Southwestern Division

Pacesetter

Spring 2015

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Fort Worth District historical architect takes walking tour of Walter Reed Army Medical Center -- Page 6

SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

PACESETTER

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On the cover

This picture of stairs taken from the fourth floor of Building 1 are part of photo documentation of the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. It was one of the largest facilities shut under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission process. The photo inventory by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers complied with cultural resources requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. (Photo by Joseph Murphey)

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We deliver value to our nation and communities

Brig. Gen. David C. Hill
Southwestern Division Commander

After a cold and late winter in most of our region, I know that all of you were ready to welcome spring earlier this month (though perhaps not as ready as our colleagues on the East Coast)! In spite of the dreariness of the weather, the past few months have been shining with special activities and achievements, and have blazed ahead with actions.

Proving that it's never too early to think and plan water safety, SWD's operations, safety and public affairs communities convened in January for lessons learned and to talk about this year's water safety season. The Tulsa District Water Safety Team was recognized for their outstanding achievement in the 2014 Recreation Season: they reduced water-related public fatalities by 50 percent during that period. That is truly outstanding. Nothing is more important than our efforts to encourage safety at all our projects by the public, Corps employees, and our contracted workforce.

As the weather warms up and the public heads to our lakes, water safety will once again move to the forefront, and our team will gear up for another push to educate the public and help save lives. This is an important part of our interaction with the public, and where the Corps can literally touch the lives of our citizens and communities.

Two major observances marked the first quarter of the calendar year: Black History Month in February and Women's History Month in March. During each observance, we had the opportunity to highlight some of our folks who have made outstanding contributions to the Army Corps of Engineers and to our Nation. Every person we highlight, and so many that we didn't have the opportunity to recognize individually, are part of that equation that makes SWD a respected organization that develops and cares for our people.

Let me focus the spotlight on just one; Dr. Michael Sterling, the Division's chief of the Water Management and Infrastructure Branch. Dr. Sterling proved what all of us knew all along when he was chosen as the Black Engineer of the Year for Special Achievement (Government Category). Not only does this national-level recognition bring distinction to Dr. Sterling; it also brings credibility to us as his employer of choice. We are proud of him and fortunate to count him as part of our team.

Others of you were very busy with the painstaking work related to the Fiscal Year 16 Budget Briefings as well as preparing your senior leadership for their Congressional visits. These actions and activities are critical in helping to build and maintain strong, productive relationships with our legislative leadership. Thank you for all your dedicated efforts that went into these preparations.

We held a Command Strategic Review in February, and focused some of our time with Maj. Gen. Richard Stevens, our USACE deputy commanding general, and Headquarters USACE staff on Knowledge Management. SWD's role as a pilot is to focus on how a division organizes its knowledge and links its business systems, documents, and processes to critical mission areas. Our overall initiative is under the purview of SWD's director of Regional Business, Mr. Pete Perez. The Knowledge Management team is represented by leads from each of the SWD Districts and led by our regional Knowledge Management Representative, Mr. John Davis. This team has been busy developing the "Discover SWD" site using media wiki to link to critical knowledge repositories. The Districts will use this site to brief our Regional Priorities during the upcoming SWD Command Week in April, utilizing some of the precepts we have been talking

See **Value** *on Page 5*

New safety chief promotes active role in personal safety

By Edward Rivera
Southwestern Division Public Affairs

From the U.S. Army to Disneyland, to NASA to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the chief of Safety and Occupational Health for the Southwestern Division David Milligan's main focus is ensuring everyone from employees; contractors and members of the public go home at the end of the day.

Milligan recently arrived to the Division staff from the Little Rock District where he was the chief of Safety and Occupational Health.

"One of our priorities is to influence our team, contractors and the members of our recreating public to take an active role in their personal safety and health, as well as the safety of those around them," he said

While he was serving at Little Rock, the district garnered the Chief of Engineers Award of Honor for 2011 and 2013. Additionally, Milligan served as a safety professional with the Afghanistan Engineer District – South at Kandahar Airfield.

Prior to entering the civilian workforce he was an Army aviator, earning his wings in 1984 as a graduate of the U.S. Army Rotary Wing Aviator Course. In 1988 he graduated the Army Aviation Safety Officer course.

"As an Army aviator I selected the aviation safety career track as it gave me the widest opportunity to work with many different career fields throughout the Army," said the 1996 Army Aviation Association of America's James H. McClellan Aviation Safety Award winner. for his professional contributions to aviation safety. The preceding sentence is too long and too awkward He retired from the Army after 20 years of service

Milligan received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Professional Aeronautics with a Minor in Aviation Safety from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He received his Master of Science Degree in Industrial Technology from Texas A&M University – Commerce.

David Milligan

A veteran of the Persian Gulf War, he held positions of increasing responsibility as a safety management professional, supervising both military and civilian members. He served as both an accident investigator and a safety trainer for the Chief of Staff of the Army, and as Chief of Operations while assigned to the U.S. Army Safety Center.

Milligan's aviation and aeronautics expertise comes in handy with the Corps having two fixed-wing aircraft, numerous unmanned aerial systems and many aviation contracts.

"I am able to serve on an Acquisition Contract Officer's team as a Government Flight Representative to perform audits and surveillance of contractor flight operations. I also serve a supporting role throughout the Corps to assist with aviation safety issues," he said.

Thinking on his past positions, Milligan said he is fortunate that all of his assignments were interesting.

"I have to say that working in the Little Rock District was just as interesting as my time with NASA. "

After he retired from active duty he took a break from federal service to work with industry in the private sector as the manager of operations safety & health at Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif.

"That was an interesting professional development opportunity. Of note, both NASA and Disneyland include EM 385-1-1 Safety and Health Requirements Manual as a safety standard in their construction contracts. And so far, my assignment here at the Division is both interesting and professionally rewarding."

Value

Continued from Page 4

about. I know that it will be an enlightening experience, and will help us move forward in our implementation of KM within SWD.

The Forbes "America's Best Employers" list for 2015 has been released, and the Army Corps of Engineers is #128. Although we still have a ways to go, every day I see many efforts being undertaken to transform and improve our workplace, not simply by supervisors and leaders, but also by our employees themselves. We can all be proud to be part of the Army Corps of Engineers with the opportunity to work in jobs that deliver such value to our communities and our Nation.

