

Engineers do a clean job even on WWII frontlines



Lack of facilities in the German forest couldn't keep these two Army engineers from making sure they were up to snuff back in 1944. SGT Jose Bombach (left) and his friend Stewart (his rank and first name are unknown) took advantage of a pause in the war to clean up a little.

District team member Maria Montes found this photo while putting together a family album. The translation of the writing on the back reads: "To my dear cousin Saturnino Montes with all my affection. Sgt Jose Bombach." Saturino was Maria's father.

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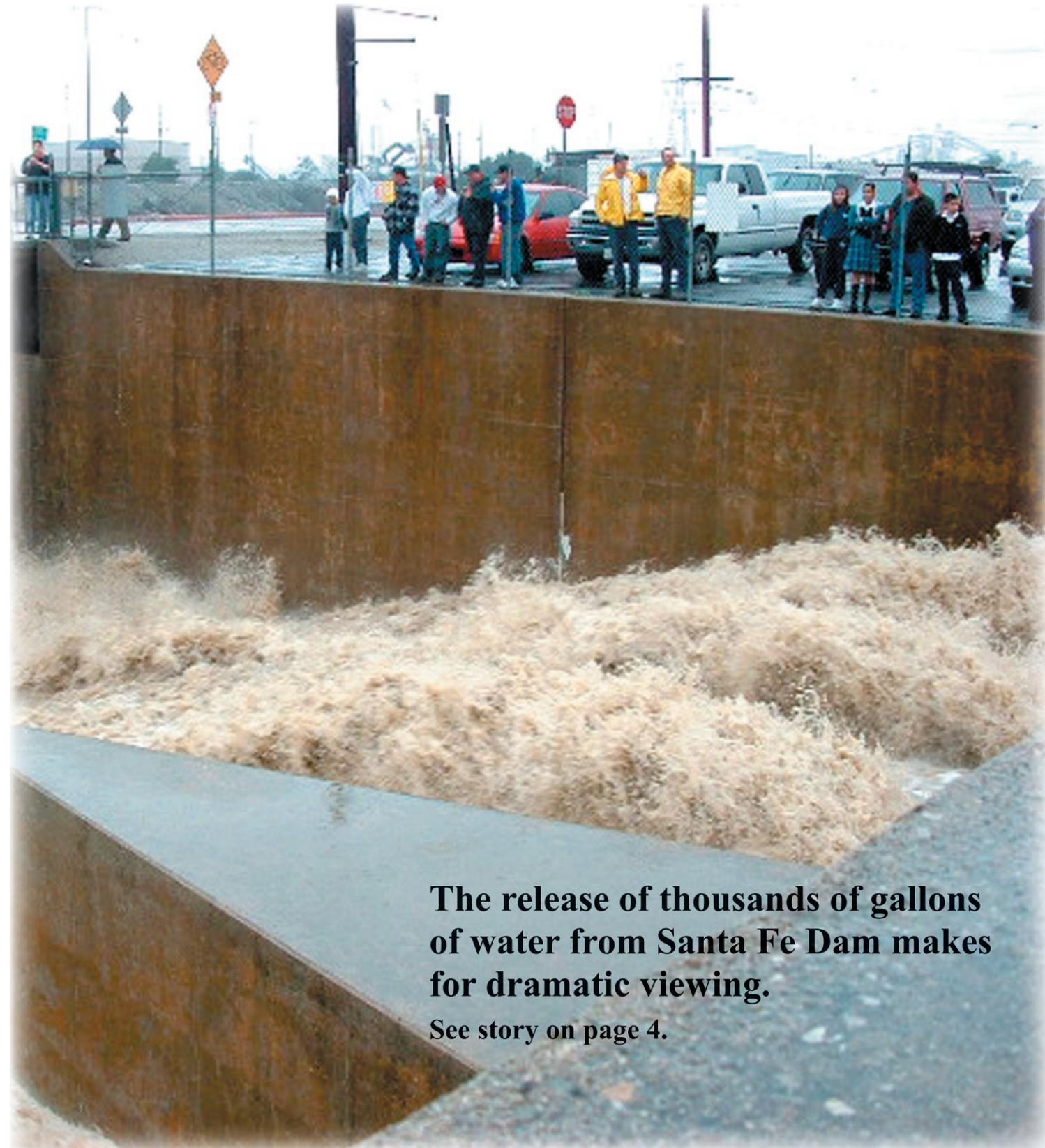
The Newscastle

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U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Los Angeles District



**The release of thousands of gallons
of water from Santa Fe Dam makes
for dramatic viewing.**

See story on page 4.

The Newscastle can be accessed online at <http://www.spl.usace.army.mil/>

Corps of Engineers wins two prestigious value engineering awards in both District, Division

By Mike Tharp

LOS ANGELES—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District and the San Francisco-based South Pacific Division have won two prestigious engineering awards presented each year for achievements in saving taxpayers' money and time.

The District won the J. Dell'Isola Award for "outstanding accomplishment in construction" related to the mammoth \$216 million Los Angeles County Drainage Area (LAC-DA) flood control project in southern California.

The Division won the Gordon Frank Award for its "re-energization of the regional Value Engineering Program" throughout its three districts in five states,

SAVE International, a Dayton, Ohio-based global professional organization dedicated to the advancement of Value Engineering and related project management disciplines and techniques, administered the awards. They are scheduled to be presented June 27 at the group's annual conference in San Diego.

Value Engineering is used to identify improvements in defense systems that can reduce costs and increase performance. The Corps' own VE awards recognize "substantial and innovative value engineering contributions," according to the Under Secretary of Defense's office.

Bill Zeigler, the Los Angeles District's VE officer (who himself won the 2002 Value Engineering Award

presented by the Pentagon), said the VE study on LAC-DA was held in 1993. He estimated that a total of about \$61 million—a 13% cost reduction--was saved on the project; \$10.5 million from ideas related to the parapet walls of the L.A. River and another \$50.5 million on other modeling of the river. The VE study cost \$770,000. Zeigler calculated the cost/savings ratio for LACDA at \$79.22 to \$1.00.

LACDA was completed five years ahead of schedule and \$150 million under budget.

In the nomination for the Gordon Frank "Outstanding Achievement in Government" Award, South Pacific Division said that in the three fiscal years after 2001, the Division rose to first among its peers in Value Engineering performance. In Fiscal Year 2004, the Division accounted for one-fourth of total Corps monetary savings and undertook one-third of overall Corps VE studies. That same year, savings credited to VE more than doubled to \$22 million and scheduled VE studies nearly tripled.

The Division has 2,200 federal employees spread throughout the region and annual spending of just over \$1 billion. At any one time, it has more than 100 projects under construction and many more under design.

Tom Chambermand, Division VE officer, nominated the LACDA project for the SAVE award. Said Alan K. Adलगren, director of honors and awards for SAVE: "Congratulations to all USACE South Pacific team members who contributed to these achievements."

Commander COL Alex C. Dornstauder
PAO/Editor Dr. Fred-Otto Egeler
Asst. Editor Kim Matthews
Chief Writer Mike Tharp

Staff Jennie A. Salas, Greg Fuderer,
Jay Field, Beverly Patterson,
Richard Jung

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On the cover:

A water release at Santa Fe Dam drew crowds. The full story is on page 13.



problems and opportunities associated with flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration in the Tillamook Bay watershed." A 1996 flood inflicted \$53 million in damages on the area.)

McCormick & Schmick's 51 Seafood Restaurants are located in 23 states. The company posted 2004 revenues of \$239 million.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, without further ado, Cheryl Hart's award-winning recipe for Mac 'n' Cheese:

The Ultimate Comfort Food: Macaroni & Cheese

Prep time is about 45 minutes

- 12 tablespoons (1 ½ stick) unsalted Tillamook butter (room temperature)
- 3 cups (about ½ loaf) good white crusty bread, cut into ¼ - to ½ inch pieces
- 4 cups (1 quart) half & half (room temperature)
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons salt or to taste
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper or to taste
- ½ teaspoon ground or whole red pepper flakes or to taste
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg or ½ teaspoon dried
- 2 cups grated vintage white extra sharp Tillamook cheese
- 2 cups grated sharp yellow Tillamook cheddar cheese
- 2 cups grated Tillamook Swiss cheese
- 1 ¼ cups grated Pecorino romano cheese
- 1 pound large macaroni with grooves

Directions:

Heat the oven to 325°. Butter and set aside a 9 x 13 casserole dish, pull out half & half and butter (both should be about room temperature). Place bread in a medium bowl.

Cheryl gets ready to cook with some of her competition at the Mac 'n' Cheese cook-off.

In the microwave, melt 4 tablespoons butter and ½ teaspoon garlic powder. Pour butter into the bowl with bread, and toss. Set bread crumbs aside.

Melt 6 tablespoons butter in a large sauce pan (enough to hold 10 cups) over medium heat. When butter melts, add flour. Cook, whisking, one minute.

While whisking, slowly pour in milk and add 1 ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon pepper, ½ teaspoon red pepper, ½ teaspoon garlic powder and nutmeg. Continue cooking, whisking constantly, until the mixture bubbles and becomes thick.

Remove pan from heat. Stir in 2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, 1 cup white extra sharp cheese, 1 cup Swiss and 1 cup Pecorino romano; set cheese sauce aside. Blend the remaining cheese together.

