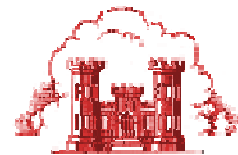


The Newcastle

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U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Los Angeles District



Curator Donna Crippen of the El Monte Historical Museum shows a 1940s headline highlighting a controversial L.A. District project. Building the dam eventually led the Corps to take over an old school for its Baseyard, left.

See story on page 5.

Corps looks to increase participation of Hispanics in technical careers

Story by Mike Tharp

The world's premier engineering organization recognizes the importance of a diverse, high-performing and talented individuals in our workforce. That's why on Jan. 16, LTG Bob Flowers, Chief of Engineers, and Ray Mellado, chair and founder of the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation (HENAAC), signed a national agreement to enhance opportunities for Hispanic students preparing for professional technical careers in engineering, science and mathematics.

In a joint statement Flowers and Mellado said: "We recognize that a workforce comprised of diverse, high-performing individuals with valuable talents and strengths is critical to providing excellent services to all our customers, especially soldiers and their families."

The national memorandum of understanding was signed during a recent ceremony in the Luckman Complex at California State University, Los Angeles. This ceremony commemorated an earlier educational program. Previously, HENAAC and the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks signed their own memo to implement "Viva Technology," the Hispanic group's innovative K-12 education program that introduces Los Angeles students to technology careers.

The Los Angeles District and SPD will initiate a pilot Viva Technology program with Roosevelt High School in Los Angeles.

Goals for the partnership include:

- Preparing Hispanic engineering students for responsible positions in an engineering and science environment;
- Enlightening Hispanic engineering students about the Corps missions, unique capabilities and opportunities;
- Assisting colleges and universities in their efforts to provide science and engineering education to Hispanic students;
- Producing a world-class diverse pool of talent throughout the Army.

In 2002, 96 percent of Hispanic parents interviewed by the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute in Los Angeles expected their children to go to college. However, the institute's researchers found that 66 percent of parents they interviewed failed to answer four out of eight basic questions about what it takes to make college a reality for their family.

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics in 1999-2000 Hispanics earned more bachelor degree's in business, social sciences/history, psychology, and education. Academic courses like algebra and geometry in eighth prepare students for college prep courses and college admissions. Over 80 percent of Hispanic and other disadvantaged students are not introduced to these courses by the eighth grade.

The Viva Technology program is designed to be a blue-

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On the cover: *Curator Donna Crippen of the El Monte Historical Museum shows a 1940s headline, "Five Hundred Families To Lose Homes at Site of Whittier Narrows Dam." The museum is at 3150 N. Tyler Ave. and offers thousands of interesting exhibits and relics of a bygone era.*





Chief of Engineers LTG Robert B. Flowers meets with HENAAC chief and founder Ray Mellado before the partnership ceremony. At the right is George N. Steigel, general manager Dept. of Recreation and Parks, City of Los Angeles.

Watch out,
it's COMING!

Corps bridges missile base

Story by Airman 1st Class Juanika Glover,
Vandenberg AFB

VANDENBERG AFB - After months of critical repair work by Army Corps of Engineers contractors Rockwood and A.J. Diani, Vandenberg Air Force Base's 13th Street Bridge is once again operational, ensuring a faster and safer route to the base's southern installation. The Air Force Space Command base along California's Central Coast launches ballistic missiles and unmanned satellites.

The bridge originally contained support piles that were constantly being hit by running water, and the resulting erosion was causing instability to the bridge substructure, according to Jim Mills, Corps contract representative at Vandenberg. The solution was to drill through the surface of the bridge into the support structure and insert 50-foot micropiles. Holes had to be drilled into the bridge surface, and later filled in, to allow the 50-foot spans to be dropped into place. The result is a bridge with exceptional stability, he said.

Repair work finished one month ahead of schedule under a tight timeline due to environmental issues. "The bridge is above an active streambed with inhabitants that could not be disturbed during certain times of the year," Mills said. "To protect the habitat, biologists and ecologists were on hand making sure the area was undisturbed."

The seven-month project began in September 2003 and is considered only a temporary solution for crossing the Santa Ynez River. Construction on a new structure, located downstream from the current bridge, is planned to begin in fiscal year 2006, Mills said.

According to Mills, the 13th Street Bridge has been repaired in the past. The new renovations should ensure the bridge is operational until it's no longer needed.