Thanks for all you do every day. You make a difference.

A cultural closure for Walter Reed Army Medical Center

By James Frisinger
Fort Worth District Public Affairs Office

A skeleton crew keeps the lights on at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, which closed in 2011 under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission process. Its storied past will not be forgotten, thanks to a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photographic inventory and historic walking tour organized for the 66-acre campus that is being repurposed for a new use.

The historic Walter Reed Army Medical Center is a ghost town now.

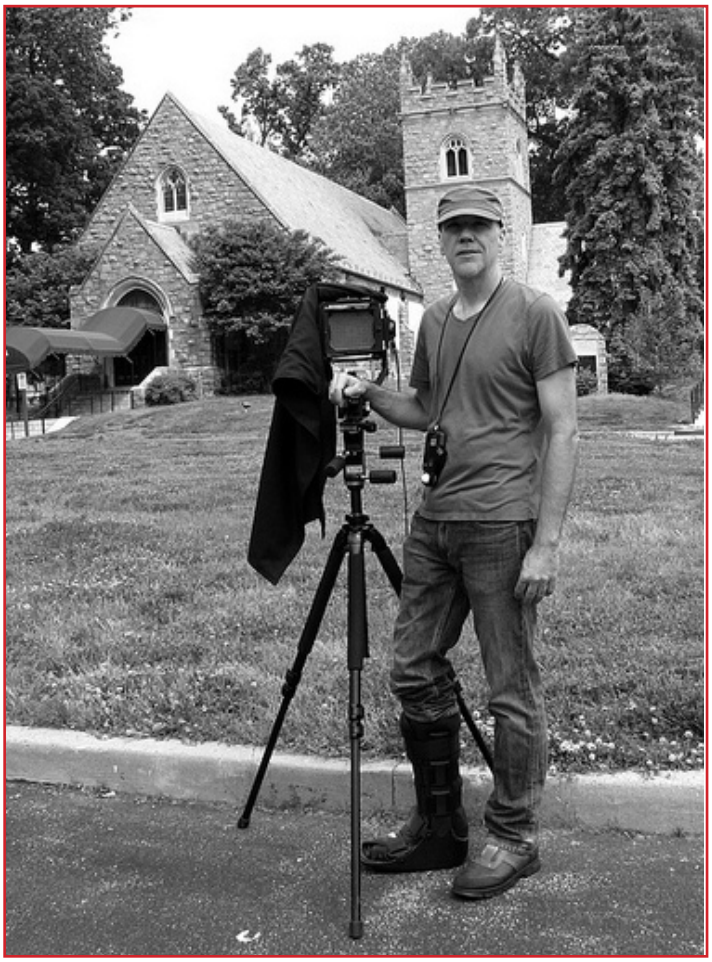
Deer and foxes roam the 66-acre campus where 10,000 people once lived and worked. It was here in the nationâ€™s capital that untold thousands of soldiers and presidents, too were treated for 102 years.

The sprawling facility in Washington's northwest corner was closed in 2011 under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission process. The medical facilities by then had already relocated seven miles away to the "new" Walter Reed the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

Today a skeleton crew keeps the lights on at the "old" Walter Reed but it's only a temporary. The campus is being repurposed with new tenants in old buildings, but Walter Reed's storied past won't be forgotten.

Joseph Murphey, an historical architect for the Regional Planning and Environmental Center, made sure of that as part of a larger team of environmental professionals.

Mobile District, which has the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lead in BRAC compliance under the National Environmental Policy Act, brought in Murphey to be the lead on the NEPA's cultural resource requirements. Walter Reed was one of the largest facilities shuttered under BRAC 2005, along with Fort Monmouth, N.J., and Fort McPherson and Fort Gillam in Atlanta, Ga.



Joseph Murphey, an historical architect for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fort Worth District's Regional Planning and Environmental Center, used a large format camera in 2013 to document the historic Walter Reed Army Medical Center facility as part of the mitigation process conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act. Shown here outside Building 57, the 4 inch by 5 inch negatives he shot are now preserved as part of the Library of Congress Historic American Buildings Survey. (Photo: Joseph Murphey/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

For the first time in its history, Murphey completely inventoried and identified everything at Walter Reed and determined what was historic. He then, as part of the NEPA team, negotiated a memorandum of agreement with the DC State Historic Preservation Office and local historic preservation societies to mitigate the effect of the BRAC closure on the historic resources, which fulfilled NEPA requirements.

The mitigation primarily consisted of nominating Walter Reed to the National Register of Historic Places, photo documenting the entire facility for the National Archives and producing interpretive panels for the publicâ€ said Murphey. The interpretive panels are to be placed on site and tell the storied history of Walter Reed as an institution.

Murphey collaborated in the development of these 14 storyboards, which will be displayed on seven free-standing panels this year along a walking tour of the

See **Closure** *on Page 7*

Deer roam outside Delano Hall at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center, which was closed in 2011. Wildlife now roam the 66-acre campus where 10,000 people once lived and worked in the northwest corner of Washington, D.C. Medical facilities were relocated seven miles away to the "new" Walter Reed – the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. – while the "old" Walter Reed campus gets repurposed for new uses. (Photo: Joseph Murphey/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Closure

Continued from Page 6

campus. It narrates the 150-year story of the site back to its pre-med days as a Civil War battlefield.

The first panel outlines the Battle of Fort Stevens in 1864. President Lincoln came under fire from sharpshooters in trees that later became part of the medical complex. It was the only time a sitting U.S. president would come under fire during battle, Murphey said.

The walking tour panels narrate the dream of Maj. William Cline Borden, more than a hundred years ago, to consolidate four different medical facilities located in south and central District of Columbia into a single site. The Army surgeon named the complex for his friend and colleague, Maj. Walter Reed, who led the team that helped eradicate yellow fever by identifying the mosquito as carrier of the disease. Reed died in 1902. (While the hospital named for Walter Reed was built in 1909, Borden's vision would not be fully realized until 1955.)

Walter Reed later become home to what was considered the first school of public health and preventive medicine in the world, and developed vaccines to prevent hepatitis A, meningococcal meningitis and adenovirus.

As part of the cultural resources mitigation, Murphey compared his new photographs with historic photos and original construction drawings. The data will aid the local redevelopment authority.

