporary housing for the hurricane victims.

The Corps’ largest mission, authorized by FEMA at \$152 million, involved the removal of storm-generated debris from public rights-of-way and property. Overall, the Corps’ prime contractor and 320 sub-contractors removed and disposed of 4.9 million cubic yards of debris in 13 counties and the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation. Included in the mission was the demolition and disposal of 70 residential structures and 12 abandoned vessels destroyed by Hurricane Rita’s surge and winds.

The Galveston District’s last active mission, removing and disposing of 12 hurricane damaged vessels stored in the Sabine Pass area, was physically completed on Dec. 15, 2006. This brought closure to 40 FEMA pre-declaration, emergency declaration, and disaster declaration missions executed by Galveston District in the State of Texas. At the end of the fiscal year, the district will have executed over \$200 million on the 40 FEMA mission assignments in support of Texas. 🌍

New Regional Leadership Development members



Three Galveston District employees have been selected for level two of the Regional Leadership Development Program. Ryan Fordyce has moved up to level three of the program. From left to right are Felicity Dodson, Evaluation Section, Regulatory Branch; Ryan Fordyce, Evaluation Section, Regulatory Branch; Dwayne Johnson, Compliance Section, Regulatory Branch; and, Kathy Reding, General Engineering Branch, Engineering Division.

Hansen promoted to lieutenant colonel



The Hansen family at the promotion ceremony.

Maj. Richard Hansen, Deputy Commander, Galveston District, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel on Jan. 3, 2007.

Hansen was promoted by Col. David Weston, district commander, with help from his two sons, John, 6, and Matthew, 4, while his wife, Catherine, watched.

Hansen has been deputy commander of the Galveston District since June 2006, following his deployment in 2004-2005 from Fort Hood, Texas, to Baghdad, Iraq, while assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division. Hansen has been selected for battalion command in 2008 and will find out his future assignment this summer. Hansen and his family reside in Houston, Texas. 🌍

New Captain arrives at Galveston District

Capt. Tricia Campbell, originally from Indianapolis, Ind., has arrived at Galveston District and is working in Operations. She graduated in 2002 with a degree in civil engineering from Purdue University. She spent three years at Fort Bragg with the 27th Engineer Battalion where she served as the Battalion Construction Officer, Vertical Construction Platoon Leader, and Support Platoon Leader. Moving on to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., she attended the Engineer Captain's Career Course. In December 2006, she earned a master's degree in civil engineering at the University of Missouri in Rolla, Mo. 🌍



Capt. Tricia Campbell

ing from Purdue University. She spent three years at Fort Bragg with the 27th Engineer Battalion where she served as the Battalion Construction Officer, Vertical Construction Platoon Leader, and Support Platoon Leader. Moving on to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., she attended the Engineer Captain's Career Course. In December 2006, she earned a master's degree in civil engineering at the University of Missouri in Rolla, Mo. 🌍

District takes part in State of Galveston Bay Symposium at convention center



Attending the State of the Bay Symposium and staffing the Galveston District display were Natalie Rund, Glenn Weitknecht, Jayson Hudson and Felicity Dodson. Also helping at the booth and attending sessions were Marilyn Uhrich, Andrea Katanzaro and Ryan Fordyce.

Galveston regulator heads to Washington, D.C., for six months

Kimberley Benavides
Pacesetter Staff

Kimberly McLaughlin, project manager in the Regulatory Branch of the Galveston District, is one of four individuals selected to participate in a developmental assignment for six months with the Regulatory Community of Practice. McLaughlin started her assignment at Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 8, and will return to the Galveston District in July.

While on assignment, McLaughlin will be working on complex national issues that will include the development of an interagency coordination for the new Nationwide Permits and Mitigation Rule, revision of the Standard Operating Principles and Procedures, development of revised historic property regulations, and watershed issues. This includes new guidance, planning regional conferences, jurisdictional issues related to Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, and continued development and refinement of Operations Regulatory Manual-2. She will act as the Corps representative for many of the meetings associated with the National Wetlands Mitigation Action Plan.

McLaughlin has said that while she is there, she would like to be exposed more to the Regulatory Branch Program as a whole and understand better how it affects the Nation's aquatic resources. She has been with the Regulatory Branch for 10 years. 🌍



Kimberly McLaughlin, project manager, is currently on a developmental assignment in Washington, D.C.