Fill a large saucepan with water; bring to a boil. Add macaroni; cook 2 to 3 minutes less than manufacturer's directions, until the outside of pasta is cooked and the inside is underdone. Transfer macaroni to a colander, rinse under cold running water, and drain well.

Add salt, pepper to taste add 2 tablespoons butter. Stir the cheese sauce into macaroni.

Pour mixture into 9 x 13 dish. Sprinkle remaining 1 cups white cheddar cheese, 1/2 cup Swiss and 1/4 cup Pecorino romano, add bread crumbs over top. Bake until browned on top, about 30 minutes. Transfer dish to a wire rack to cool 5 minutes. Enjoy!

Cheryl and her recipe are featured at www.tillamookcontest.com/winners.html.



Photos courtesy Cheryl Hart

Cheryl Hart went to town—and that’s no baloney—blended cheese and won a prize with her macaroni

By Mike Tharp

You’ve got two stove burners, two other contestant-cooks, five judges, 15 secret ingredients and 45 minutes to whip up your “fairly new family recipe” for Mac ‘n’ Cheese at the upscale McCormick & Schmick’s Seafood Restaurant in Phoenix.

That’s what Arizona/Nevada Office Procurement Technician Cheryl Hart faced in June when she competed in a national contest sponsored by Oregon’s Tillamook Cheese and the 51-restaurant chain.

And she won.

The three-year Corps veteran was awarded \$1,000, 25 pounds of Tillamook cheese and the chance that her recipe will appear on retail packages and in a recipe book. “Cheryl’s was the ultimate comfort food,” says Tillamook representative Erika Simms. “It was real cheesy and had a little pep to it. It sounds as if she won by a landslide. She’s a great finalist to have.”

Adds SGM Jeff Koontz, one of the 25 or so family and friends who gathered at McCormick & Schmick’s for the contest and who tasted the winning dish: “Oooooo!”

Cheryl and her late mother Kathryn concocted the recipe a few years back and began serving their original macaroni

and cheese on holidays in their Olympia, Wash., home. When Cheryl heard about the contest on a Phoenix radio station, she submitted her entry online and was then asked to join two other chefs in a cook-off. They prepared their fixin’s in advance before the checkered tablecloth was waved to start their saucepans. “It was very fun,” Hart recalls. “Of course, you’re nervous prior to getting there, but once you settle in, you just cook. I know how to cook under pressure.”

SGM Koontz downed two or three samples during the event. “It was good,” he says. “I think it’s probably the combination of all the cheeses—extremely tasty but the cheese wasn’t overwhelming. The combination made it a real smooth cheese blend. Delicious.”

Hart, who’s in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, notes that “several people at the office enjoy my food. They say, ‘Cook for me.’”

Judges—a panel of local culinary experts and celebrities—based their decisions on creativity, use of ingredients, taste, consistency, texture and quality of the cheese flavor. All the recipes had to serve at least four people, include noodles and feature at least one type of Tillamook cheese. (Cheryl used three.) Earlier winners had been announced in Denver, Dallas and the Bay Area.

The Tillamook County Creamery Assn. was founded in 1909 in the scenic Oregon county which borders the rugged Pacific Ocean west of Portland. Currently, it has 150 owners and operators, and its cheeses are sold and distributed nationwide. “We had a bunch of focus groups and heard from consumers that macaroni and cheese is the ultimate comfort food for them,” explains Tillamook’s Simms. “We decided to invite people from across the country to enter their recipe.”

(The Corps has another Tillamook connection: Portland District is now preparing a feasibility study “to identify and evaluate the

Chef Shawn Bell gives Cheryl moral support at the contest.



Corps Takes On Hispanic Engineer Conference

Story and photos by Jay Field

Dozens of Corps employees participated in the 17th Annual Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation (HENAAC) Conference in Anaheim Oct. 5-8. The conference promoted careers in engineering, science and technology and honored Hispanic achievement in engineering.

The Corps kicked off the conference with a “Building on Your Strengths” workshop, during which district commander COL Alex Dornstauder shared a presentation on HENAAC’s Viva Technology program for high school students.

In another event, Los Angeles District civil engineer Javier Gonzalez co-coached the Corps’ College Bowl team through a series of competitive challenges that allowed the students to interact with their peers and with engineering professionals.

Several representatives from HQ and several district offices wrapped up the conference by manning the USACE booth at the HENAAC Career Fair where they met with promising students interested in opportunities with the Corps.



College students Daliana Rodriguez and Sharlyn Garcia, both from the University of Puerto Rico, prepare a prop for an skit on engineering careers during the HENAAC College Bowl competition.



Chief of Engineers LTG Carl Strock shares a laugh with Seamoor, the Water Safety Sea Serpent, at the HENAAC Career Fair. Seamoor, an interactive teaching aid from the Portland District, rides a mini-jet ski to teach children about water safety. The remote-controlled serpent helped attract college students to the Corps’ recruiting booth.



LTG Carl Strock presents a Chief’s coin to Corps park ranger Kelly Thomas of the Portland District. Thomas helped operate (by remote control) Seamoor at the HENAAC Career Fair, which attracted lots of interest in the Corps’ recruiting booth.

District emergency team helps two drenched California counties cope with record rainfall

By Mike Tharp

In what has become almost an annual rescue ritual, District emergency team members rapidly responded when two southern California counties sought help after January's Noah-esque rains.

As it did in late 2003 for San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, the District pitched in this year to clear flood-control debris basins in Santa Barbara County and help stop a possible breach of a levee in Orange County's San Juan Creek Channel.

"Everything went very smoothly," said Emergency Operations chief Ed Andrews, who only a month before had returned from his second long tour in Iraq. "We had all the same players from the District and Division headquarters as last year. People knew what to do and got all the professionals leaning in the same direction. It all happened very quickly and very successfully."

What has been described as "the 15 wettest days on record in Los Angeles" also posed threats north and south of the county. In Santa Barbara, whose average annual rainfall the past decade was 5.85 inches, the Los Prietos area reported 15.55 inches and the Maria Ygnacio Ridge 12.78 inches in the Dec. 27, 2004-Jan. 10, 2005 period.



"Extreme rainfall...provided southwestern California with precipitation tallies more associated with snowfall from blizzards in New England," the National Weather Service later reported. "CALTRANS estimates the cost of road repairs to be in excess of \$30 million. There were 22 deaths directly and indirectly related to the storm, according to county emergency management."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration blamed the storms on "undercutting disturbances."

Whatever the cause, the deluge spelled trouble for Santa Barbara County's 17 debris-collecting basins that catch runoff from higher ground and prevent downstream flooding. They had to be cleared, but the state of California said it couldn't help. So, as they had done in 1995 and 1998, county officials turned to the Corps to bolster their own cleanup efforts.

Santa Barbara could handle 11 debris basins but needed help on the other six. Southern Pacific Division and USACE headquarters immediately set aside \$3 million in emergency funds for the project, "based on SWAG (Scientific Wild-A--Guess)," recalled Andrews. That amount was soon bumped up to \$6 million after negotiations with contractors.

"The Crisis Management Team was activated," Andrews said. "We pushed through the contracting; we pushed through the environmental assessment. We got Contracting on board; we got Construction Management on board. And the sponsor did its part in identifying the (debris) disposal areas."

While this disciplined drill was unfolding, Orange County also fired off an SOS. If anything, its request was even more urgent: officials feared raging waters might cause a breach in an 800-foot-long section of a concrete levee in the San Juan Creek Flood Control Channel.

Flood waters being released at Santa Fe Dam.

"I found it highly valuable," said McCabe of Distributed Generations Systems Inc., Lakewood, Colo. "A liaison is a person highly in demand. To share our experiences and provide communication between industry and tribes, between federal agencies and tribes or even between tribe and tribe allowed us to communicate business opportunities for tribal economic development—which is the cornerstone of tribal self-determination."

The Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs' Jackson, a former U.S. congressman, observed that it was his first such meeting. He provided an update to participants on the commission's statewide activities, including tribal outreach, government offices, the main tribes and the Arizona legislature. "Throughout the day, business cards were exchanged" he added, "and ideas were shared about economic

development, banking and the environment on Indian land. I found it very useful to make those connections."

Northern Arizona University's Gishey called the meeting "helpful in a lot of ways." He described liaison people as "diplomats or ambassadors who can connect two organizations together so that whatever jobs need to be done can get done." He added: "You have to be familiar with your organization's missions and goals and can articulate those when you meet the public. You have to make the link to what the tribal needs are to where the resources are—what are your limits, what are your resources. It's not all black and white—you have to be very imaginative."

Sounds a lot like Glynn Alsup.

We get letters...



Dear Mike,

Thank you so much for the two Newcastle magazines with the articles about Dennis. My 24-year-old son, Jason Dennis Tamblin, read it and wants to meet Tim Barden or write him. I hope I still have his e-mail address. Your articles are fabulous, and we so appreciate you taking the time to write them. You would have liked Dennis, as he was a friend to all. Thank you.

Claudia Tamblin

[Editor's note: The letter refers to the March 2005 Newcastle with two articles in it about a memorial behind Prado Dam to the late Lt. Dennis Cook. Ms. Tamblin is Dennis's sister; Tim Barden is a distance runner who began taking care of the memorial during his runs and who contacted the District about its upkeep.]