The information that we gave them formed the baseline for them to start the work on the restoration, said Murphy. It forms a time capsule on what it looked like when the Army left Walter Reed.

For some shots, Murphey used a large-format camera, which makes 4-inch-by-5-inch negatives. The camera and tripod, with a hood that covers the operator, resembles the equipment Matthew Brady's team used to photograph the Civil War. One hundred of these photos will be delivered to the Library of Congress Historic American Buildings Survey, which requires a negative processed to last at least 500 years.

The Beaver Dam power plant operates two main 56 megawatt turbines and one house unit. The revenue from power generation is returned to the U.S Treasury to pay for the purchase price of the dam and the generating equipment Operations and Maintenance. (USACE Little Rock District photo)

Generating interest in Southwestern Division hydropower

By Jay Townsend
Little Rock District Public Affairs Office

As the nations' demand for renewable energy use increases, so does the strain on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ageing hydropower infrastructure, the largest producer of renewable energy in the U.S.

The Corps is the largest owner-operator of hydroelectric power plants in the U.S. and one of the largest in the world. They operate 353 hydroelectric generating units at 75 multipurpose reservoirs with a total capability of 21,000 megawatts. This capability generates about 24 percent of America's hydroelectric power and represents approximately 3 percent of the country's total electric-generating capacity.

In order to ensure the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa, Little Rock and Fort Worth district hydropower assets are reliable for years to come, the three districts, under the umbrella of the Corp's Southwestern Division, have formed the Southwestern Division Regional Hydropower Governance Board

The governance board provides oversight of the region's hydropower programs. The goal of the board is to seek the most effective and efficient processes to deliver power generation, sustain the infrastructure, execute operations and maintenance at the hydropower projects and sustain technical competencies.

Currently the board has established eight working groups to study specific facets of the hydropower program. Discussions range from staffing and succession planning to data acquisition and even hazardous energy. The board indentified common integral sub-programs of the overall hydropower program and charged the working groups staffed by regional subject matter experts with developing implementation plans for standardization across the region.

The board is using the Army's risk management processes (e.g., monitoring, examination, and analysis) to decide where and when to invest in maintenance and repairs in order to assure safe operations and provide national economic benefits.

The electricity produced within the Southwestern Division is marketed by Southwestern Power Administration and is sold, at cost, to not-for-profit municipal utilities, military installations and rural electric cooperatives for use by the citizens of Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas.

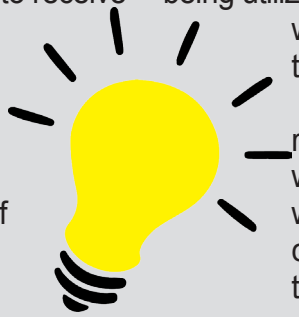
See **Hydropower** *on Page 9*

Corps using new technologies to reduce energy consumption

The Little Rock District is installing new technologies at our Mountain Home and Clearwater project offices to reduce the overall carbon footprint from government facilities and operations. It is important for the government to lead the way in energy saving technologies. Many businesses and individuals are reluctant to initiate the use of new technologies because of higher upfront cost and unproven benefits. The Corps of Engineers was selected to receive upgrades implementing two sustainability technologies.

One of the newer technologies becoming main stream is the use of LED lighting equipment. LED lights produce similar lumens, light output, using just 20 percent of the required energy by conventional incandescent bulbs. The life span is estimated to be five times longer than fluorescent bulbs and 40 times that of incandescent bulbs. Using LED light bulbs not only saves energy costs but also reduces maintenance costs. All lighting fixtures and/or bulbs on the interior and exterior of the Mountain Home Project Office have been changed to LED, with the exception of leased security lights.

The second technology that the Mountain Home and Clearwater offices will be implementing is ground-source heat-pump for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning applications. This technology is referred to as geothermal. Geothermal heating and cooling systems take advantage of the stable temperature underground using a piping system, commonly referred to as a "loop." Water circulates in the loop to exchange heat between the building, the ground source heat pump, and the earth providing heating and cooling at remarkably high efficiencies. Most of the Corps property in downtown Mountain Home is being utilized so the upcoming geothermal system will use vertical heat transfer wells under the existing parking lot at the Project Office.



"About 22 wells 250 feet deep will be required at the Mountain Home Project while at Clearwater 12 wells 250 feet deep will be required," said Kim Casey, design coordinator. "The estimated life span of the geothermal HVAC unit is more than 50 years and we expect to recoup the cost of the project in 30 years."

"The LED lighting has improved the work environment for employees, while reducing our operation and maintenance costs through lower energy consumption and extended life of LED bulbs," said Jon Hiser, operations project manager for the Mountain Home Project Office. "While the geothermal system is not yet installed, we have the same expectations for it – extended useful life and lower operating cost, which result in reduced impacts to our environment."

Hydropower

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The Fort Worth District operates and maintains three hydroelectric plants, containing a total of 6 units with a generating capacity of 101 Megawatts. All of the plants are located within Texas.

The Tulsa District operates and maintains eight hydroelectric power plants, containing a total of 22 units with a generating capacity of 584 megawatts. Seven of the plants are located within eastern Oklahoma with one located just across the border in Texas. These plants benefit approximately 2 million end users throughout Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas and Louisiana.

The Little Rock District operates and maintains seven hydroelectric power plants. The 27 units in Little Rock have a a generating capacity of 1,068 Megawatts, and enough generation to power up to 400,000 households. Six of the plants are located throughout Arkansas and one is located at Table Rock Lake in Branson, Missouri.

Corps hydropower plants provide the ability to respond to rapid fluctuations in the nations' power grid caused by other intermittent renewable resources such as wind and solar power. These auxiliary support services provided by Corps hydropower plants stabilize the grid and are essential for the smooth electrical integration of other renewable energy resources.

The current makeup of the board puts both Tulsa and Little Rock District commanders as co-chairs of the board with the Tulsa District Commander serving as the Executive Director. Members of the board include representatives from all three districts with provisions for special advisors to be select from best qualified from all three districts.