Houston Ship Channel marsh named for Dick Gorini

Dick Gorini, who was instrumental in the creation of the Interagency Coordination Team for the Houston Ship Channel project, and who served as chairman of its subcommittee, the Beneficial Uses Group, was honored at a ceremony in December. It was announced during the event that one of the beneficial uses marshes, created through the deepening and widening of the ship channel, would be named for Gorini.

The Dick Gorini Marsh, formerly called the Atkinson Island Demonstration Marsh, was started early in the Houston Ship Channel deepening and widening project. The Port of Houston paid for the containment levee, Galveston District Operations pumped material into the levees, and grants helped fund the planting expenses.

The marsh development brought applications that are being used today in marsh creations in other locations. 🌍



A group of Galveston District employees visit the marsh.



Winter doesn't stop team Tulsa

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

Boy it's cold! This is weather that I grew up with in Chicago, but we're in Oklahoma. Whatever happened to global warming? At least we have a lot of work to do which keeps us busy and generates "body heat."

This work has included an emergency power mission in Oklahoma. We reacted very quickly to a Presidential emergency declaration and a request by the state to provide emergency power generators. We deployed the Tulsa District Power PRT, 16 Soldiers from the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power), and the DTOS from Fort Worth District to McAlester, Okla., and began operations within 48 hours of the declaration. Within a few days, we had installed 64 generators, provided emergency power to dozens of facilities, and received high marks from numerous officials and the people of Oklahoma. Well done!

We've also transitioned 63 supervisors in Tulsa District into the National Security Personnel System. The NSPS procedures we implement and practice over the next few months will provide very valuable lessons for the full implementation of NSPS in the district this October. Right now, we are decisively engaged in "budget work." By the time you read this, we will have a Civil Works budget for fiscal year 2007. I've seen the numbers and although

they're not great, they are better than last year and will allow us to meet our personnel, operations, and minimal maintenance costs. The FY08 O&M President's Budget is significantly better. There even appears to be money in the FY07 budget for continuing our most important studies and projects – those in which our non-federal partners have signed

"Tulsa District has great people, a great plan, and we are part of a great Southwestern Division team."

agreements with us and contributed funds. Over the next six weeks or so, we are going to be very busy finalizing and implementing our FY07 work plans, briefing Congress and stakeholders on the FY08 President's Budget, and beginning the effort to execute a year's worth of program in seven or eight months.

In our military program, we expect to get information soon on how the FY 07 military construction and BRAC program will be handled. Will there be a MILCON appropriations bill? We don't know, but by the end of February we should know which projects will be funded and at what levels. I have great confidence that we will be able to react quickly and execute accordingly whatever the actual 2007

MILCON and BRAC program end up being. We have a very lean and flexible organization.

All this uncertainty just confirms that we live and operate in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) environment. To survive in this environment, we must constantly evaluate and assess the situation and be very flexible. We're doing that every

day. We've adjusted our strategic plan; we've adjusted our organization and work force; and we've successfully pursued work on nationally significant projects in Sacramento and Louisiana in order to

enhance our technical expertise and to reinforce our relevance. Additionally, our patriotic work force continues to volunteer in record numbers to support our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have a "can do, never quit" attitude, and as a result, we are doing more than surviving; we are thriving in a VUCA environment.

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

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

Coming soon ...

The Society of American Military Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock and Tulsa Districts, present the Future Work and Partnering Symposium on April 3-5, 2007 at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock, Ark. The symposium will include guest speakers on upcoming military projects, partnering sessions for small and large business, numerous contracting opportunities, seven district commanders and two division commanders, continuing education credit, SAME golf tournament, Clinton Library tour and dinner, and vendor and small business exhibits. For more information, look online at <http://posts.same.org/arkansas/>.



Eastern Oklahoma ice storm hits Corps parks

The ice storm did severe damage in the Eufaula Lake area and left considerable devastation in park facilities at Tenkiller, Fort Gibson, and Webbers Falls. Total damage estimate for the eastern area projects is \$497,600. Resulting safety concerns have caused several parks to be closed.

Damages include debris from trees and limbs, broken water hydrants, broken camp site components such as concrete tables and benches, and damaged electrical pedestals. The biggest problem and the most costly will be removing all of the leaners and hangers from the trees in the parks so as not to pose a hazard to customers during the next recreation season.

According to Dan Bentley, eastern area manager, all focus will be placed on getting these areas restored before the recreation season begins. This will require full use of limited personnel and resources. 🌍



U.S. Army photo by Kirt Curell, Tulsa District

Ice damaged park areas at Fort Gibson Lake.