Thank you so much for your contributions making the Retirees Luncheon a success. It was the very best I have attended. It just gets better and better.

Thanks and God Bless.

Love,
Valaria Lincoln



District's Indian liaison jump-starts Phoenix meeting as part of wide-ranging aid to Southwestern tribes

By Mike Tharp

Southwestern Indian tribes have plenty to talk about—economic development, gaming, health care, housing, the environment, sovereignty and tribal trusts, among other issues—and the District's point man with them recently stimulated that conversation.

Glynn Alsup, whose formal title is Tribal Liaison, Native American Special Emphasis Program Manager, helped jump-start a February meeting in Phoenix. Called the American Indian Liaison Meeting, it offered participants a forum to coordinate tribal working strategies for businesses, tribes and state and federal agencies. They also discussed best business practices.

More than 50 people were invited, and two members of Gov. Janet Napolitano's staff attended.

Alsup had been asked by Steve Grey, the Dept. of Energy's headquarters tribal representative, and Derrick Watchman of JP Morgan Chase in Arizona to assist in organizing the event. They also asked him to be the guest speaker representing federal agency liaisons.

No surprise at either request: For a decade, Alsup has been helping tribes within the District deal with a diverse range of problems. Most prominent have been his long years of work investigating the environmental impact of played-out uranium mines dug long ago on Indian land. His and other team members' research caught the attention of tribal leaders in determining any health hazards from the mines, and District folks also suggested ways to purify water in radiation areas.

His thousands of hours and miles devoted to these tasks have made him almost an honorary tribal member, so it was logical for his guidance to be sought in February. "We have to worry about budgets and allocations," Alsup said after the conference, "but we're still dealing with real people with real problems."

Some 170 tribes live in the South Pacific Division, 59 of them within the District's boundaries. Corps tribal projects include building and remodeling schools for the Bureau of Indian Affairs; promoting the American Indian Society of Engineers and Scientists; providing excess computers to Indian schools; staffing a federal agency water task force; and studying abandoned mine lands with the Environmental Protection Agency.

The liaison meeting at the Bank One Building was hosted by Bank One, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, JP Morgan Chase and Arizona Public Service/Pinnacle West.

Kathy Anderson, a District environmental project manager, also attended; she's being groomed to replace Alsup when he retires.

Speakers included Alsup, Watchman and Grey; Ben Campbell, president of JP Morgan Chase/Arizona; Laurence Gishey of Northern Arizona University; Brian Gilbert of Cellular One's tribal relations office; Jack Jackson Jr., executive director of the Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs; and Peterson Zah, a former president of the Navajo Nation now at Arizona State.

Other key guests: Nick Melcher, director of the U.S. Geological Survey's Arizona Water Science Center; Dr. Elvira Bitsoi Largie, executive director of the Navajo Education Technology Consortium; William McCabe, director of Native American and Resource Programs for a Colorado-based renewable energy developer; Harold Skow, director of information technology for the Navajo Nation; Preston Thomas of the General Service Administration's Federal Technology Service; Michelle Garcia, Southern California Edison's Washington representative; and Suzy J. Baldwin, who provided technical writing services.

The group tackled several subjects besides best business practices: What develops good working relationships with tribes; what is a tribal liaison; what are their purpose and goals; and the best methods of forging relationships that have already accomplished projects with tribes.

Reactions to the meeting were uniformly positive. "It was a wonderful opportunity to collaborate and meet other entrepreneurs interested in investing in the Navajo Nation and other nations across the country," said Dr. Largie of the Gallup, N.M.-based consortium. "How do we keep people interested and committed to development in Indian country? By developing businesses and partnerships is how."

Watchman, a vice president of JP Morgan Chase in Phoenix, found the meeting "very informative, especially about learning how fellow liaisons work for their entities." He added that while every tribe is different and unique, "there are commonalities, like communication and how to bundle your services. This was a review of lessons learned."

The San Juan Creek Watershed covers almost 134 square miles and includes parts of Dana Point, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita and San Juan Capistrano. To call the area upscale is to call Larry Bird a pretty fair shooter.

The specific threat: the swollen current had eroded the concrete lining at the bottom of the channel. Water attacked the earth levee itself, which was surrounded by thousands of homes and businesses. "They (Orange County) were frantic for assistance," Andrews said. "They were about to lose the remaining portion of the levee. Luckily, the rain stopped and the channel started dropping or it would have been breached."

As some Dana Point residents were advised to evacuate, the county called the Corps. The levee had to be rebuilt, and within three days District team members had signed up a contractor. The contractor brought in stone and filled in the levee so it wouldn't fail, then strengthened the density of stone and earth in the levee.

For these two rescue missions, the District's preparation was crucial. "All the work we did up front paid off," Andrews explained. "All the contracting tools were in place. All the right people were there when you needed them. The money was there when we needed it. We never slowed down. We didn't wait for anything."

Sponsors in both counties agreed. "In times of severe flooding on the south coast, the Corps' assistance has proven invaluable to us over several decades—not just 2005," said Tom Fayram, deputy public works director of the Santa Barbara County Public Works Dept. and Flood Control District. "The Corps got on the six most full (debris) basins for us. We've built a good cooperative relationship between agencies."

Echoed Herb Nakasone, director of public works and chief engineer for Orange County: "We're very pleased with how quickly the Corps responded. We had to evacuate people because the levee got damaged and nearly breached. We started repairs and the Corps came and helped us finish; they came within three days, which is really great. We'll do more permanent repairs in the summer, and the Corps will assist us in that too. They did very excellent work."

Encouraging words. But Ed Andrews didn't have time to savor them. After the third big winter rainstorm in six weeks drenched parts of Arizona, the Emergency Ops chief sped to Duncan, on the New Mexico border, which was threatened by the rampaging Gila River.

Whatever was needed, District team members would be ready. They'd had a bit of practice.



Flooding at Prado Dam in Orange County brought construction to a soggy halt.

Who will guard the guards? Dam tenders keep 24/7 watch on District's huge flood control labyrinth

Story and photos by Mike Tharp

They're the District's Maytag repairmen.

Unlike the cop who's never around when you need him, they show up more often than Forrest Gump.

They're the fail-safe button, the dead-man switch, the backup file.

Meet the dam tenders.

Steady as the reliable blue-uniformed appliance fixer from Iowa—but with a lot more to do. On guard 24/7 at 11 dams the District operates in California and Arizona. Like Gunsmoke's Matt Dillon on the radio ("I'm the first man they look for and the last they wanta meet"), they are the front line of defense in emergencies and the endgame during crises.

Their mission ranges from white-knuckled decision-making—when a wrong move could send floods raging downstream—to Boswellian record-keeping that gives team members at the Reservoir Operations Center (ROC) in downtown L.A. the data they need to safeguard millions of lives and billions in property.

Emergency Operations Chief Ed Andrews, a two-tour veteran of Iraq, declares the District is lucky to have them. "They're out where the rubber meets the road," he says. "If these guys weren't there, we couldn't manage the flood control releases on our projects at all. They're the backup when the system breaks down. Not a lot of people could do

what they do. I think that's extraordinary."

Adds Reservoir Regulation Section Chief Brian Tracy: "Our dam tenders are the most important links in the operation of the District's flood control projects. While we can gain a lot of supporting information from all the technology we have deployed, we cannot completely trust those systems the way we can trust thinking human beings reporting from the projects."

Like airline pilots and combat grunts, dam tenders endure hours of boredom spiked with moments of sheer terror. "We go from nothing happening to all hell breaking loose," says 15-year veteran Jeff Nelson, who's usually found at San Antonio Dam. "We have a routine we go through every day, but you can't fake it when the storm comes."

Far from standing alone, District dams form an interlocking grid, similar to the southern California freeway system. What happens at one can affect other links in the flood-control chain—sometimes even crossing international borders. Take Painted Rock Dam in Arizona, for example. Any time water rises behind the dam, it has to be released into the Gila River at Yuma, which, in turn, flows into the Colorado and thence into Mexico. U.S. treaties with its southern neighbor stipulate the amount and quality of the water "so we have to be real careful in what we do," understates dam tender Donnie May. "A lot of people are involved in our dam, and they monitor our water with the Colorado River water. It's not like L.A. where they can just dump it in the ocean."

In the front row, left to right: John Bullington, Dong Lee, Dave Riggle, Ralph Richards, Lee Burwell and Crosby Gardner

Back row, left to right: Harvey Sherman, Louie Munoz, Jeff Nelson, John DeSimone, John Bennett and Roland Gonzales



for technical reasons." Chong is adamant against visiting questionable sites: "Going to porn sites is the same as going to hate Web sites. Don't go to them. Don't download any of it."

What are the IM people doing to protect our networks/Internet?

Porn is only one part of the problem. David Butterfield (CEEIS-Portland) says: "We don't target IP addresses. When we log on to the system, we consent to monitoring. An employee can be fired for viewing porn on their computer. No one has been caught doing that, but if they were, it's up to the individual Chief of IMO at the site. We don't monitor it unless it is specifically requested. We go through our lawyers. It might be found in an investigation of viruses." But this brings up another reason not to go to those sites. Viruses can be downloaded from those sites. While it's true a virus can be accidentally downloaded from any Web site, it would be harder for an employee to explain where they were when they got the virus.