Galveston District hosts Stakeholder Partnering Forum

Galveston District
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District met with non-federal sponsors, customers and agency partners to collaborate on best practices regarding programs ranging from environmental to flood risk management, dredging the Texas coast and regulatory oversight of U.S. waters during a Stakeholder Partnering Forum Feb. 25 at the district's headquarters building in Galveston. (USACE Galveston District photo)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District met with non-federal sponsors, customers and agency partners to collaborate on best practices regarding programs ranging from environmental to flood risk management, dredging the Texas coast and regulatory oversight of U.S. waters during a Stakeholder Partnering Forum Feb. 25 at the district's headquarters building in Galveston.

"Fostering effective working relationships with these agencies is critical to the success of our district's missions," said Col. Richard Pannell, commanding officer of the USACE Galveston District. "We construct, maintain and operate key infrastructure projects that contribute to the nation's economy, environment, safety and quality of life and are always seeking opportunities with our partners to improve these services. Hosting a partnering forum affords stakeholders a venue to understand and interact on the latest information about our programs, projects, business processes and capabilities."

The one-day forum identified opportunities to better synchronize and integrate the district's support of stakeholder commitments and emergency interests such as the Coastal Texas Feasibility Study and the Freeport Harbor Preconstruction, Engineering and Design plan. It is a unique opportunity for non-federal sponsors, customers and agency partners from the Sabine to the Rio Grande Rivers along the Texas coast to network and exchange ideas from the whole community perspective on ways the Galveston District is able to improve value delivery to the nation across civil works and regulatory business lines.

"This partnering forum allowed us to hear direct feedback from our sponsors and stakeholders on issues that are key to the successful execution of projects and to move forward on integrated solutions," said Bill Wise, chief of the Project Management Branch for the USACE Galveston District.

According to Joe Hrametz, chief of the Operations Division for the USACE Galveston District, this forum enabled him to update stakeholder on the fiscal year 2015 budget and how this funding will impact future dredging projects along the Texas coast.

"The FY15 President's Budget for the O&M Program was increased $19.7 million in the work plan," said Hrametz. "The partnering forum provided an excellent venue to interface with our customers face to face to address their issues and concerns and to provide an explanation on how the extra money will be used to reduce critical backlog.

Facilitated stakeholder breakout discussions relating to partnered progress and needs included Texas coastal resource management; Texas ports; the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and Texas floodplain management support for non-federal investment. Partnering panel discussions that included successes, challenges, lessons learned and strategies for working with the district were helpful for many of the participants according to Dan Harmon, director of the Maritime Division at the Texas Department of Transportation.

"The Stakeholder Partnering Forum provided an important opportunity for TxDOT and the

See **Partnering** *on Page 11*

Galveston District removes vegetation at Addicks and Barker

Galveston District
Public Affairs Office

GALVESTON, Texas – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District began removing woody vegetation from within 50 feet of the inside and outside toes of both of the Addicks and Barker dams, located near the intersection of I-10 and State Highway 6 in Houston in February.

"Most of the work will be taken care of using a large wood chipping mower but some of the big trees will require a bulldozer," said Natural Resource Supervisor Richard Long. "Corps studies indicate the presence of trees on these structures increases the uncertainty associated with structural integrity and performance."

According to Long, woody vegetation includes trees, bushes and shrubbery. Long explained that several large trees will require removal near hike and bike trails and other highly visible locations.

"We know that the removal of these trees will cause concern with residents and visitors of the reservoirs, as they act as a natural shade and provide habitat for local wildlife," Long said. "We have reviewed all possible ways to mitigate this issue to avoid impacting as much of the vegetation as possible."

Long explained that the removal of the trees is part of the Dam Safety Program that requires the removal of woody vegetation within 50 feet of the earthen dams and adds that this construction is not related to the upcoming infrastructure construction scheduled for the fall of 2015.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District will begin to remove woody vegetation from within 50 feet of the inside and outside toes of both of the Addicks and Barker dams, located near the intersection of I-10 and State Highway 6 in Houston. (USACE Galveston District Photo)

"Over the years, this vegetation has encroached in many places within the 50-feet limit at both of the dams," Long said. "Staff is working to remove this vegetation while it is dormant and before bird nesting season begins."

Partnering

Continued from Page 10

district to better understand the unique processes and capabilities of our agencies in order to improve coordination that will facilitate and expedite the navigational safety and efficiency of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, an economic engine for the state and nation," said Harmon. "We look forward to continuing and growing our partnership with the district."

With increasing constrained financial resources, both stakeholders and district representatives expressed that they will continue to seek ways to efficiently spend resources responsibly to ensure that taxpayer-provided funds maximize value to the nation and look forward to the next stakeholder forum is scheduled for August 2015.

"This event series is strategic for networking our stakeholders across the Texas coast, cultivating and strengthening relationships and identifying opportunities for increasing the value that the Galveston District is able to bring to the Nation and region," said Dr. Edmond Russo, USACE Galveston District deputy district engineer for Programs and Project Management. "Partnering, conducted consistently over time, yields results."

The USACE Galveston District was established in 1880 as the first engineer district in Texas to oversee river and harbor improvements. The district is directly responsible for maintaining more than 1,000 miles of channel, including 250 miles of deep draft and 750 miles of shallow draft as well as the Colorado River Locks and Brazos River Floodgates. Its main missions include navigation, ecosystem restoration, emergency management, flood risk management and regulatory oversight. The Corps also supports a robust Regulatory Program that interacts with the local community through a variety of public outreach opportunities.

Tulsa District implements new water quality release plan to conserve water at Skiatook Lake

By Sara Goodeyon
Tulsa District Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District, announced today the implementation of a new Skiatook Lake water quality release plan, which began March 3, to provide more flexibility in discharges of water while maintaining downstream environmental protection and water quality standards.

The Indian Nations Council of Governments' request for a minor permit modification was approved by the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, Friday, Feb. 27. The modification changes where Bird Creek flows are measured from a United States Geological Survey gauging station, near Sperry, to an alternate USGS gauge located further downstream, near Owasso. The requested modification also includes allowing 72-hour rolling average measurements to be used to determine minimum flows.

"If this is as successful as we think it will be, surrounding communities will benefit from lake levels not going down any further than necessary, which in turn supports continued recreation," said Mike Abate, Chief, Civil Works Branch, USACE-Tulsa. "INCOG, the City of Tulsa, ODEQ, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, the USGS, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and the Corps all rolled up our sleeves, focused on solutions and cooperated in a 'good faith' effort to get this done."