Forslund awarded Commander's Award for Civilian Service



John Forslund, program manager at Sheppard Air Force Base, was recently presented a Commander's Award for Civilian Service for his outstanding work at the base. 🌍

Finding a different route



U.S. Army photo by Aimee Jordan, Tulsa District

A severe ice storm swept through eastern Oklahoma causing major damage to Eufaula Lake park areas. Here, a tree has fallen across a road in a recreation area at the lake due to the weight of the ice. 🌍

Little Rock District FEST trains at National Training Center

Tammy Reed
Pacesetter Staff

Dozens upon dozens of Iraqi Sunni and Shiite, Kurdish, and even Afghan and U.S. opposing forces inhabit ramshackle villages with names like Medina Jabal and Al Sharq that dot a dry barren landscape in California.

For more than three years now, two weeks at a time, several times a year, these role-playing “villagers” teach U.S. Soldiers how to deal with the complexities of combating terrorism and insurgent warfare.

They also weave into the warfare the tasks of rebuilding Iraq and stabilizing Afghanistan.

The Little Rock District Forward Engineer Support Team participated in this training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, from Nov. 26 through Dec.17. There, they provided forward engineering support to the 1st Combat Support Brigade as they trained too.

FEST member Maj. Andrew McVeigh said the 1st CSB, a newly formed brigade, arrived at NTC with an effects cell containing few engineers and little practical experience. The Little Rock FEST consisting of Robert Stainton, water resources engineer; Kenneth Thornton, electrical engineer; Jim Marple, ranger supervisor; and McVeigh, Army reservist and Corps engineer, proved to be a welcome addition to that unit’s training.

“I thought that we were a natural fit into the Army unit,” Thornton said. “We stood out some and were recognized as “different” but we were pretty widely accepted once they began to understand our role and capabilities.

“We worked all projects as a team with assigned role emphasis on our background and strengths. Maj. McVeigh was able to quickly recognize and sort out the work with our individual strengths in mind.”



U.S. Army photo by Maj. Andrew McVeigh

Little Rock FEST members Robert Stainton, Kenneth Thornton, Jim Marple and Maj. Andrew McVeigh pose for posterity during their recent training at the National Training Center in California.

He added, “We would come to an agreement on a project and then ‘bounce ideas’ off whoever was leading that particular effort. If we got stuck, Major McVeigh would use his leadership skills to pull us to a final product.”


The work that led to those products included: performing infrastructure assessments of mock Iraqi villages, airfields and a Borax mine; recommending and providing full information packages for a new concrete batch plant, fertilizer plant and trash incinerator; and assessing the infrastructure needs for water, sewer, electricity, agriculture and trash.

“After initial assessments and information gathering . . . we then authored a collective recommendation and contract package for each problem that included cost estimates, complete designs, and scope of

See **FEST** on page 24

Tulsa state of the district address



Col. Miroslav Kurka held a Town Hall Jan. 18. He gave a “state of the district” address and took questions from the audience. Video of the town hall is available at the Tulsa District website. 



“Thank you, me won’t drown now.”

Little Rock District park rangers make wishes come true

Tammy Reed
Pacesetter Staff

The water safety messages from Clearwater Park Ranger Don Henson and his sidekick “Bucky Beaver,” a.k.a. Park Ranger Chris Alley, really hit home with at least one of the 60 pre-schoolers at the Grandin Head Start program in Grandin, Mo.

But it took Santa Claus to bring it to light. As Christmas approached, the children from that school wrote letters to Santa. A little boy named Dakota obviously took those water safety lessons to heart and wrote the following:

Dear Santa,

I want a tractor, a fire truck and a life jacket.

Love,

Dakota

The youngster’s teacher, Barbara Hixson, sent a copy of the letter to Henson, and asked, “Is there a way to make his wish come true?” The teacher said the area where the family lives is a low-income one where money is tight.

“Upon receiving the letter I shared it with the Clearwater staff,” Henson said. “I received enough donations from fellow

employees to make his wish come true.”

The Clearwater staff gave Dakota his life jacket Dec. 18 at the school. Dakota and his mother were very appreciative.

“Thank you, me won’t drown now,” Dakota responded.

The Clearwater project office employees also donated enough money to buy Dakota a tractor and a fire truck to make all his wishes come true.