Douglas Burt from Portland explained protection for our e-mail. "We use an Ironport appliance that uses 'Reputation Filters' that identify suspicious traffic patterns. Suspect senders are throttled or blocked, preventing malicious traffic from even entering the network." There are also four different scans done, two in Portland, one in from the local network and one from the individual employee's computer. Burt admitted, "You're not going to catch all the spam. It's like hitting a moving target."

Porn messages are treated like any other spam that may come across our network. They go through a series of filters and blockers at the Corporate level and on our local networks. Our Corporate networks in Portland and Vicksburg use an appliance made by Ironport out of northern California, (San Bruno, near San Francisco) to block spam and viruses. The machine uses several different kinds of software to filter the messages for certain words or patterns that indicate a threat. The dangerous e-mail is then throttled, quarantined or blocked.



Engineer Day 2005

To see more Engineer Day 2005 photos of the day's festivities and awards, see the LA District Web site at <http://spl01.usace.army.mil>.

The eyes behind the screen

By Pam Wills

“I know it when I see it.” That’s what Potter Stewart, Supreme Court Justice (1954-1981), said in determining whether a film was obscene. This was in 1964 and we can only wonder what he might think now, with the Internet serving up obscenity at the touch of a finger. The Random House College Dictionary defines obscene as “offensive to modesty or decency” and, more specifically, “causing or intending to cause sexual excitement or lust.” It also defines pornography as “obscene literature, art or photography especially that having little or no artistic value.”

So, is there a growing problem with people in the Corps viewing porn at work?

Barbara Warren, team chief of our local CPAC, says, “There are no statistics right now. It’s an area that is getting more attention. It’s a loss to productivity and a misuse and abuse of government resources.”

“I wouldn’t be surprised to see it in the District or offices. It’s not doing work during government working hours,” says Gilbert Chong, Office of Counsel. “There is no reason for it and it sucks up resources; 95 percent of it is abusive to women and offensive to half of our workforce. If management finds it by accident, they should suppress it.”

What are the regulations?

A December 1997 Memorandum for the Commander, LA District on the “Permissible Use of Federal Government Communications Resources” states: “Permission does not extend to activities or any other use that would reflect adversely on the Army or which is incompatible with public service (including but not limited to...surfing sexually oriented sites, or downloading sexually oriented material.) Also, ER 25-1-99 B.3.3.5, dated 30 July 1999, prohibits the “storing, processing, displaying, sending, downloading or otherwise transmitting offensive or obscene language or material. Obscene material includes sexually explicit materials.”

What happens if you are caught?

From ER 25-1-99, “Inappropriate use of USACE equipment and systems may be the basis for disciplinary, administrative and judicial action.” Barbara Warren says, “The first offense can result in a written reprimand or removal.”

You use a government computer system with the understanding that such use is not secure, not anonymous

and subject to monitoring. Anytime you login to your office computer, you give consent to monitoring. USACE has the capability to monitor an individual’s use of USACE Internet resources. When an individual is suspected of violating USACE Internet policy, a supervisor may request that the individual’s use be monitored. Requests for monitoring will be prepared in writing by the appropriate office chief, and forwarded through the Director/Chief of Information Management and the Office of Counsel, then on to the Commander for approval. Commanders will send requests to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Corporate Information. When criminal activities are suspected, the matter will be immediately referred through Office of Counsel to the Commander.

What if you type it in by accident?

There are some Web sites that are designed to be accessed “accidentally.” The most famous was the whitehouse.com Web site. While looking for the official White House Web site, instead of www.whitehouse.gov, some people might type in www.whitehouse.com which would bring up a sexually explicit site.

And is what constitutes pornography or obscenity different for different people?

An employee had a calendar with a naked woman on the back of his office door. It was not in plain sight and he had even covered the potentially offensive “body parts” with yellow post-it notes. But some people in the office still complained, explaining that just its presence in the office was offensive to them, thus making it a hostile working environment. Gilbert Chong (OC) says, “There’s no good reason for it. There are too many EEO reasons.”

What about E-mail?

Chong says, “E-mailing questionable jokes are gray areas and are okay within reason. It’s a form of communication. Sending abusive or degrading e-mails is not good. I personally don’t mind. But they clog up the e-mail system, especially if they have attachments. It fills up space. You could direct them... to a private e-mail account.” And those who send out jokes should make sure that the person receiving them actually wants them. From Barbara Warren: “Sending it out to people who don’t want it can result in sexual harassment charges.” Dave Snuggs (IASO) says, “There are no restrictions on our access to the Internet but if an employee downloads a movie, it usually has a large bandwidth and can be monitored. We can monitor



Dam tenders’ duties haven’t changed much since a 1957 op plan for Whittier Narrows spelled them out:

The dam tender...is required to be present at the dam when rainfall or runoff is occurring...see that all equipment at the reservoir, including recorders, indicating gauges, gate mechanisms, power units, radios, etc., is in good working condition; operate the gates in accordance with the Control Group; keep the Control Group notified of any unusual developments, such as trash accumulation, power failure, mechanical difficulties, etc.; follow the fixed-gate operation schedule posted in the control house... assist engineers dispatched by the Control Group during flood emergencies in every possible way; maintain routine records on prescribed forms, including water-surface elevations, inflow and outflow gauge heights, precipitation amounts, gate openings and a daily log; notify local authorities of anticipated releases when instructed to do so by the Control Group.

If it’s not time to build an ark when a tender reports to his dam, his chores are predictable. (Heavy rain—and all bets are off.) He checks water elevation and rainfall readings, downstream flow and gate settings, even evaporation rates, relaying that info back to the ROC by phone, radio or e-mail. Then he performs maintenance, including painting, cementing, putting up fences, cleaning, mowing and spraying. Emergency generators, vital if the power goes out, must be inspected. If ROC orders a new gate level, the tender must ensure the gates open or close smoothly; the process resembles flushing a giant toilet, except it takes 30 minutes.

Simply put, a dam tender serves as long-range-patrol point man for ROC headquarters. The tender is the eyes and ears of the District’s labyrinthine flood-control network. The center acts as a command post, continually processing information gathered at the dam sites, then



calibrating water flow and ordering changes according to facts on the ground—or in the clouds. Counties and other local partners are also in the loop. “We always touch base with the public,” says acting dam superintendent Louis Munoz. “During rainy season all the public agencies—police, park rangers, California Highway Patrol, fire departments—all wanted to see what the water looked like in the (Los Angeles) River” at Sepulveda Dam.

Much of the monitoring process is performed by computers hard-wired to telemetric measuring stations at the dam and upstream and downstream on the rivers. But there’s plenty of room—and need—for the human element, which is where the tenders come in. A machine might register an object weighing 1,500 pounds stuck near one of the gates. But only a pair of experienced eyes peering through binoculars into a sideways rainstorm can tell whether the object diverting the river’s flow is a flattened Volkswagen or Sasquatch.

And only a trained team member can then clamber down steep steps from atop the dam to eyeball the gauges that show the river’s inflow and outflow within 1/50th of an inch. Or, as is the case at Painted Rock, endure 117-degree heat to scrupulously check the release of water into the Gila. Or liaise with local police searching for a victim swept away by El Nino currents. “We want their overall impressions,” explains Greg Peacock, chief of the Water Control Data Unit in the Reservoir Regulation Section. “If they see something going on we should know about, something odd, they let us know.”

Although all the dams are earthfill and connected, each dam is different. Gates which control the flow of water can be hydraulic, cable-driven or winch. A dam can have two, three, four or eight gates—Santa Fe Dam has 16. Even the water at the dams is used in a variety of ways—for ground-water recharge, percolation, irrigation, drinking, conservation, recreation and environmental benefits. “There are some universal readings,” explains John DiSimone, assigned to Carbon Canyon Dam, “but each structure is unique with different idiosyncrasies.”

The same could be said of the tenders themselves. Nelson and DiSimone were collegiate soccer teammates and now play together on the same roller hockey club. May is a prizewinning rodeo steer team-roper, and his Painted Rock partner Cliff Olson plays Texas Hold’em poker in several states. Northwest of there, at Painted Rock Dam, tenders John Bennett and Frank Knight have been on the job since last spring. They shop for groceries 90 miles away at Wickenburg, and the nearest Wal-Mart is 150 miles

Who are those guys? Butch (John DeSimone) and Sundance (Jeff Nelson) show élan on the job.

from the dam. Which suits Bennett just fine: “I can see the stars at night, there’s no pollution or traffic and there’s a permanent lake where I can go fishing. The relatively new team members got their baptism by water late last year and early this year. “We’ve run the dam more in the last 14 months than in the previous 10 years,” Bennett says. Adds Knight, who came from sparsely populated Wyoming to even sparser western Arizona: “Isolation? It’s got pros and cons—a lot of free parking, not many traffic jams. Our front yard is like a zoo—bobcats, deer, wild burros, every kind of bird that flies. It’s purdy peaceful and quiet.”

Several of the tenders list military experience on their resumes. That includes Roland Gonzales, a 15-year Corps vet who spent two tours in Vietnam with the Navy and is now a retired Army Reserve lieutenant colonel. He’s an alternate tender at Carbon Canyon and relies on his blue- and brown-water days: “I know what the forces of nature can do and I respect them.”