"We recognized that the repair of this bridge was mission essential because it's a straight route to south base," said Mills. He said along with the environmental concerns they had to deal with, the contractors also wanted to make sure the job was done early and correctly. "They did a great job under very difficult circumstances," he added.

"The importance of this bridge is immeasurable, and I'm sure it's going to hold anything that comes across it," Mills said. Along with the current revision, Team Vandenberg plans to put a diversion upstream to retard debris flow. It will also channel river water to flow evenly under the bridge, causing less erosion on its support structure.

The 13th Street Bridge is expected to remain open until construction on the new

The 50-foot micropiles are ready to be capped off, reinforcing the bridge's existing support structure.



Corps contractors guide 50-foot micropiles

Missile Transport Bridge Opens

This bridge at El Rancho Road, Vandenberg AFB, opened to traffic last December. The Corps-constructed causeway-type bridge provides a flood-free crossing over the San Antonio Creek and links the northern and southern sections of the missile base.





From across Durfee Ave., the Baseyard still looks like a school

Corps History 101:

District stays after school for controversial dam project

Story and photos by Mike Tharp

Maybe it was when he saw the divots gouged in the concrete just past the three-tiered steps. It may well have been when he gazed up at the empty tower and wondered whether there ever had been a bell penduluming there. Or was it when he deciphered the scrimshaw-like graffiti carved in the ancient red brick wall?

Whenever and whatever it was, as he walked around the District's Baseyard at Whittier Narrows, Alex Martinez was hooked. History had latched onto him like a melody you can't get out of your mind. He wanted to know the origins, the backstory, of the Baseyard. He knew that all the buildings and land now used by the District for maintenance, surveying, communications, carpentry and storage had once been used for something else.

Martinez decided to go exploring—in time, not space.

By the time his research was finished, he knew those holes had once held bolts anchoring anteproscaenium seats in a small theater where students per-

formed plays and musicals. The tower indeed had housed a bell, which tolled for class periods and other important events. The graffiti had come later, in the 1940s after the original school had closed, during a decade whose students had felt compelled, then as now, to leave some record of their passage.

"I just kept thinking there was something behind it all," Martinez says. "I thought it was significant. I thought if more people knew about it, they'd come out and say, 'Hey, so this is what that was!'"

The Baseyard itself seems a pastoral throwback in a District thoroughly enmeshed in 21st century technology. Except for the 50 or so team members who work out of its acreage every day, few District employees ever make the 15-mile drive to S. El Monte, due east of downtown L.A.

But all the GPS devices, tele-engineering, CAD blueprints and Web-based commo would be only so many toys without the nuts-and-bolts support from the Baseyard operations. Its missions include maintenance, engineering, information management, radio, survey, soils, envi-

ronmental construction, water data control and a Los Angeles projects office.

All SoCal dam tenders are headquartered at the Baseyard, and all the region's heavy equipment is parked there. Terry Wotherspoon, a 31-year Corps veteran, has been chief of operations and maintenance at the Baseyard since 1996. "I love it," he says. "It's quiet, not as hustle-bustle as downtown."

Like Martinez, Wotherspoon began to notice he was a modern witness to history when several elderly residents asked if they could walk through what once had been their elementary school.

That school was Temple Grammar (or Elementary), and it was the oldest in southern California, founded in the early 1850s. It was "a simple one-room mud and willow-wattle structure located on the banks above the Rio Hondo and boasting an enrollment of 15 pupils during its first year of existence," according to an online history of El Monte by Jack Barton.

Just after the turn of the 20th century, the El Monte Union High School District was formed, according to Barton's history. It operated out of a single upstairs classroom in the old Lexington Ave. Grammar School, and the high school enrolled 12 to 15 students. Within a few years, the high school had its own campus and an enrollment of 65 students.

The Temple K-8 School, at the corner of Santa Anita and Durfee, was named after the Walter Temple family, some of the area's early settlers who started a big ranch on Potrero Grande Hill. Mike Shively, whose father was superintendent of the district for 30 years, was a student at Temple. He recalls that the school drew enrollment from a largely farming community and had 500 to 600 students at its peak. "There was a pretty nice auditorium," he remembers, "with padded seats and all kinds of functions were held there."