Henson said he had a great time presenting the gifts to Dakota.

“This is the fun part of my job,” he added.

Chris Smith, Little Rock District Water Safety Team program manager, said Dakota’s story “shows the dedication of our staff to ensure the safety of a child. I would say we have met our water safety goal!” 



Dakota, his mother, Park Ranger Don Henson, Dan Gross (president of the Southeast Missouri water safety council), teacher Barbara Hixson and Park Ranger Chris Alley pose for a picture after Dakota received his life jacket and toys Dec. 18 at the Grandin Head Start.

FEST

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work,” Thornton said. “Field Commanders then delivered and presented our finished product directly to the mayors and leaders of these villages for discussion and review for implementation.”

McVeigh added that major challenges faced the team at NTC, as they would in Iraq and Afghanistan. These included drinking water and sewage (gray and black water) disposal and providing electrical power to the villages.

“Robert’s PE license and experience came in handy regarding the drinking water and sewage disposal,” McVeigh said. “After receiving requested RFIs (requests for information), Robert quickly analyzed the information provided by USACE reach back personnel and tailored the information to the ‘on-the-ground’ reality.”

“His resulting design-build product was

succinct and so thorough that the Iraqi contract role-players had never seen such a comprehensive design package.”

The next challenge of providing electrical power to the villages fell to Thornton. McVeigh described this former Marine as a steady driving force who provided a workable alternative to the standard application of portable diesel fueled kilowatt power generation.

“Kenny effectively combined the integration of avant-garde wind generation and skid mount mounted generators. In doing so, his work gave the regular Army engineers insight into how to solve real world problems that they could face as they deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Marple, the last member of the team, brought to his teammates prior combat experience and a previous rotation through

NTC.

“Jim brought a level of calm maturity necessary on any team,” McVeigh said. “His practical USACE and deployment experience were invaluable to the day-to-day operation of the FEST.

“He knew the scenario playbook, which helped ensure that the team understood the mission at hand. While not an engineer, Jim’s common sense approach was often that important bit of insight that proved invaluable to successfully completing every mission.”

Successfully completing the missions was not the only reward the FEST received during their time at NTC. Interacting with the role players proved to be just as rewarding for Thornton.

“I learned a great deal from the role

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Drought didn't cool shipments

Arkansas River tonnage sets record high year

P.J. Spaul
Pacesetter Staff

With the waterway locked in Level 2 drought during most of 2006, shipments were still hot on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, where shippers set a new tonnage record at 14 million tons.

This compares to the system's previous record of 13.1 million tons set in 2003. An estimated 12.9 million tons moved in 2005. Every month except December topped 1 million tons during 2006. December shipments were estimated at 889,310 tons.

The totals are unofficial tallies reported by the Army Corps of Engineers Little Rock and Tulsa Districts and are subject to change. Official totals will be reported later by the Corps in "Waterborne Commerce of the United States, Part 2."

Of the 12 commodity categories, six were up from 2005 and six were down. The ups outweighed the downs. Iron and steel, chemical fertilizer, petroleum products, coal and coke, aggregates, and soybeans were all up. Declines were noted in other chemicals, minerals and building materials, wheat, food and farm products, manufactured equipment and machinery, and miscellaneous.

Little Rock District's Sheila Ellis compiles the tonnage figures. She said a combination of things led to the new record such as catch-up shipments of farm products after Hurricane Katrina, coal shipments to a power plant near Redfield, Ark., iron and steel moving through Tulsa, and increased rock shipments.

She pointed out that high fuel costs may



Tanker barges enter Dardanelle Lock on the Arkansas River near Russellville, Ark.


be steering more shippers to convert to barges because of the fuel efficiency over other transportation modes and that "the system's supporters really do a great job promoting the system."

The drought failed to quench navigation on the Arkansas because of the engineering that went into the system. The navigation system was in Drought Level 2 much of the year on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the most severe drought. Corps water managers in Oklahoma and Arkansas monitored water levels closely and implemented actions to conserve water and help limit adverse impacts.

The 445-mile system of 18 locks and dams was constructed to provide pools deep enough to allow commercial barge transportation to navigate the river year round even during very low flows. The

locks and dams form a stairway of water, climbing more than 400 feet in elevation from the Mississippi River to the Tulsa Port of Catoosa.

This drought put the system to yet another test, and the McClellan-Kerr passed as it continued to link ports in Arkansas and Oklahoma with ports around the world.