Dave Riggle, with 33 years experience, and Ralph Richards with 29, remained calm during this year’s Noah-like drenching of southern California. At Brea in March, Richards advised closing down Bastonchury Road in Fullerton because of overflow. At Prado, where the international news media gathered under the mistaken impression that the dam was leaking, Riggle merely described the situation as “interesting—a little extra overtime is all.”

Jeff Adams, who just celebrated his silver anniversary with the Corps, works as both an electrician and as a relief dam operator. John Bullington, another team-roper, has spent 14 years as an alternate tender, complementing his job as an engineer and equipment operator.

Crosby Gardner, 27 years with the Forest Service followed by 12 with the Corps, was on duty at Prado in January when the wettest rains in decades forced him to open the gates to 9 ½ feet from 4 ½ feet, doubling the outflow to 10,000 cubic feet per second. Steve Saucedo has worked the graveyard shift for three years—“the night person doesn’t get to meet people—just the police,” he says. Harvey Sherman has been around the dams since 1973, also serving as a maintenance worker. Taleni Tialino, a heavy equipment operator for six years in the District, is an alternate at Brea, where after heavy rainfall finally dried out, he removed all the debris so it wouldn’t clog the dam basins.

Bob Taasaas was welcomed into the District (after 28 years of federal service) by the January rains at Whittier Narrows, where he toiled through several 12-hour shifts. Dong Lee, a Chinese native of Vietnam, has been on night duty at Rio Hondo 14 months. Florendo Aguilar, 14 years as a fed from Hawaii, is an alternate at Fullerton Dam.

Alex Martinez, another Rio Hondo alternate, recently achieved permanent status, just in time to literally hit the ground running at the dam. “We were doing (flow) readings to Division every 15 minutes,” he recalls. “As soon as we’d run up to get the reading, we’d come down to call it in and then have to run back up.”

And then there’s Kaz Kordecki. The Polish-born, 20-year veteran of government service says he “was absent during the historical event,” meaning the record-setting rainfall early this year. Turns out he was recovering from his own historical event—wounded by a mortar attack south of Baghdad, where he had volunteered as a construction representative. Injured in the head and feet, Kordecki was in Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., when Chief Engineer LTG Carl Strock lauded his sacrifice: “He



Steve Saucedo and Bob Taasaas bring brawn and brains to their tender mercies at Sepulveda.

volunteered to serve in Iraq because he said he wanted to take part and contribute to something historic. He also said his experience has shown him that the Corps of Engineers takes care of its own.” Now he’s back in the District as a maintenance worker and relief dam operator; “I’ve never met such a wonderful group of people,” he says of his Baseyard colleagues.

So these are the men who tend the dams. (One woman, Mary Fierros, worked as a tender briefly in 2002, but today all the tenders have a Y chromosome.) Almost totally unheralded but crucially vital to the Corps’ mission, they perform their duties off camera and below the radar. Except for those who know the sacrifices they make to keep lives and property safe.

“My wife and kids know that if there’s a big rainstorm, Daddy won’t be around,” says Jeff Nelson. “We hope for the best and prepare for the worst.”

command and the Corps are measured, but not the receiver.”

His rationale: The end-user is interested in the end product because it fits his mission requirements, but he also may ask for changes during the work. “Currently, we don’t have any incentive for him to say, ‘If we do this, it affects my cost growth or my completion date.’ I just asked, ‘What can we do to incentivize the wing commander so he gets involved in cost completion?’”

In seeking the answer to this and other questions, Baird invokes the Hasbro model of salesmanship. “Nobody wants to be sold, but people like to buy,” he recites. “We’re trying to make the customer’s job easier so they want what you’re bringing to the table.”

He strongly endorses District Engineer Col. Alex Dornstauber’s mantra: “We can move the Corps culture to believe that ‘We are part of the customer’s PDT—they are not part of ours.’” Baird adds: “How do we service you? How can we help? When you contact the Corps, it’s going to make your life easier. You always want to make sure you’re servicing the needs of your customers.”

Trained as a zoologist at Cal Poly Pomona, Baird spent a decade as an enlisted man in the Air Force Reserve, reaching the rank of E-7. In 1980 he earned



A C-17 at March Air Reserve Base, one of Col. Baird’s customers, at the recent ribbon-cutting for the hangar.

a direct commission (“a two-week wonder”) at Norton AFB, California, and began his career in Personnel as a traditional reservist. Along the way, he worked for Hasbro at its Rhode Island headquarters.

Now he and wife Karen are empty-nesters in Redondo Beach. Their son Robert works for the Border Patrol in San Diego, and daughter Jennifer works as—natch—a marketing director for a chain of printing stores in North Carolina. Besides spending time with his family, which is his top priority, Baird enjoys ocean fishing—“off a pier, a boat or a barge.”

The corporate slogan for his onetime employer Hasbro is, “Making the World Smile.” For this lanky Air Force colonel, making Corps customers smile means just as much.

Retirees Luncheon 2005



This year’s Retirees Luncheon was attended by more than 35 former District members in October.

COL Alex Dornstauber challenged them to become mentors to the District and contribute their knowledge and experience.

Colonel who once sold toys now serves six USAF bases

By Mike Tharp

In one of USAF Col. William E. Baird Jr.'s previous incarnations, he promoted such household-name Hasbro toys as Star Wars and Batman figures, Nerf, Play-Doh and GI Joe.

That national marketing experience comes in handy today as the veteran Air Force Reserve officer moves seamlessly between the District, the Air Force and the six air base customers he serves as Air Force Liaison Officer in the Programs and Project Management Division. In a sense, he sells the Corps' services to the Air Force and, in turn, sells the Air Force's evaluation of the Corps' performance back to the District.



Colonel William Baird

His current mission calls for him to work closely with project managers Brian Moore and Mary Bridgewater.

The District is responsible for five active-duty Air Force bases and one reserve base. "Brian Moore told me that the District could use 'an interpreter' between the Air Force and the Army," Baird explains.

"It needed someone who understands the bigger picture from the receiving end of what the Corps does."

As in the late '50s, when the District played a vital role in helping establish Vandenberg AFB as a key element of national missile defense, today those half-dozen air bases have become essential cogs in the Global War on Terror machine. Luke and Davis-Monthan AFBs in Arizona, Nellis in Nevada and Edwards and Vandenberg AFBs in California function as active-duty installations; March Air Reserve Base in California is a reserve base.

March ARB was plenty active when Col. Baird served there from 2000 to 2004. The first two years he was commander of the 452nd Mission Support Squadron; the 20

next two he was deputy commander of the 452nd Mission Support Group. While he was on post, the base "loaded and deployed more DoD personnel and airlifted more equipment than any other Air Force base in the United States," he says. Thousands of Marines, for example, departed for Iraq and Afghanistan and came home again on the March tarmac.

Because his military specialty, Personnel, wasn't deemed necessary at the time, Baird missed being called up in the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War. So this son of a career Marine was more than pleased when he was activated in 2002 to join the Global War on Terror. "Up till then, I was a traditional reservist," he recalls. "I felt let down after Desert Shield and Desert Storm. If I didn't get to do what they've trained me and trained me and trained me for, what do you do? When they called me for Operation Iraqi Freedom, I felt I could be put to use."

As deputy commander of the Mission Support Group, Baird was responsible for more than 1,500 personnel. He directed security forces, personnel, communications, aerial ports, transportation, fuels, logistics readiness and civil engineering functions to support the 452nd Air Mobility Wing.

When his activation for Operation Iraqi Freedom was winding down, he happened to sit next to Col. David Turk at a luncheon. Turk, who had held numerous posts in the District for a decade, told his colleague about the Partnership for Fiscal Integrity program that provides full-time reserve volunteers for active-duty tours at defense agencies. Baird's tours at March and elsewhere had brought him into daily contact with base operations support people, most of whom are civilians.

So he felt qualified to work in a Corps district with nearly 800 civilians. Brian Moore agreed, and Baird moved in earlier this year.

Already he's contributed. The Air Force's "Dirt-Kicker Program" measures the Corps' performance on project delivery. There are dollar incentives for the major command if performance reaches a certain level. But there are none, it seems, for the most crucial customer, the wing commander. "What's the incentive for the wing commander when the project is actually taking place?" Baird asks. "It didn't quite make sense that the major

Relocation project helps tenant become homeowner

Story and photos by Jay Field

CAMP NAVAJO, ARIZ.—The Army built the Wherry Housing area in the mid-'50s to house military families assigned to Camp Navajo, a former Army ordnance depot and now a National Guard training site near Flagstaff, Ariz. Fifty-eight families, including federal and state employees, National Guardsmen and 35 civilians, called the sleepy little village home. Last winter, they were told to move.

The housing, constructed and managed by a contractor, had fallen into disrepair. With no money to fix or rebuild the homes, and no need to house active-duty troops, the Army had to relocate the tenants and demolish the homes.

Staffers from the District's Arizona office took on the sensitive mission. "We're relocating the folks to housing that is decent, safe and sanitary—it may be apartments, it may be a new home—and we're providing some funding for that," said project manager Larry Flatau.

