Pacific Currents

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The National Archives is turning 75! Come help us celebrate!

Founded in 1934 during the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the National Archives marks its 75th anniversary this year. To observe this milestone, we are holding an Open House in San Bruno on Friday, June 19th, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. **RSVP** to sanbruno.archives@nara.gov

Going to Washington, DC?

NARA is also mounting a major exhibit entitled *"BIG!"* at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC. It includes "big" documents, like the 13-foot original Articles of Confederation and a huge map of the Gettysburg battlefield. The exhibit runs through January 3, 2010.

## The Grapes of Wrath was written using Federal records

The Great Depression of the 1930s witnessed the displacement of tens of thousands of farm families from drought-stricken regions of Oklahoma, Texas, and neighboring states. Many of these Dust Bowl refugees, having lost their farms to foreclosure, traveled to California to work as migratory farm laborers.

Their plight was portrayed in the photographs of Dorothea Lange and in John Steinbeck's novels, *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Of Mice and Men*. Steinbeck later cited as one of his main information sources the official reports of Federal migrant housing camp administrator Thomas E. Collins.

Today, most of Collins' reports are preserved and available for research in the NARA archives branch in San Bruno. Prominent Steinbeck and Dust Bowl scholars have consulted these reports and other records of the Farm Security Administration (FSA), a New Deal agency established to aid the migrants.

These records and their influence on *The Grapes of Wrath* are discussed in an article by regional archives director Daniel Nealand in the Winter 2008 edition of *Prologue*, the National Archives' magazine. (The relationship between Steinbeck's writings and Collins' reports was first uncovered by Jackson J. Benson in the 1970s.)

In 1935, Collins and the FSA began a chain of Federal camps in California's agricultural valleys. At their peak just before World War II, 18 camps, from
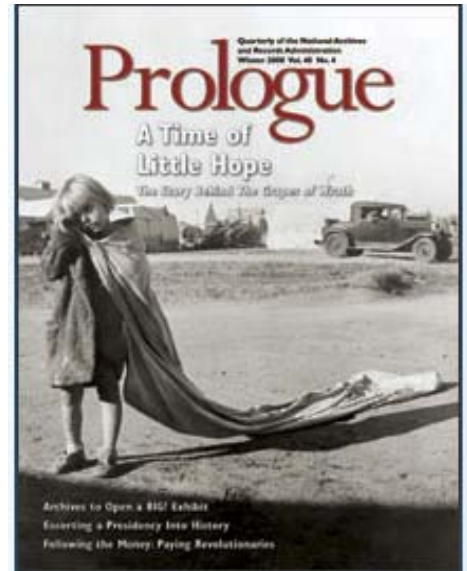
Brawley in the south to Yuba City in the north, provided basic shelter for migrant families, often numbering 500 or more people per camp.

In 1936, when he met Steinbeck, Tom Collins managed the FSA Arvin-Weedpatch camp in the southern San Joaquin Valley. The camp housed

A young FSA camp resident. Dorothea Lange photo, *FDR Library*

Grapes of Wrath

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thousands of newly arrived Dust Bowl refugees, mostly from Oklahoma, southwestern Missouri, central Texas, and western Arkansas. Stereotyped by locals as "Okies" or "Arkies," the newcomers harvested crops for poverty wages.

Collins hosted several Steinbeck visits to the Arvin-Weedpatch camp beginning in the summer of 1936, when the author journeyed from his San Francisco Bay Area home to do field work for a seven-part *San Francisco News* series. Publicity relating to the migrants' plight, including Lange's shocking photos, spread to the nation's front pages. This helps to account for the explosive sales of *The Grapes of Wrath* upon its publication in 1939 and for the popularity of the John Ford movie version in 1940.

Read Dan Nealand's excellent Prologue article (Winter 2008, Vol. 40, No. 4) at http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2008/winter/grapes.html

Thomas E. Collins, Farm Security Admin. Labor camp administrator. Dorothea Lange photo, Library of Congress

NARA's E-records Toolkit – a Resource for Federal Agencies

Electronic records present many challenges to archives and records management. Their exponential growth in volume, the creation of records at every workstation, and the constant evolution of technology places records (and corporate memory) at risk.

Yet Federal agencies are legally obligated to manage, make accessible, and preserve electronic records just as they are with paper records.

How can agencies and their employees meet these daunting challenges? The NARA National Records Management Program's *"Toolkit for Managing Electronic Records"* provides an ever-growing suite of carefully selected and vetted products to assist Federal records management and information technology staffs to meet the demands of the electronic records world.

The *"Toolkit"* is a web portal that provides links to resources - how-to guides, checklists, research reports, best practices, lessons learned, etc. The tools address a range of records management activities and specific technologies, such as e-mail, blogging, cryptography, geospatial information systems, web content, and others.

The intended audience includes a cross-section of records-related occupations - chief information officers, general counsel staff, system administrators, web managers, agency historians, records managers and other employees.

The tools are not limited to guidance developed by NARA, but include items developed by numerous organizations - governments at various levels, professional organizations, businesses and universities, both domestic and foreign. Some of the tools are toolkits in themselves.

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Electronic Records Scheduling Deadline Looms!

NARA Bulletin 2006-02, issued on December 15, 2005, reminded Federal agencies that all electronic records are subject to the same legal requirements as paper. The bulletin also established timelines by which Federal agencies and NARA must take action regarding records management of both temporary and permanent electronic records.

The bulletin specified that, by September 30, 2009, agencies must have NARA approved records schedules for all records in existing electronic information systems. The requirement includes any system containing electronic information that meets the definition of a Federal record (see 36 CFR §1222.12 for detailed definitions). The Federal Records Council, an interagency group that advises NARA, suggested that NARA compile and issue recommendations to assist agencies with meeting this deadline. NARA anticipated the following questions to help agencies meet their scheduling deadline:

Q: How are existing electronic information systems determined?