According to Abate, the temporary permit modifications will allow added flexibility in how downstream releases are performed and will also allow the release schedule to better adapt to watershed conditions and downstream needs.

"By limiting releases and withholding water when downstream needs are met by natural flows, we can preserve the lake levels in ways that weren't available before," said Abate. "Ongoing monitoring and surveillance will ultimately determine what level of flow reduction is sustainable and protective of downstream uses and minimum flows will be met or exceeded."

"All parameters monitored in the past will continue to be monitored and minimum flow requirements for Bird Creek have not been changed," added Abate. "This should ensure that adequate flows will be maintained to meet OPDES permit requirements and other downstream beneficial uses."

The Owasso gauge was not available when the original Water Quality Management Plan was developed for discharge of water at the lake," said Abate. "Changing the gauge from Sperry to Owasso will provide a better view of upstream flows to allow preservation of the lake level as long as possible and ensure people continue to have access to all the recreational activities this superb lake has to offer."

"By limiting releases and withholding water when downstream needs are met by natural flows, we can preserve the lake levels in ways that weren't available before."
--Mike Abate

The gauge change is the result of an Oct. 24, 2014, Interagency Drought Management Committee meeting in Skiatook, the purpose of which was to explore solutions for conserving water at the lake, especially as it pertains to required conservation pool releases for water quality.

"I couldn't be more proud of the interagency team that came together to take on the many challenges we face during this period of persistent drought," said Col. Richard A. Pratt, Commander and District Engineer, USACE-Tulsa. "Our team of hydraulic engineers joined forces with state and local officials to successfully develop this initiative and help further improve our overall conservation efforts at Skiatook."

Low lake levels are the result of drought conditions and below normal inflows into the watershed above Skiatook Lake. These weather patterns have been in effect since 2010, with little relief. In addition to providing

See **Plan** *on Page 13*

Tulsa District prepares for a busy recreation season

By Sara Goodeyon
Tulsa District
Public Affairs Office

The summer recreation season is quickly approaching and Tulsa District expects it to be a good year at its lakes and public use areas.

Rangers and volunteers spent the winter months getting the parks ready for the upcoming season and are currently making things safe for returning visitors.

Tulsa District Recreation Planner Abby Gaydusek said work focuses on tasks like hiring gate attendants, getting law enforcement contracts in place and turning on the water for the restrooms and campsites winterized last fall.

Gaydusek said the recent spell of nice weather has already brought some visitors out.

"We've already have campers at the Lakes," said Gaydusek. "We are looking for a good recreation season if the weather stays the way it has been going."

Other good news is that Lake Texoma has recharged thanks to winter rains and is just a couple of feet below the top of the conservation pool. It is a remarkable recovery, considering that just a year ago the lake was on the verge of dropping to Drought Level 4 of the district's Drought Management Plan.

Though Canton and Skiatook Lakes remain in drought, both are open for recreation and boating and offer excellent fishing opportunities.

Promoting boating and water safety is a primary focus of the warm weather recreation season. Tulsa District has a robust water safety program and plans to continue with what worked in the past and build on it this year.

Gaydusek said the program will continue the education outreach to all audiences, but will drill down deeper to pinpoint sportsmen.

"We already have a strong water safety program and we will build on it by focusing more on sportsmen and hunters to get the message to them that wearing a life jacket is not cumbersome," said Gaydusek. "Part of this outreach will include contacting lake associations, police and fire departments, and local officials asking them to talk about water safety with their constituents."

That type of one-on-one interaction is a key aspect of water safety education. Rangers routinely go out on foot patrols in the recreation areas, talking to visitors about water safety. If they see a child wearing their life jacket they ticket them for getting caught wearing it, the ticket being a coupon for a free Wendy's frosty treat.

Another focus area this year will be watching for days when the forecast calls for extremely hot temperatures.

"We have noticed a trend that the hotter the days the more people visit the lake and the more drownings occur," said Gaydusek. "Maybe some of these visitors don't come out to the lake that often, so we want to get the water safety message out early so our visitors have fun and go home safely."

Tulsa District has some of the most highly visited recreation areas in the Corps, logging well over 300,000 visits annually.

Plan

Continued from Page 12

flood control and recreation, Skiatook Lake's authorized purposes also include water supply and water quality. Water quality flow releases are made year round to augment the natural flow of water in Bird Creek, downstream of the dam. Downstream releases are necessary to avoid fish kills, maintain the aquatic biota and prevent violation of OPDES permit conditions for city public works projects. Corps officials state that this is a weather problem, not a use or operations problem, and only significant runoff in the watershed will solve the problem.

The Corps and the other agencies involved with this OPDES permit modification and new water release structure will schedule a public meeting to inform the public about the changes and to accept comments.

Despite the impact persistent drought conditions have had on the region, Lee Perry, the Corps' Skiatook Lake Manager is looking forward to a good year of recreation on the lake.

"We still have plenty of water to accommodate boating and a full range of recreational activities throughout the year," said Perry. "We're looking forward to a good fishing season and encourage everyone to take advantage of all Skiatook has to offer."

"We continue to work closely with our non-Federal partners and have begun requesting their input as we work through our budgetary process. Including them in that process has proven beneficial to our partners and district."

-- Lt. Col. Neil Craig

Fort Worth District water supply mission critical to Texas

By Lt. Col. Neil Craig
Acting Commander
Fort Worth District

Team Fort Worth, as we begin the spring season, recreation and outdoor activities are on the minds of the public, you and your families. Many of those activities are focused on and around water, including our Fort Worth District's 25 lakes.

One of my goals with having this quarterly Commander's column is to use it as a forum to educate our workforce and those outside of the district about each of our primary missions. I can't think of a better one to kick-off the Spring Pacesetter than talking about our water supply mission.

While water is at the crux of that recreation mission, many of you and the general public aren't aware that we have an overall water supply mission that is critical to the entire state of Texas.

The Fort Worth District operates and maintains reservoirs and lakes, providing outdoor recreation opportunities for over a million visitors annually, while simultaneously furnishing approximately 35 percent of Texas' water supply.

The district's reservoirs are all multi-purpose in nature and include water supply as an authorized purpose. As a part of that mission, SWF executes several water storage agreements that allow water users to store 'raw' water for which they are issued water rights permits from the state of Texas.