To minimize the inconvenience and financial hardship, Corps relocation specialists helped Wherry Housing residents move with benefits under federal law. The

funding covered moving expenses and a dislocation allowance aimed at keeping tenants financially whole for nearly four years. Many residents said they hated to leave, but understood why they couldn't stay.

Resident Donna Huesman lived in the Wherry Housing area with her family for seven years. "We were a little nervous, not knowing exactly where we were going to be living in a few months' time—very nervous, too, because in our area the home prices are so expensive."



Donna Huesman

However, Huesman, like some other residents, saw the relocation as an opportunity. With the Corps' assistance and a lump-sum dislocation allowance, Huesman and her family were able to realize the American Dream of buying their own home.

Huesman praised the Corps team for never making her feel as if she were getting a handout and for getting her the relocation funds just in time to buy her new home. "We felt like we were very well taken care of," she said. "They gave us plenty of time to decide what we were going to do and then to move on that."

The once sleepy little village known as Wherry Housing recently became abuzz with activity as the homes were demolished, the land returned to near original condition and now made available to the National Guard for use in training.



Donna Huesman and her two children enter their new home in Williams, Ariz. Corps relocation assistance made it possible for the Huesmans to purchase a home after vacating their residence in the Wherry Housing area.



The U.S. flag flies in front of one of residences in the Wherry Housing area just before the dilapidated houses were vacated and torn down.

Tribal liaison Alsup extends hand of friendship to Navajo

By Mike Tharp

The Dine word for “friend” is *shikis*.

For years, Glynn Alsup has been a *shikis* to the Navajo (Dine) Nation. “That word definitely applies to Glynn,” says Lynnea Smith, a project specialist for the Eastern Navajo Dine Against Uranium Mining. “We really thank Glynn because he has helped out the Navajo community so much. It’s really important to have somebody in that position to address the past effects (of uranium mining) so we can understand them. He’s just been a tremendous help.”



Glynn and one of his friends.

Ever since he began District work on abandoned uranium mines in Arizona and New Mexico in 2000, Alsup has become as much a part of the Indian landscape as hogans and saguaro. Making several trips a year to the southwestern-most parts of District territory, the native Tennessean has offered a handshake of federal friendship to some of the Corps’ neediest stakeholders.

Whether it’s carting excess computers to Indian schools or sharing Corps environmental data with academic institutions, Alsup has found ways to put a human face on a large

government bureaucracy. And even with retirement looming in 2007, the soft-spoken Alsup shows no sign of slowing down the hectic optempo of his outreach to Indians.

In late April, for example, acting as the District’s tribal liaison and program manager for the Native American Land Environmental Mitigation Program (NALEMP), he attended the three-day annual NALEMP meeting in Albuquerque. The Department of Defense created NALEMP to address environmental impacts on Indian lands, including properties in Alaska, from former DoD activities and facilities. These include weapons testing, field maneuvers and other activities. The program seeks to involve tribes in the process as much as possible.

Glynn and Kathy Anderson, the District’s assistant program manager, met with representatives from 42 tribes, 13 contractors, 17 other Corps team members and Alex Beeher, assistant deputy undersecretary of defense. The conference included a field trip on unexploded ordnance cleanups sponsored by the Albuquerque District, and discussions about four Cooperative Agreements (CA) the Los Angeles District manages with the White Mountain Apache, the Yavapai-Prescott Tribe and the Mohave Tribe.

“The Corps uses site evaluation and assessment processes that are consistent with national environmental regulatory requirements,” Alsup explained, “but we also consider the potential effects of past military operations on traditional cultures, such as the risk to subsistence activities,” including farming.

Since Alsup took over as program manager, the District has added one new CA each year. It is currently working on a new CA with the Yavapai-Prescott Tribe.

Right before the Albuquerque meeting, Alsup met with officials of the University of New Mexico Cancer Research Center. He introduced Kathy Anderson and Lara Beasley as new members of the Corps team to Dr. Johnnye Lewis, director of the university’s Center for Population Health, and to Chris Shuey, director of the Southwest Research and Information Center.

Homeland security marches on at March Air Reserve Base

C17 Hangar

Photos by Jay Field

An Air Force C-17 Globemaster sits outside the newly constructed maintenance hangar at March Air Reserve Base. Bryan Construction designed and built the \$15 million, 42,000-square-foot facility for the District to support the giant cargo plane, eight of which are soon to be stationed at the base. The hangar features a light-reflecting stain-resistant floor, a high-tech fire suppression system and a water recycling system. U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert (R-Calif.) participated in the June 1 dedication of the hangar and two other facilities at March ARB, totaling \$37 million, saying the improvements will sustain the vital role the base plays in defense of the nation.



C-17 Simulator

Dignitaries explore the cockpit of the new C-17 flight simulator at March where pilots will train before taking the controls of the giant cargo plane soon to be stationed at the base. The District renovated the building which houses the \$15 million simulator and other training systems. U.S. Rep. Calvert participated in the June 1 dedication of the simulator and two other facilities at March ARB.

Fire Station

Tripling its size, the new \$7 million, 51,000-square-foot fire station at March replaces its 1950s-era predecessor and adds vehicle bays, improved living quarters and an enhanced communications center for firefighters. The District project enables March’s firefighters to support the C-17 Globemaster and cargo carrier DHL which will both begin operating at the base this fall. U.S. Rep. Calvert also participated in the June 1 dedication of the station and two other facilities at March ARB.



Value Engineering's roots born at General Electric, watered in Japan and in full bloom at District/Division

By Mike Tharp

The link between LA District's Bill Zeigler and the Japanese emperor is a roundabout but clear one.

Zeigler, the District's Value Engineering (VE) sherpa, and the Japanese government both recognize the enormous contributions of a former General Electric engineer, Larry Miles, and his strategy to enhance value in a product or service. Miles is widely credited with creating the VE concept as a productivity and cost-savings measure in the 1940s while at GE.

So impressed and influenced were the Japanese that they bestowed on Miles a rare prize for a foreigner, the Imperial Award, Third Order of Merit with Cordon of Sacred Treasure. Miles was honored posthumously in 1985. (Only three other Americans have been given the award, and two of them are also shoguns for Japanese business: quality control expert W. Edwards Deming and management guru Peter Drucker.)

Like the Japanese, who devoured Miles's theories to help them become an industrial superpower, Zeigler and the Corps have incorporated VE lessons into an internationally acclaimed program. And like Miles himself, Zeigler's Los Angeles District and the South Pacific Division recently have been recognized for their efforts with two prestigious engineering awards presented each year for saving the taxpayer's dime and time.

The District won the Alphonse J. Dell'Isola Award for "outstanding accomplishment in construction" related to the mammoth \$216 million Los Angeles County Drainage Area (LACDA) flood control project in southern California. LACDA was completed five years ahead of schedule and \$150 million under budget.

The Division won the Gordon Frank Award for its "reinvigoration of the regional Value Engineering Program" throughout its three districts in five states.

SAVE International, a Dayton, Ohio-based global professional organization dedicated to the advancement of Value Engineering and related project management disciplines and techniques, administered the awards. Significantly, its first president was Larry Miles. The awards were presented in June at the group's annual conference in San Diego.

The Corps uses VE to identify improvements in defense systems that can reduce costs and increase performance.

Corps-wide, VE has been used since the mid-'60s, and historically the program has returned \$20 for each dollar spent on the VE effort. The bottom line: an estimated \$4.3 billion in construction of facilities, without additional fund requests to Congress. "We've had international recognition for some time," says Michael Holt, chief of Value Engineering/Value Management at Corps headquarters in Washington. "We are known among the best in the world."

In addition to the SAVE trophies, the District also won in June the 2004 VE Organization of the Year Award presented by the Pentagon. And individually, Zeigler won the 2002 VE DoD Award.

The Office of Management and Budget in 1993 began to require that all federal spending over \$1 million have a VE study completed. The law includes proposed construction or operations and maintenance projects, as well as procurements. A 1996 proviso required that all federal agencies have a VE presence and use VE procedures. "The earlier Value Engineering is employed in a project, the sooner savings can be realized," declares one Corps Web site.

Besides applying VE to its own projects, the Corps regularly helps other federal, state, regional, county and city agencies, as well as other nations, begin their VE programs. At one VE workshop, for example, Holt reckons that the Corps saved another government agency \$100 million, bringing it back into the black and on schedule. The other agency "was way over budget on that one, but didn't want to ask Congress for more money," he explains.

Over the last five fiscal years, the Corps' VE savings and cost avoidance have totaled \$231.7 million in its military projects and \$488.4 million in civil works, for a total of \$720.1 million. As the late Sen. Everett Dirksen once famously said: "A billion here, a billion there, soon you're talking about real money."

VE is applied to contract negotiations, innovation, independent technical review, civil works planning assistance and to preparing the scope of projects. It is also used to grow a contractor's profits, expand work for construction contractors and increase the number of local contractors. High-profile projects bolstered by VE in recent years include an Indianapolis waterfront, Mississippi River levees, a Louisiana sanitary sewer and a Chicago shoreline.

For the LACDA SAVE award, Zeigler said the VE study on the flood-control project was conducted in 1993.

The District's project delivery team for the Navajo Abandoned Uranium Mines study and for the Remediation of Abandoned Mines and Navajo Abandoned Mines Reclamation Project shares data with the university and research center. Participants met to discuss GIS data and information gathered for the New Mexico Navajo chapters affected by the mines. In turn, Lewis and Shuey briefed the District team members on their medical data for the area. Radon and radiation studies have been completed and are being analyzed, Alsup said.