Little Rock District operates the Arkansas portion -- 308 miles of channel and 13 locks and dams. Tulsa District operates the Oklahoma portion of the channel and five locks and dams, as well as a system of reservoirs that provide flood reduction and help accommodate navigation. Both districts work together regionally to operate and maintain this great transportation alternative. 

FEST

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players," he said. "I spent some time getting to know our assigned Iraqi translator, Eba. Eba shared with me, in detail, her political and religious beliefs and stories about her childhood, family, and experiences in Iraq under Saddam's regime.

"She shared with me that she believes most Iraqi citizens very much want for the U.S. efforts to succeed in Iraq. She validated the beliefs that I already had about Iraq and the war."

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Thornton also felt that the role players liked what they were doing there at NTC. "I was amazed at the positive attitude of both the Soldiers and Iraqi role players," he said. "I was left with the impression that the Iraqi role players I met and talked to were very committed to their role in helping the U.S. Army. They seemed proud to be there."

According to McVeigh, the role players also seemed amazed at the SWL FEST work during the team's training at NTC. "The

Iraqi translators proclaimed that not in more than three years have they ever seen the kind of full-spectrum products provided by the Little Rock FEST." 

Pacesetter Points

Congratulations

Justin Crowe, Little Rock District, was selected as the river and harbor maintenance worker on the Arkansas River Fleet.

Jason DeLancey, Little Rock District, was selected as the lock operator at Dardanelle Lock and Dam.

Little Rock District's Russellville Project Office has selected **Phillip Farmer, Sr.** as a power plant mechanic at the Ozark Power Plant.

Tammy L. Reed, a Little Rock District public affairs specialist, recently earned two first place awards for her news and sports articles submitted to the 2006 Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Journalism Awards Competition for the Installation Management Command-West region. As first place winners, her entries will now be entered into the Army-wide competition.

Jim Sandberg is the new operations project manager at Little Rock's Table Rock Lake. In his new position, Sandberg is responsible for managing and operating Table Rock and Beaver dams and power plants as well as Corps parks and public land surrounding Table Rock Lake.

Retirements

James D. Childers retired Jan. 2 after 35 years, six months of service at Little Rock District's Pine Bluff Marine Terminal. He started as a laborer at the Pine Bluff Project Office in 1971, was promoted to surveying aid in 1972, to contract inspector in 1974, to motor vehicle operator in 1976, then to engineering equipment operator WG-10 in 1981. He was a member of the Pine Bluff Project Office dive team since 1971.

Col. Emmett H. Du Bose, Jr., deputy commander, Southwestern Division, retired from active duty Jan. 1, after serving our Nation, our Army, and the Corps of Engineers for more than 26 years.

Gary Goodwin, hydraulic engineer, Regional Business Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters, retired Feb. 3, with 33 years of service.

Larry Harrison of the Little Rock District Regulatory Office retired Jan. 3 after 28 years with the Corps.

Troy Hensley, information technology specialist, retired Jan. 8 from the Information Management Office in Little Rock District after 32 years of service.

Tommy Knox, chief, Civil Works Integration Division, Programs Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters, retired Jan. 5, following nearly 34 years of service.

James Nevel retired Dec. 31 from Little Rock District's Ozark Lock and Dam.

Jacky Patterson retired Jan. 2 as a lock and dam equipment mechanic supervisor at Lock and Dam 5 on the Arkansas River after 29 years, 10 months service.

Jimmie Reep retired Jan. 2 as a transportation assistant at Little Rock District's Pine Bluff Project Office after 32 years, eight months of service.

Ken Rollins retired Jan. 3 after 43 years and three months service. He served 25 years as a real-time water manager in the Reservoir Control Section of Little Rock District's Hydraulics and Technical Services Branch. Rollins primarily provided services to operations managers at Millwood and the Tri-Lakes, as well as Nimrod, Blue Mountain and Clearwater Lakes. He regulated projects during all of the major flood events in Little Rock District in the past 25 years. He also worked for the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Geological Survey during his career.

Dave Scott, program manager, Programs Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters, retired Jan. 31, with more than 38 years of service.

Clyde Timms, a senior electronics mechanic at Table Rock for about eight years, retired Jan. 3. His past federal experience included the Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation and National Park Service, and the General Services Administration's Federal Protective Service.