Oil was discovered in 1921 at the Temple Hills, according to a history of South El Monte. "With the help of taxes from the rich oil wells, the old school building was enlarged and a cafeteria and auditorium added. Tennis courts were built. The contract price of building was sixty-eight thousand dollars. More ground was secured and a teacher's cottage added to the north edge. The entire grounds were beautifully landscaped. Eastern educators were brought out to see the Model School of the Country." School officials agreed to name it after Mr. Temple after he donated a 100-foot-tall, \$600 flagpole brought in by rail from Chicago.

In 1941, Temple's 8th grade class posed for a photo, now displayed at La Historia Society in El Monte. Twenty-nine students and two teachers are shown. "The barrios of Las Flores, Canta Ranas and La Mision attended there," the museum caption declares. And 13 years before *Brown v. Board of Education*, one of the 8th-graders was black.

When Shively was in 4th or 5th grade, the school was forced to relocate—around 1949. And that's when the Corps of En-



inez at what was once the school's bell tower.

gineers moved in. “They claimed eminent domain,” says Ernie Gutierrez, El Monte’s mayor and a major supporter of the Hispanic museum.

Fred Love, who spent 20 years as head of maintenance and operations for the Rosemead High campus and 13 more as an El Monte city caretaker, was also an historian for the El Monte Historical Museum. He says that after World War II, the Los Angeles District bought the land on which the Temple school sat and the school moved to the corner of Tyler Ave. and Potrero. The immediate area “dates back to the building of the San Gabriel Mission in 1771 on the west side of the Rio Hondo River,” Love relates.

After World War II, the school became part of the backdrop for one of southern California’s most ferocious postwar political battles, pitting the Corps and its flood control efforts against many El Monte residents and a young congressman named Richard Nixon. The dispute raged for several years in the late ‘40s, as the Corps tried to implement the Whittier Narrows Dam project, which it deemed vital to protect the lives and property of those living in the rapidly expanding region.

Following deadly floods in the 1930s, the Corps had created an ambitious flood control plan for the Los Angeles County Drainage Area (the now-famous LACDA). Initially a single-purpose flood control project, LACDA was later expanded by the Los Angeles District to include multipurpose functions, including water conservation, irrigation, municipal and industrial water supplies, pollution abatement, hydroelectric power, navigation, fish and wildlife and recreation.

Despite the Corps’ best intentions, many people in the areas that would be affected by Whittier Narrows opposed the location, scale and overall impact of the dam on their livelihoods and neighborhoods. In 1947, for instance, an Anti-Whittier Narrows Dam Assn. of San Gabriel Valley claimed support from Garvey, Rosemead, San Gabriel, Bassett, Puente and El Monte. A year later, prominent produce grower Pearson Bros. Inc. wrote then Sen. William Knowland, “We as residents and taxpayers in this district strongly protest the building of a dam in this area.”

Shively, the onetime Temple student, remembers Nixon sitting in his family’s living room, discussing the Whittier Narrows issue. “My dad went back to Washington about it,” he says. “He was friends with Nixon.” Dean Shively, the superintendent of Temple School District, hosted a 1947 rally “concerning this menace that threatens your home.”

Harold Pearson, a leading El Monte farmer, wrote his family from Washington, D.C., about efforts to defeat the Corps’ original blueprint. “(Nixon) is working with us, and our case looks better all the time,” Pearson wrote. “He looked at our pictures, maps and briefs today, and says we’ve really done a swell job preparing our case.” (Pearson also wrote that he sneaked downstairs in their hotel for a dish of peaches and an orange juice,



but “don’t like the water here so don’t drink any more than I have to.”)

Headlines in San Gabriel Valley newspapers chronicled the conflict: “Senate Rejects Whittier Dam Plan”; “El Monte Wins Victory in Capital”; “El Monte Locks Horns with Army Engineer in His Claims on Whittier Narrows Plan.” Some folks got postcard solicitations reading, “I’m in the ‘Dam’ Fight.” (Curiously, a radio program hosted by Nixon and featuring sev-

Original blueprints from the '30s showed the school’s expansion, including an “Americanization” classroom for immigrant students which is now the motor pool.

eral visiting dam opponents, started off with an anti-communist rant by Whittier’s city attorney, Thomas Bewley, also Nixon’s law partner. Bewley referred to a U.S. Bureau of Standards official “as an unsafe security risk due to some of his associations, particularly with Communist foreign agents.”)