Beasley and Brian Jordan of the District's Albuquerque office will periodically brief the university on the Corps' findings, and Anderson will take over as project manager after Alsup retires.

In April, Alsup was invited to attend the signing ceremony for the Dine Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 at Crownpoint, N.M. And in a sign of appreciation, he was also invited to lunch after the ceremony with Navajo Nation President Joseph Shirley Jr. and members of the local community.

The law that Shirley signed is the first Navajo Nation law ever enacted banning uranium mining and processing in Navajo Indian country. It was signed at the water station that thousands of people haul water from every year. Called "historic legislation" by the Eastern Navajo Dine Against Uranium Mining (ENDAUM), "it reflects the overwhelming sentiment of the Navajo people to resist new uranium mining and addresses the lingering effects of past mining," ENDAUM's spokeswoman Lynnea Smith said.



signing ceremony for the Dine Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 at Crownpoint, N.M. The law that Shirley signed is the first Navajo Nation law ever enacted banning uranium mining and processing in Navajo Indian country. It was signed at the water station that thousands of people haul water from every year.

She added that the prohibition is needed to address "the deadly legacy" of past uranium mining on Navajo lands and to protect the economy, environment and health of the Navajo people from future uranium mining and milling.

It's a legacy that Alsup has made his mission.

And it's a legacy that some compare to the Tuskegee, Ala., syphilis experiment (from 1932-1972, nearly 400 black men with syphilis were left untreated by the U.S. Public Health Service in order to collect data from their autopsies) or to the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II (rounded up as security threats).

Both of those groups got apologies from the U.S. government: the syphilis survivors and their families from President Clinton in 1997; Japanese-Americans from President Bush in 1988. In 1990 Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to pay claims from uranium miners, workers and transporters, as well as so-called downwinders, victims of nuclear testing; the law was expanded in 2000, but many Navajo bitterly complain that its provisions "were written by accountants to make it more difficult to become eligible for benefits," said one Navajo official.

Shirley campaigned two years ago on a no-uranium-mining platform. After he signed the bill into law, some analysts suggested it would be challenged in court. In recent years, some private companies and their political backers have lobbied to allow uranium mining on Navajo land, claiming that new processes would prevent contamination.

"Now the Navajo just want to say, no—not us," said Shirley's spokesman, George Hardeen. "If it comes to a fight, the Navajo don't want to spend the money—but they will."

Meanwhile, Glynn Alsup continues to log thousands of miles on his government vehicle's odometer, criss-crossing reservations and states, quietly proving again and again that he is *shikis*, a friend.

New Digs:

Corps-built 'Mod City' offers Fort Irwin troops apartment-style living

Story and photos by Jay Field

FORT IRWIN, CALIF.—Soldiers supporting the mission at Fort Irwin's National Training Center used to have to go outside their crowded, open-bay barracks just to use the restroom or take a shower. Now, home-like bathrooms are just a few steps away from the doors to their private bedrooms.

The recently completed first phase of the so-called "Mod City" project, built by a Corps of Engineers contractor, shows soldiers living much the same as if sharing a three-bedroom apartment.

"Living here, it's been very comfortable in comparison to the augmentee barracks, which is open bay," said SGT James Kim, a chaplain's assistant with the 40th Inf. Div. temporarily assigned to Fort Irwin. "I have my own room... and we're sharing the kitchenette, the latrine, and the best part of this modular is the air conditioning."

The individually adjustable air conditioning is welcomed by troops at the High Mojave Desert fort, where temperatures hover in the triple digits during the summer months. Each 770-square-foot modular barracks unit includes three furnished bedrooms, a full bathroom and a kitchenette, complete with stove, microwave, refrigerator

and water filtration system.

SGT Kirk Gardner, a training NCO with the 540th Main Support Bn., 40th Inf. Div., whose unit provides maintenance, medical, supply and transportation support to the base, was among the first to move in.

"Morale-wise, this was a big boost for the 540th in itself, to be put in these barracks," he said. "When they opened up the barracks for us and stuff—it was just great. You could see the smiles on everybody's faces and everything was just fantastic."

The Corps Fort Irwin Resident Office oversaw the \$6 million first phase of construction of nearly six dozen units by Alaska contractor Alutiiq and Texas-based Comark Buildings. When all three phases are completed, Mod City will house a battalion-sized unit of some 800 soldiers.

Housing the 40th Infantry Div. troops in these temporary barracks allows the Corps to renovate four permanent buildings vacated by the deployed 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the training center's longtime opposing force, which acts as an "enemy" in field maneuvers. The nearly \$8 million upgrade is expected to be completed by the end of the year, before the regiment returns from Iraq.



Left: SGT Kirk Gardner in the kitchen of his new housing.



Below: The old augmentee barracks

Corps-built facility at Edwards AFB wins 2005 Air Force Design Award



The Consolidated Support Facility (CSF) won the Sustainable Design category in the annual competition that recognizes design excellence. The 49,000-square-foot building consolidates various support functions that were scattered around the base, making it a "one-stop shop" for airmen. The CSF is Silver-certified under the Green Building Rating System for its energy-efficient and environmentally-sensitive design. Among the items leading to the rating are the use of recycled materials in its construction and a unique cooling system that generates and stores thermal energy overnight when electric rates are cheaper. (Photos by Jay Field)



were encountered with the gate about three-quarters open. The gate was closed, and an inspection of the tunnel revealed that a 30-foot-by-30-foot square section of the concrete floor a short distance downstream of the gate was damaged. The damaged section is in the area where the concrete floor was resurfaced due to prior damage from diversions of flows during dam construction.

The hydraulic data from the testing collected prior to the time of the damage, along with additional data to be collected from coring samples of concrete throughout the tunnel floor, will help engineers determine the cause of the damage and design the proper repairs. In the meantime, the reservoir is being drained at low release of only about 700 cfs by using a combination of a steel pipe that runs underneath the tunnel and the low flow regulating gate that restricts the flow sufficiently to prevent further damage. The reservoir is expected to be nearly empty in early May, and repairs are expected to be completed before the beginning of the next flood season in November.

“We generally expect to see some shakedown issues with a project of this magnitude,” Evelyn said.

‘Water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink.’

Rarely has a line of literature so well matched the status of a Corps of Engineers project. Despite the record amount of water that Seven Oaks Dam retained, it did not answer

the need to provide large amounts of clean drinking water for the regional water agencies.

For several years, the Corps has worked with flood control and water agencies to identify how best to use and operate the dam for water conservation and supply. An earlier study recommended water conservation and supply be added as project purposes, along with flood control. However, due to new listing of an endangered species, additional coordination with resource agencies is needed to complete NEPA requirements and allow implementation of the water conservation and supply plan.

Planners are also discussing methods to improve the quality of the water that Seven Oaks retains and provides to water agencies. Both the water supply and water quality issues require significant interagency coordination – and significant funding support. According to Ed DeMesa, of the District Planning Division, “Our challenge now is to find ways to improve the quality of this water and make it available for local use.”

Girish Desai, the Corps’ project manager for the Santa Ana River Mainstem Project, summed up the effort so far. “Seven Oaks Dam reflects the work of many agencies over a number of years,” he said. “Along with the rest of the Santa Ana Project, it’s already provided benefits in terms of reducing flood damage and improving lives along the river. Now we just need to continue to work hard together to see how else we can serve the community.”



Release of excess water helped drain the reservoir.

Seven Oaks: One dam, multiple functions

By Greg Fuderer

HIGHLAND, CALIF.—Five years after coming on line, Seven Oaks Dam finally had the opportunity to function the way its designers intended.

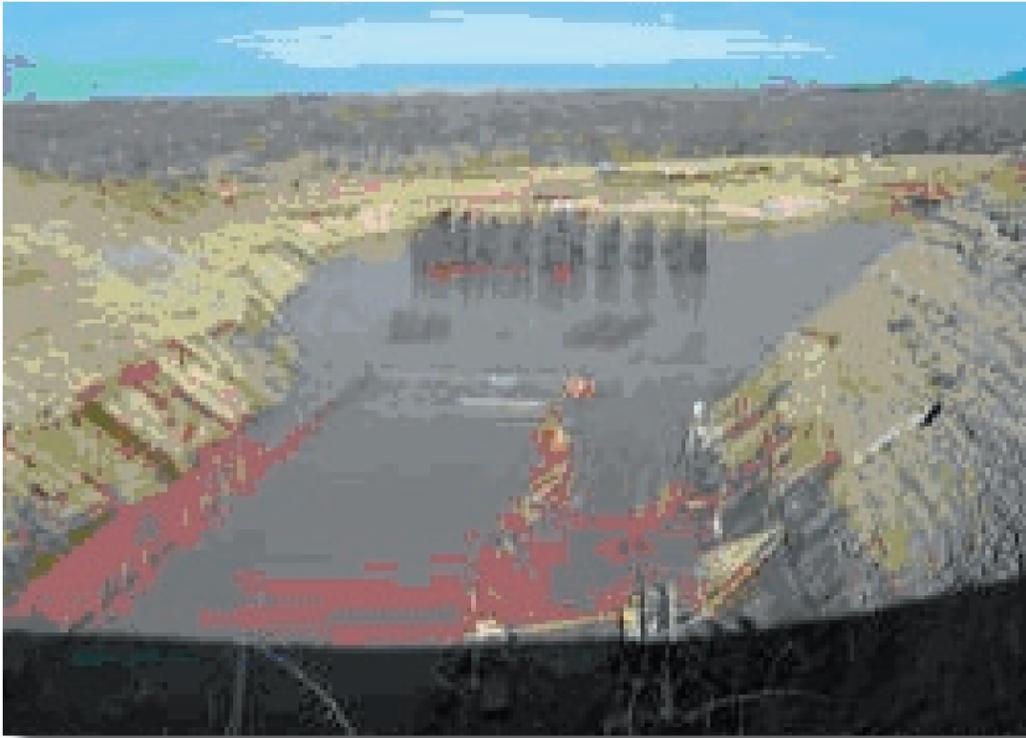
As with many dams in Southern California’s arid climate, the basin behind Seven Oaks Dam is dry much of the year. In early 2005, however, heavy rains fell throughout southern California. The reservoir at Seven Oaks Dam rose, climbing steadily and submerging the intake tower, until it reached a record depth of more than 290 feet.