While the district's water supply mission dates back to 1950, when Fort Worth District stood-up, that mission has met challenges and has evolved over time, with competing water resource needs and changes to some of the District's river basins.

Because of an increased demand for municipal and industrial water supply, a need for additional water supply storage has grown. SWF, when doable and or feasible tries to help meet that demand by allowing a reallocation of storage at existing Corps reservoirs as an option.

While our goal is to support communities and the state of Texas, in terms of water supply, the Corps is still a Federal agency and we face the challenges of often limited Federal funding. Faced with these funding challenges, your division leaders and I are working diligently to prioritize needs by taking into account items that are the most critical for sustainability.

We continue to work closely with our non-Federal partners and have begun requesting their input as we work through our budgetary process. Including them in that process has proven beneficial to our partners and the district.

In addition to including those partners in our budgetary process, we are also working closely with State agencies, like the Texas Water Development Board, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and others. Our work with those agencies helps to assure state water plan implementation activities are properly coordinated. We also have measures in place to ensure that the various State and Federal permitting processes can share data efficiently and effectively.

See **Water** *on Page 15*

Section chiefs' mentoring group takes on common management challenges

By Clay Church
Fort Worth District Public Affairs

The March 2015 First Line Supervisor's meeting was held in the Executive Conference Room and had (from left to right) the director of Programs for the Southwestern Division, Robert Slockbower, in attendance as a guest presenter. Pictured here, clockwise from left, are Slockbower, Doug Sims from the Regional Planning and Environmental Center, John Jefferies and James Miller from Real Estate Division, Stacy Gray with Programs and Project Management Division, Jennifer Walker and David Madden with Regulatory, and Joe Lujan and Jessica Napier with PPMD. Fort Worth District USACE photo.

As a newly assigned section chief, Jessica Napier discovered the world of being a first line supervisor to be a challenging and rewarding experience. Of course, in parlance from The Beatles - With a Little Help From my Friends – is always desirable. In this case, the help was a little harder to find.

"Starting out there was not even a distribution list in Outlook for section chiefs. I put together this Section Chief Mentoring Program so we can facilitate discussion and share in our common management challenges," said Napier. "We have been meeting almost monthly for about a year. Not mandatory for section chiefs to attend but invite those here in the building that want to grow their abilities."

Some of the stated goals for the meetings are to grow relationships between section chiefs from all functional areas, improve program/project execution and enhance management and leadership skills. The guest presenter for March was Robert Slockbower, Senior Executive Service, director of Programs for the Southwestern Division.

Napier, a native of Farmersville, Texas was impressed with Slockbower's presentation. She summed up the meeting with those in attendance by listing his main points of importance of managing good and bad stress; challenges of first line supervision; importance of team building; creating relationships with other state and federal agencies and remaining relevant to our customers.

Joe Lujan, a project manager within the District's civil branch of Programs and Project Management Division, described the meeting with Slockbower by saying "he always has some great insights." Lujan added the mentor group meetings have helped with team-building and building trust and relationships with the project delivery teams. "We are able to work to solve problems and to keep communication flowing so there are no surprises," said Lujan.

Water

Continued from Page 14

A final initiative we have begun as a part of our overall water supply mission is the education of our numerous current and potential water project applicants about the varying Federal permitting needs and requirements.

This initiative is one that will not only assist those customers and applicants in developing sound water planning strategies, but will also provide our district with best practices that we will use in our many planning processes.

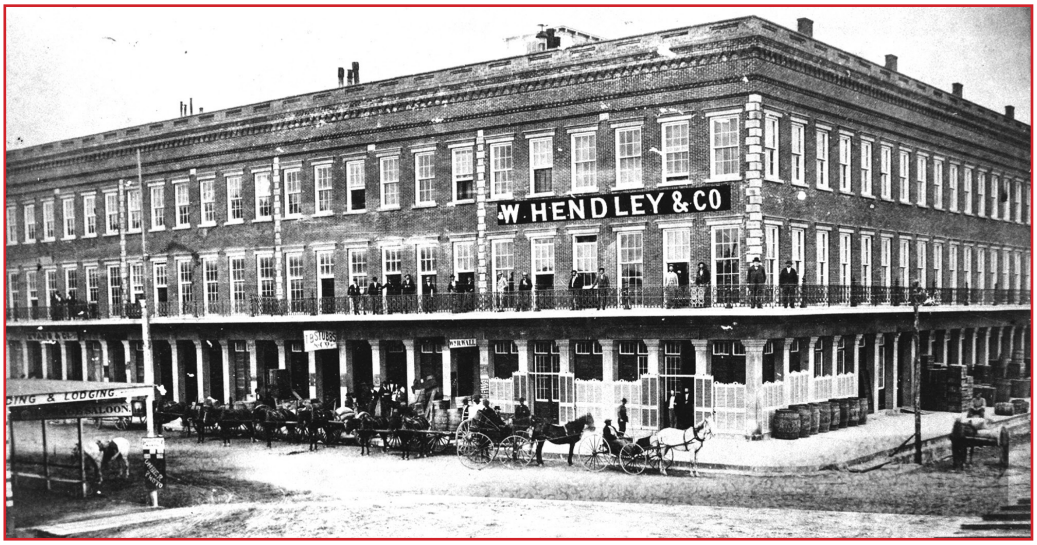
As you begin to enjoy the nice weather outside, remember to always take safety precautions in and around the water. Remember that alcohol and boating don't mix and remember to always wear your life jacket.

I ask each of you to help us spread that safety message throughout our surrounding communities because that message could mean the difference between life or death!

Thanks for all you do every day.

"On Jan. 9, 1880, the adjutant general of the Army directed Maj. Samuel M. Mansfield to establish the Galveston Engineer Office. Mansfield's immediate task was to improve navigation along the coast in support of the nation's westward expansion and increasing trade throughout the Gulf of Mexico."

-- Col. Richard P. Pannell



The Hendley Building is the oldest remaining commercial building in Galveston, Texas. Constructed in 1860, the Greek Revival-style is located in the Strand National Historic Landmark District. The building was constructed to serve as offices for brothers William and Joseph Hendley, cotton and commission merchants. The building served as a Confederate watch tower during the Civil War and became the original headquarters of the USACE Galveston District.