A: Systems that are in steady state operation or mixed lifecycle stage as of December 17, 2005, and electronic records in legacy systems that were not scheduled before decommissioning of the system are subject to the scheduling deadline as records in "existing electronic information systems."

Q: What scheduling approaches should be considered?

A: 36 CFR part 1228 allows agencies to apply a previously approved schedule to electronic versions of the records when specific conditions are met. Agencies may continue to submit schedules covering series of electronic records, or may continue to submit schedules covering specific systems. Guidance for flexible schedules may be found at

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Eight Steps to Scheduling E-Records:

1. Read the NARA Bulletin.

2. Work with your Records Officer and CIO to determine if there are existing e-records located in your field office that need to be scheduled.

3. Review your agency's retention schedule for previously scheduled e-records and identify possible existing disposition authorities.

4. Inventory any unscheduled e-records in your office.

5. Have IT staff complete a NARA system appraisal questionnaire for each system.

6. Refer to General Records Schedules 20 and 24 for scheduling certain e-records components such as non-unique inputs, outputs, backups, and documentation, and IT operational records.

7. Consider multiple scheduling approaches.

8. Contact NARA for assistance, see www.archives.gov/recordsmgmt

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www.archives.gov on the web page for Records Managers.

Q: Is there a NARA contact for assistance and advice?

A: Yes. The Pacific Region Records Management Program staff is available to answer questions and provide assistance. NARA analysts can provide the agency records officer with a questionnaire that both the records officer and the agency IT department may use in creating new system schedules. For more information, contact us at (650) 238-3461 or richard.boyden@nara.gov

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Electronic Records Management Toolkit

A brief description and a weblink are provided for each tool. The descriptions are intended to provide a quick overview of each tool. The toolkit is searchable by topic (what the tool is about), occupation (suggested audience), creating organization, or by keyword within the descriptive text. Alternatively, one can browse an alphabetical list of tools.

Examples of tools include a decision chart for determining whether e-mail is an official record. Entitled "Is it a Record?" this one page guide was produced by Sandia National Laboratory. Other tools include an excellent 2007 NARA study of records management applications, and a checklist for embedding records management in the systems development lifecycle.

To use the Toolkit, browse to http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/policy/guidance-regulations.html, and click on the link "Toolkit for Managing Electronic Records." NARA's Toolkit Project is ongoing. NARA staff are actively searching the web for prospective tools. Also, users can themselves bring tools to NARA's attention by clicking on the "Suggest a Tool" link.

Check Out Our Website!

archives.gov/pacific/

Send comments to:

Laguna.workshops@nara.gov

Records Management Training, April-September, 2009

To register go to archives.gov/records-mgmt/training/
or email our training registrar at laguna.workshops@nara.gov

Creating and Maintaining Agency Business Information
Knowledge Area 2

May 12-13, Reno, NV
July 28-29, San Diego, CA

This course covers Federal records management requirements and polices and procedures.

Records Scheduling
Knowledge Area 3
July 30-13, San Diego, CA

Scheduling records determines the basis for meeting your agency's operating, fiscal, and legal needs.

Records Schedule Implementation
Knowledge Area 4
July 15-16, San Francisco, CA
August 24-25, San Diego

This course teaches how to apply NARA-approved records schedules to Federal records. program.

Asset and Risk Management
Knowledge Area 5
August 4-6, San Francisco
August 26-27, San Diego

This course covers the fundamentals of risk management and cost-benefit analysis and how they relate to maintaining a viable records management program.

Records Management Program Development
Knowledge Area 6
August 6, San Francisco, CA
August 28, San Diego, CA
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This course covers the concepts and practices involved in developing a successful records management program.

Basic Records Operations
April 21, Yuma, AZ
May 14, Carson City, NV
June 9, Perris, CA
June 16, Arcata, CA

This course describes what to file, how to file it, and how to remove files no longer needed for current business.

Emergency Planning and Response for Vital Records and Essential Information
April 9-10, Sacramento
June 10-11, Perris, CA

This course teaches how to identify, protect, and access vital records in the event of a disaster.

Electronic Records Management
April 22-23, Yuma, AZ
May 7-8, San Diego, CA
The course teaches the skills and knowledge needed to manage electronic records through their lifecycle.

Advanced Electronic Records Management
June 2-3, Sacramento, CA

Designed for individuals with prior background in electronic recordkeeping, the course expands on the basic electronic records management knowledge in other NARA courses.

RECORDS TRANSFER and REFERENCE WORKSHOPS

These *FREE* half-day and full-day Federal Records Center Program workshops teach you:

- ▶ How to transfer non-current records to your Federal Records Center
- ▶ How to make a request for reference services
- ▶ About other services available from your Federal Records Center

RECORDS TRANSFER and REFERENCE WORKSHOPS
In Northern California (classes held 8:30 am until Noon):

When	Where	Information and Registration
July 16, 2009	San Bruno, CA	Ken Thomas (650) 238-3474 kenneth.thomas@nara.gov
Sept. 8, 2009	San Bruno, CA	

RECORDS TRANSFER, REFERENCE, and DIGITAL CAPTURE SERVICES
(Includes an overview of ARCIS, the new Federal Records Center portal)

In Arizona, Southern California, and Las Vegas, Nevada (classes held 9:00 am - 4:00 pm):

When	Where	When	Where	Information and Registration
April 21, 2009	Las Vegas, NV	July 14, 2009	Perris, CA	Diane Jones (951) 956-2064
May 12, 2009	Perris, CA	Aug. 11, 2009	San Diego, CA	diane.jones@nara.gov
June 23, 2009	Perris, CA	Sept. 8, 2009	Perris, CA	