Joel Trautmann, attorney in the Office of Counsel, Southwestern Division headquarters, retired Jan. 31, with more than 26 years of service. Four years of his service were active duty Army before he received a disability retirement as a result of wounds he suffered in Viet Nam during Operation Apache Snow, more familiarly known as the Battle of Hamburger Hill. Trautmann served as a 1st Lt. Platoon Leader in that battle and is a Purple Heart medal recipient.

Dennis Turner, a civil engineer at Little Rock District's Beaver Lake, retired Jan. 3 after 28 years with the Corps.

Joel Ward of the Little Rock District Regulatory Office retired Jan. 3 after 31 years with the Corps.

John Young, the operations manager of the Nimrod-Blue Mountain Project Office

for 18 years, retired Jan. 3 after 37 years of service with the Corps. Young worked as a park ranger, chief park ranger and lake manager at the Russellville Project Office (Lake Dardanelle) as well. On the night of his retirement, a large crowd of friends and co-workers attended a ceremony and banquet honoring him during the intra-district annual meeting held at the new lodge on Mount Magazine. Young's many achievements were recounted by officials and friends who stood to wish him well in his retirement.

Promotions

Congratulations to **Mark Gmitro** on his selection as program manager, Regional Business Management Division, Regional Business Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters. Gmitro comes to the division from the Corps' Institute for Water Resources.

Congratulations to **Gloria Pena**, Resource Management, on her recent selection as a program specialist, Programs Directorate, Southwestern Division headquarters.

Congratulations to **Eric Verwers**, director, Engineering Construction Support Office, on his promotion to GS-15, Jan. 7.

Congratulations to **Maureen Weller** on her recent selection as supervisory contract specialist, Office of the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting, Southwestern Division headquarters. Weller previously served as Fort Worth District's Contracting Officer.

Condolences

Jerry Hankins' father-in-law, **John Brown**, passed away Jan. 19. Hankins is the facility maintenance inspector at Little Rock's Russellville Project Office.

Southwestern Division retiree and former chief, Real Estate, **Michael B. Cottrell**, passed away in Arlington, Texas, Feb. 11. The family plans a private service in DFW National Cemetery at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to local chapters of the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society.

Betty Sugg Allinder, 71, passed away Jan. 11. She was the mother-in-law of **Jim Cullum**, who works in Little Rock District's Office of Counsel.

Elizabeth Lucille King died Jan. 10.

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Frigidity at its best



Ice dangles from a large tree outside the Rustling Winds Center and covers a plant in McAlester, Okla. The Tulsa PRT deployed to McAlester during the ice storm. 🌍

U.S. Army photos by Mary Beth Hudson, Tulsa District

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She was the mother of **Kay Dice**, Little Rock District's Pine Bluff Project Office admin officer, and grandmother of **Brian Worsham**, a Montgomery Point Lock and Dam lock operator.

Dee Dorsch passed away Dec. 19. She was a retired Regulatory employee and is the mother of **Dana Needham** in Little Rock District's Planning Office.

Clyde Thomas, father of **Elaine Edwards** of Little Rock District's Regulatory Office, passed away Nov. 26.

Dayle Beckham, 76, died Jan. 10 after battling Alzheimer's disease. He was the father-in-law of **Joe Holden** of the Fort Chaffee Project Office in Fort Smith, Ark.

Edna Morrison Wise, mother of **Jerri Keith** of the Central Arkansas Area Office at Little Rock Air Force Base, passed away Jan. 21 at 88 years old.

Alberta Loos, mother of **Keith Loos** of Little Rock's Contracting Division, departed this life Jan. 10. She died peacefully at home in the presence of her loving children, to be with her late husband of 32 years, Ervin A. Loos, and daughter, Alice.

Dwight McKee, 61, passed away Dec. 5 at his home in Iuka, Miss. He was a former member of the Lion's Club in West Columbia, Texas. McKee spent many years in service to the Corps of Engineers, during which he worked in several districts. In

2001, he left the Galveston District and came to the Little Rock District, where his kindness, intellect and humble nature made a lasting impression upon his friends and coworkers.

Dencil Carter, father of **Lisa Owens** of Little Rock's Nimrod-Blue Mountain Project Office, died Jan. 3.

Joseph E. Sugg, a lock and dam operator at Little Rock's Ozark Jeta-Taylor Lock and Dam, died Jan. 25 at his home. He worked in the Ozark area for the Russellville Project Office for more than 34 years and had been at Ozark Lock since 1978. 🌍