Galveston District celebrates 135 years of service

By Col. Richard P. Pannell
Commander, Galveston District

Feb. 25, 1880 is the official birthday of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District; it also marks the nation's commitment to promote westward expansion and development in the southwest United States. The Corps began work in Texas as early as 1853 when Lt. W.H. Stevens from the New Orleans Engineer Office completed the first survey of the Galveston Entrance Channel.

In the period after the Civil War, efforts to improve the channel met with mixed results. Various projects had increased effective depth of the channel from about nine to 12 feet between 1867 and 1872. Engineers agreed that long jetties on the entrance channel were needed to reduce shoaling of offshore sandbars. The Corps had little experience with construction of ocean jetties in a tidal setting. Additionally, the hurricane of 1875 proved to be a major setback in work of the jetties. After many years and the equivalent of around $11 million spent, the Corps had not achieved the significant progress it had hoped for.

On Jan. 9, 1880, the adjutant general of the Army directed Maj. Samuel M. Mansfield to establish the Galveston Engineer Office. Mansfield's immediate task was to improve navigation along the coast in support of the nation's westward expansion and increasing trade throughout the Gulf of Mexico. The top priority at the time was to increase the entrance channel depth at Galveston. His arrival Feb. 25, 1880, ushered in a new era for federal projects in Texas and established the continuous presence of an engineer district-level command in Galveston for the next 135 years. He established the first engineer office in the Hendley Building on the Strand near 20th Street, where today there is a historical marker on the side of the building to mark our original headquarters. By 1897, Mansfield and his successors had deepened the channel to 25 feet and firmly established Galves-

See **Celebration** *on Page 17*

President's FY16 Budget for USACE Civil Works released

By Galveston District
Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District will receive new feasibility funding for the Houston Ship Channel and Coastal Texas studies; continued funding for the Sabine Pass to Galveston Bay study; construction funding for Addicks and Barker Dams and Greens Bayou in Houston, as well as continued Operation and Maintenance funding for the Texas waterways in the president's fiscal year 2016 budget for the Corps' Civil Works program.

"The district's programs are well funded in FY15 with potential growth in FY16 particularly with respect to our Construction General and General Investigations funding," said Col. Richard Pannell, USACE Galveston District commander. "In 2014 Congress authorized a total of nine new starts across the country; two of those are in the Galveston District. This year we will be moving forward into the feasibility phase of both Houston-Galveston Ship Channel improvement and Coastal Texas storm damage reduction studies."

General Investigation studies refer to the traditional and most common way for the Corps to assist a community in addressing large-scale, complex water resource problems. A General Investigation study often begins with a request for assistance from a community or a local or state government entity with a water resource need (navigation, flood protection or ecosystem restoration) beyond its capability. Before initiating a study, the Corps generally requires two types of congressional authority - authorization and appropriations. Once the study is authorized and funds are appropriated, the project will advance through two phases using General Investigation funding: feasibility and preconstruction engineering and design. If the study is approved by Congress, additional authorization and appropriations must occur for construction to begin.

"The 2016 Civil Works budget for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reflects the administration's priorities to support and improve the nation's economy, protect the American people and restore our environment," said the Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, assistant secretary of the Army for Civil Works. "This budget supports the core mission areas of coastal and inland navigation, reducing flood and storm risks and restoring aquatic ecosystems."

Bill Wise, chief of the Project Management Branch for the Galveston District said the funding will enable staff to work with non-federal partners to continue ongoing studies and design on various projects.

"It will allow us to initiate new studies and design as well as assess opportunities to provide navigation improvements, flood risk management, restoration, protection of marshes, national seashores, wildlife refuges and state wildlife management areas along the Texas coast," said Wise.

Sharon Tirpak, Galveston District project manager, is tasked with overseeing the feasibility phase of the Sabine Pass to Galveston Bay Study and is collaborating with non-federal sponsors to identify shared objectives for managing Texas coastal priorities on current and future potential cost shared studies/projects.

"The Galveston District received $583,000 for the Sabine Pass to Galveston Bay study, which along with matching non-federal funds will be used to continue with the feasibility phase of the project," said Tirpak. "The feasibility phase is looking at a comprehensive characterization of the upper Texas coast with detailed evaluation of the Orange, Jefferson and Brazoria counties for coastal storm risk management opportunities."

Celebration

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ton as a reliable deep water port.

While the missions and priorities of the district have changed over the years, the essence of that first mission remains the same. The Galveston District's connection to coastal resources and navigation improvement endure and the scope and scale of activities have only increased. From the Rio Grande to the Sabine, our projects protect Americans, enable commerce and improve ecosystems. On this day we honor the great men and women who have gone before us and established a heritage of delivering successful projects and providing great value to the nation. We will never forget the pacesetting spirit of this proud organization with one of the richest

" This is the worst drought in decades for this region and it is presenting never-before-seen issues for us to tackle at our lakes. In this situation, we are reaching out to partners and stakeholders to devise new ways to preserve our resources and balance the authorized purposes of our lakes."

-- Col. Richard A. Pratt

Tulsa reports significant success in FY 2015

By Col. Richard A. Pratt
Commander, Tulsa District

Fellow Pacesetters, we are about to wrap up the second quarter of this fiscal year and I'm pleased to report that through your dedicated efforts the District enjoyed some significant successes in the first half of FY15.

We continue our mission to support the warfighter through our Military Construction program. February 4, Tinker Air Force Base announced the purchase of 158 acres of land on the west side of the base for construction of multipurpose hangars for next-generation aerial refueling aircraft. Tulsa District's Office of Counsel and the Real Estate Office did a tremendous job of spearheading the efforts to clear the way for the land transfer. Close coordination had to be conducted with Division, Headquarters, Tinker AFB, and AF Headquarters to ensure the land transfer met all the necessary legal requirements. The District is also responsible for coordinating the design and construction of the hangars.

At Fort Sill, we delivered a state-of-the-art Reception Battalion Complex for $33 million, consolidating the new recruit reception operations into one complex. The 93,000 square foot complex includes a Central Initial Issue Point, Personnel Affairs Division and Identification Processing Point, medical, dental, audiology and optical processing points and a barber shop. The end users are pleased with the quality and appearance of the facility.