Finally, on March 18, 1948, a headline blared: “Reach Whittier Dam Compromise; Will be South of Original Location.” The Corps had agreed to move the proposed dam about 1.75 miles south of its original site. “End of 12-year Bitter Battle Hailed as Victory for El Monte,” declared a local newspaper.

The first construction bids were opened Feb. 28, 1950, by District Engineer COL W.D. Luplow from the District headquarters at 751 S. Figueroa, just around the corner from today’s HQ. Putting the best face on the years of controversy, District historian Anthony Turhollow had only this to say about Whittier Narrows, citing the first-ever use of a “slip-form paver” which operated on rails and “eliminated the need for headers and paved continuous strips up to 60 feet in width.”

At the Nov. 12, 1955, Whittier Narrows Dam dedication ceremony, Sens. Thomas Kuchel and William Knowland both spoke, as did the assistant secretary of the Army for public works, George H. Roderick. The event ended with a jet flyover. Nixon was vice president of the United States.

By then the Corps had been using the old Temple school acreage as its base of operations for the dam, and

later converted many of the buildings to the uses seen today.

The principal’s office is now used for storage; Tony Masoe has what was once a nurse’s station; a grassed-in area once held a kindergarten class; the cafeteria is now a book storage room and carpenter shop; original hardwood floors are covered with industrial carpet; a hallway drinking fountain still features the original orange and red tile behind it; a teacher’s workroom now holds the commo gear; and many team members’ offices contain the original blackboards from classrooms.

As Alex Martinez strolls around the grounds, he can almost smell the chalk dust. He can almost feel the corduroy grid of the erasers. He can almost hear the recess cries of “Tag! You’re it!” Says Martinez softly: “I wonder what that wall was for. What did this look like when there were kids walking down it? I got interested in everything about this place.”

As Fred Love, the 73-year-old historian recalls: “In 1851 this was what the pioneers were looking for—98 percent of them were farmers, and after crossing the Cucamonga Desert, a tremendous distance with nothing but heartache, they were looking for the oasis at the end of the rainbow.”



Joe Bautista, sergeant-at-arms of La Historia Society Museum in El Monte, holds a photo of Temple School in 1923. The museum is at 3240 Tyler Ave., not far from the Baseyard.

AROUND THE L.A. DISTRICT

Black history month



Gregory McClinton was the guest speaker at the opening for Black History Month here in the District in February. McClinton is a trial lawyer with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission.

Women's history month celebrated

By Heather Self – Federal Women's Program Manager

In 1978 the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women initiated a "Women's History Week" celebration to address this lack of public consciousness. By the end of 1980, then-Representative Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) had co-sponsored the first Joint Congressional Resolution that declared the week of March 8, 1981, as National Women's History Week.

In 1987, at the request of women's organizations, museums, libraries, youth leaders and educators throughout the country, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the national celebrations to the entire month of March. Since 1992, a Presidential Proclamation has carried the directive for what is now a major national and international celebration.

This year's theme is "Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility," celebrating the hope and sense of possibility that come to our lives from the inspirational work of women.

In addition to these educational and inspiring bulletin board displays, a variety of events will be taking place throughout the month to celebrate women and to demonstrate ways in which women can continue to inspire hope and possibility within the Corps. A complete listing of events will be available in the Daily Bulletin, on the District's EEO Intranet web site, and on each of the hallway bulletin boards starting March 1.



I want to share with you a copy of a letter I sent to the Editor of the [Orange County Register](#).



Dear Editor:

I want to publically thank the U. S. Corp of Engineers and Orange County for the wonderful upgrading of the Santa Ana River Trail. For the past few months my wife and I have watched as workers have done a re-make of the landscaping along the bike/walking trail from about MacArthur Boulevard northward into Santa Ana. It obviously has made a tremendous difference in the pleasure experienced by walkers, hikers, and those on bicycles. My guess is that these agencies hear an "ear full" of complaints; I wanted to let them know how work their work and efforts are appreciated by probably the vast majority of those using the Trail. Thank you.

Ray and Ruby White
Santa Ana

In Sympathy

Sylvana V. DaCigaran passed away in August after a brief illness. She retired from the L.A. District in 1977 after 32 years with the Corps. In 1994 her name and picture were added to the District Gallery of Honor for her years of outstanding service and many accomplishments. Sylvana had three daughters.