“The inflows into Seven Oaks presented us with the first time that Seven Oaks mattered as a flood control structure,” said Joe Evelyn, chief of the Hydraulics and Hydrology

branch. “This was the first time that the dam really had an impact on flows downstream.”

Lying at the foot of southern California’s majestic San Bernardino Mountains, Seven Oaks Dam sits between two branches of the San Andreas Fault. Completed in 1999 at a cost of \$500 million, the dam is a major structure of the Santa Ana River Mainstem Project that wends its way through San Bernardino, Riverside and Orange counties. It plugs a gap where floodwaters once flowed in 1938, creating death and destruction on their way to the Pacific Ocean at Newport Beach nearly 75 miles downstream.

Those steep mountain slopes provide the backdrop for the Santa Ana River, whose drop in elevation exceeds that of the nearly 2,500-mile-long Mississippi River. These factors



Controlled flooding at Prado Dam, downriver from Seven Oaks Dam.

combine to make the Santa Ana River an infrequent but formidable force to confront. They also mean that Seven Oaks will retain a deep pool of water.

A prime recipient of Seven Oaks Dam's impact on flows downstream is Prado Dam, nearly two years into an eight-year, \$430 million modification. The improvements there will increase the volume of its retention basin and more than triple its discharge capacity. As Prado experienced its own record inflows, residents around the dam benefited from the nearly 43,000 acre-feet of water that Seven Oaks held back during the deluge. (An acre-foot of water covers one acre to a depth of one foot. It is roughly equivalent to a football field under one foot of water.) Although the rain caused some damage and closed some roads, the advantages from Seven Oaks were clear.

"During the storms, we retained flood water at Seven Oaks and reduced the flow rates downstream," said Lance Natsuhara, section manager for the Santa Ana River Project in Orange County. "The major source of significant flows along the river was runoff from the watershed downstream from the dam. Without the dam, the peak flows would have been significantly higher."

Lotsa Water

Capitalizing on the silver lining provided by the rain from January's overflowing clouds, the Corps assembled

a team of engineers and technicians, installed instruments and prepared to perform operational tests of the new flood control structure. They would release water under controlled conditions, technically called Seven Oaks Hydraulics Instrumentation Test Plan, to collect data on how the outlet works operate.

"Mother Nature provided us with a golden opportunity to conduct the releases in a safe and controlled manner," Evelyn said. "We had design engineers and operations experts on hand to manage and monitor the releases under pre-determined conditions. We had a schedule in place to discharge set rates of water for specified

times. The tests would then compare the outlet structures' performance to their design parameters."

"The tests were an opportunity for us to collect data on the dam's outlets and to verify the dam's design," said Dave Cozakos, a senior hydraulics engineer at the Corps. "It's something we'd been planning to do for years, but we'd never had enough water in the reservoir to be able to conduct the study."

"Seven Oaks is designed to operate under the high pressures associated with a deep reservoir. Its outlet gates are designed to be able to operate under that high pressure," Evelyn said. "Fortunately, we didn't have to make our initial flood control releases during a major flood in the middle of the night. We knew how much water we had. This was a great chance for us to run the operational tests."

Before the testing began, Cozakos said the releases from Seven Oaks Dam would have minimal impacts downstream. "Riverside County will see lower flow rates from the water we release due to the brevity of each test release and its distance downstream," he said. "Because of the nature of the streambed, we can assure everyone that the flows will be confined to within the channel banks."

After the tests, engineers would revert to normal flood-control operation of Seven Oaks Dam. They anticipated that lowering the remaining pool of water behind Seven Oaks would take six to eight weeks.

"This was like Christmas for the engineers," said Robert Kwan, referring to the anticipation those technical experts felt in advance of high-pressure release tests. Kwan is the project engineer at the District who oversaw the design and construction of the dam. All the engineers needed to do was to cut the giant bow and tear off the wrapping paper.

Scrooged

As the date for the tests approached, several concerns arose.

Engineers needed to limit the amount and the duration of the releases at Seven Oaks because of ongoing construction at Prado Dam some 35 miles downstream. Prado already retained a significant amount of water. Excessive inflow to Prado risked overtopping the cofferdam (a temporary retaining structure designed to keep a work area dry) that protected construction at Prado's intake and outlet works. Heavy rains in January had done just that, dumping water, muck and other debris into the construction pit, halting work and adding months to the project schedule.

Flood control districts, emergency response organizations and water conservation agencies were among those that expressed a desire for more coordination for the test releases among the agencies involved.

How would the releases affect low-lying roads that cross the river's path?

What efforts would be taken to ensure that the homeless, off-roaders, sightseers and others who live or recreate in the area would not be washed out to sea under a perceived tsunami-like wall of water gushing down the riverbed?

Why would the agencies involved "waste" millions of dollars' worth of scarce, valuable water stored behind the dam merely to conduct a test?

Conversely, why would the agencies retain unusable, silty water behind the dam when it could be drained quickly and replaced with the cleaner, crystal-clear spring flow from the mountains' soon-to-melt snow? – Water that would more suitably meet the area's water resource agencies' needs.

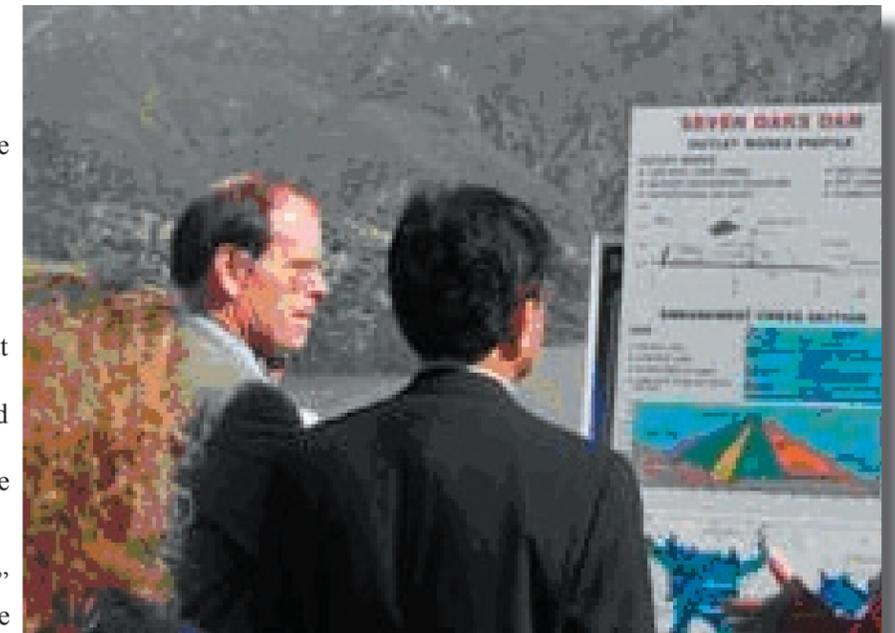
All good questions. No easy answers.

Countdown

At several coordination meetings, the agencies addressed the specifics of the tests and the safety measures to be put into place. By mid-March, the tests were ready to proceed.

"The tests incorporated a series of short-duration releases that covered the designed operating range of the dam," said Evelyn. "Ideally, they would verify that our operating procedures are optimal. Since this was the first time that significant flood control releases would be made from the dam, we felt we'd likely find that there were adjustments to the procedures developed during the design of the dam that could improve overall project operation. We also felt the data would be useful in terms of contributing to current engineering guidance for the design, construction and operation of outlets for other deep reservoirs."

The tests would allow the agencies to collect data on how the outlet operates with a significant reservoir level. Engineers would also have an opportunity to determine the best combination of gate openings to use when making releases at various reservoir levels. Officials from both the Corps and local agencies emphasized that the test releases would not pose any safety threat to residents or businesses.



Brian Moore and Girish Desai look over plans for Seven Oaks Dam construction.

For the most part, the outlet works testing was successful, and considerable valuable data were collected. All of the low-flow testing was completed, but the high-flow testing had to be cut short. During the test of operating one of the two main regulating gates, an unusual noise and vibration