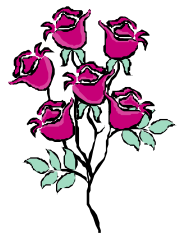


Photo correction

The photo in the story about Dennis Eich in the October issue of the Newcastle was not Dennis, it was his protégé, Artie. Dennis is pictured to the right. Our apologies for any confusion this may have caused.



...AND A LITTLE MORE FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT



The District presented awards and said good-bye to Gail Thearle in February.

District Engineer COL Richard G. Thompson presented an Achievement medal for Civilian Service to Jeffrey C. Cole (second from left). Irma Nevarez, Gustavo Ruiz and Thomas Luzano each received a certificate of appreciation, along with Cole.



Gail Thearle prepares to cut her going-away cake.



Fred T. Davis received the Department of the Army's Meritorious Civilian Service Award.



Dan White, David Lukesh, Lloyd Godard, Debra Flores and Hector Angeles all received SPK Commander's coins.



Priscilla Perry received a photograph of the former Cornfield Railyard and a letter of appreciation from the Trust of Public Land, Western Region.



Phylliss Trabold received a letter and certificate of appreciation for Natural Resources Management Gateway Development and Implementation.



Arthur Jung received the SPD ISO9001:2000 Study Team certificate of appreciation.



MAJ Dave Hurley presented Ed Andrews with the Commander's Award for Civilian Service and a certificate of appreciation.

What's the big deal about the L. A. District Intranet?

By Pam Wills

Double-click on the blue e on your desktop and up comes the Los Angeles District homepage. How many of us use this page and never think about it? The homepage is the front door to the Internet and the world, but it is also the first screen you see of the District's intranet.

How is an intranet different than the Internet? An intranet is a private network set up by a group such as a government agency, company, school or business to be used by only those who are authorized, usually internal team members who login with a password to the network that gives them access to the intranet.

Glenn Emigh, Information Management office, is the web master for the District intranet. "Our intranet provides a place for District organizations. We turn over space to them to manage for themselves. However, some organizations do not have resources or expertise and IMO helps them with it." Some of the sections that are helped are EEO, Toastmasters and the GIS Center. He uses Microsoft FrontPage for working on the site itself and Jasc PaintShop Pro for graphics. The menu code was purchased from Likno Software.

Parts of the homepage include the district scroller, an announcement box for news and upcoming events. "The

website is designed so that the intranet is the individual's home page. They will see District announcements as soon as they open Internet Explorer." If someone wants to get something up on the district scroller, they should contact Patsy Delgado or MAJ David Hurley.

Below the district scroller is the IMO scroller that is for announcements from IMO. The daily quotes featured on the intranet homepage come from the Internet and are generated automatically. The Los Angeles District divisions and support offices are accessed through the USACE tab, with links to USACE headquarters, other divisions and EngLink.

The District Intranet has many useful links to other sites. Under Hot Buttons, there are links to CEFMS and the Daily Bulletin. Search engines such as Google and Yahoo are also accessed here. Under the Reference tab are the GIS Center, Mapquest, and the District Phone Book. Toastmasters, VA and Army Benefits Center are listed under Employee Services.



Construction on Yuma Proving Ground test facility begins

Story, photo by Yolie Canales, YPG Public Affairs

Groundbreaking for the Dynamometer Complex Support Building at the Yuma Proving Ground took place Feb. 19th.

The Corps will begin construction of a state-of-the-art testing facility, a 3,000-square-foot building along the west side of YPG's Dynamometer Course. The facility will provide a central location for instrumentation and field personnel who conduct strenuous endurance and performance tests of tracked and wheeled vehicles.

The building, complete with electricity, phone lines and networking capabilities, replaces a van currently used to store testing equipment. "The facility will provide some relief from what have been primitive conditions for test folks working in the extreme heat of summer and cold winter winds," said Wayne Dailey, mechanical engineer for the Combat and Automotive Systems Division.

According to Dailey, the Army Corps of Engineers and YPG's Public Works Division worked long and hard on getting the necessary funding and paperwork in order to get started on the complex. It has been in the planning stages since the 1990s. "There was some compromising, some give-and-take," Dailey said, "but what we envisioned is pretty much what we're getting..." The facility should be completed by January 2005.



Left to Right: Raymond Salas, Corps of Engineers, Yuma Project Office; Jim Burns, Rafael Construction; COL Stephen Kreider, YPG Commander; Carol Coleman, YPG Garrison Director; LTC Shane Dietrich, Yuma Test Center Commander.

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