Another issue at Fort Sill regarding the well-being of our warfighters and their families is the persistent drought and the threat to the water supply at Fort Sill and in the Lawton, Okla. region. We will conduct a roundtable discussion in the third quarter of this FY with the Oklahoma Secretary of Energy and Environment's office, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, the Waurika Lake Conservatory District, the Bureau of Reclamation and other local and city officials and agencies to discuss short and long-term actions to ensure a sustainable water supply at Fort Sill.

While Fort Sill is our first MILCON project with water supply threatened by the ongoing extreme drought in the region, several Civil Works projects continue to suffer consequences from this dry cycle. This is the worst drought in decades for this region and it is presenting never-before-seen issues for us to tackle at our lakes. In this situation, we are reaching out to partners and stakeholders to devise new ways to preserve our resources and balance the authorized purposes of our lakes.

Waurika Lake is a water supply source for Fort Sill and the Lawton region. The lake's conservation pool is currently only 28 percent full and is in Drought Level 4. The lake's level is below the top gate, leaving the middle gate for pulling water. If the level drops below the middle gate, the bottom gate is not available for pulling water because of siltation. We are working with the WLCD on a $12 million project to dredge the sediment filling the pumping system's gates, repair those gates, and install a floating intake pipe to pull water from the deepest part of the lake. This will ensure the sustainability of the lake for water supply.

Skiatook Lake, though not in Drought Level 4, is at its lowest level since impoundment. The challenge with Skiatook is that, even in drought, the congressionally authorized purpose of water quality is achieved through releases to help meet the requirements

See **Success** *on Page 19*

Tulsa opens modern, improved Canton Lake campground

Tulsa District
Public Affairs Office

The Tulsa District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony to reopen the Canadian "A" area campground at Canton Lake, located near Canton, Oklahoma, March 25 at 3 p.m.

Brigadier Gen. David C. Hill, Commander, Southwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Col. Richard A. Pratt, Tulsa District Commander and District Engineer, as well as local and state civic leaders will participate in the ribbon cutting ceremony. Members of the public and media are encouraged to attend.

According to Kathy Carlson, the Tulsa District Canton Lake Manager, the rebuilt campground will provide campers and day-use visitors with modern amenities and significantly improved recreational facilities.

"Visitors to the campground will also find 50 amp electrical outlets, the current standard for recreational vehicles, and potable water hookups," Carlson said.

The campsites, two showers and restroom facilities, loop roads, a playground and a boat dock, as well as portions of the nearby day-use area, were destroyed when an EF 3 tornado struck the campground, May 24, 2011.

The vortex left Canton Lake's oldest developed campground in ruins.

"Entire areas were covered with downed trees, and debris was scattered all the way to the shoreline," Carlson said. "Although it was an unfortunate natural disaster, we were fortunate that nobody was seriously injured and we've been able to make improvements to the campground as part of the overall repair and construction that went into the rebuilding effort."

All 77 campsites in Canadian "A" have been constructed according to USACE standards for class 'A' campsites. Among the newly constructed facilities are covered shelters on each site, a courtesy boat dock, two concrete toilet facilities, a new playground. More than 140 trees were also planted to replace those lost in the tornado.

To protect the new saplings from disease, the project office planted seven varieties of trees. The variety prevents massive loss in the event

See **Canton** *on Page 21*

Success

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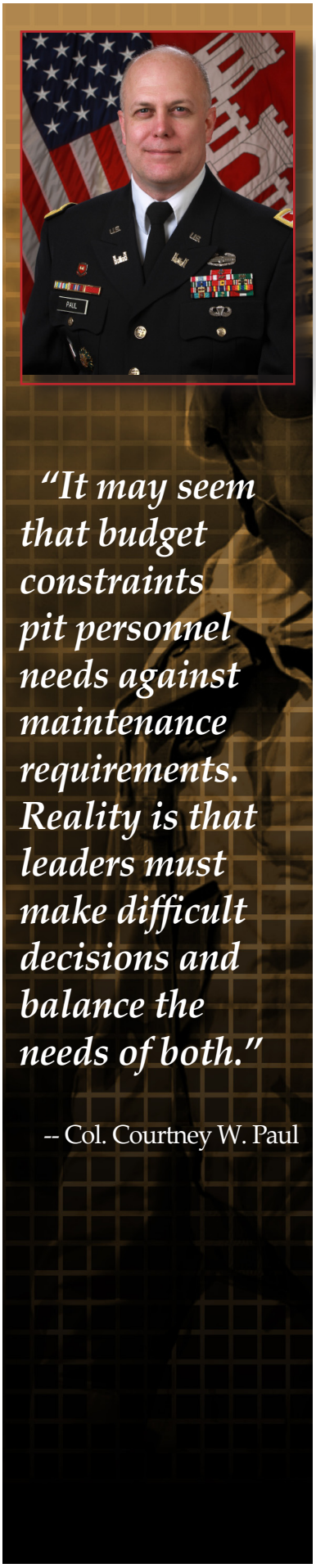
of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits of several entities. In an effort to conserve water at the lake, we implemented a deviation to the lake's water control plan March 3. The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality approved the Indian Nations Council of Governments' request for a minor permit modification, Friday, Feb. 27. The modification changes the measurement of flows in Bird Creek from the United States Geological Survey gauging station near Sperry to an alternate USGS gauge located further downstream, near Owasso. The requested modification also includes allowing 72-hour rolling average measurements to determine minimum flows. We expect this will reduce the need for continuous releases and may prevent lake levels from going down any further than necessary, in turn benefitting recreation and the surrounding communities. I couldn't be more proud of the interagency team which included INCOG, the City of Tulsa, ODEQ, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, the USGS, and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation that came together to take on the many challenges we face during this period of persistent drought. Our team of hydraulic engineers joined forces with state and local officials to develop this initiative and further improve our overall conservation efforts at Skiatook.

We now look to continue our work through the second half of this fiscal year. Dredging may begin at John Redmond Reservoir and Waurika Lake to remove sediment, first-of-their kind efforts for Tulsa District. We continue to work to bring in the Vance Air Control Tower and we are making headway on the Solar Ponds at Truscott Lake. Additionally we kick off the annual recreation season April 1 at our lakes and campgrounds. A special thank you goes out to our park rangers and volunteers who have worked throughout the off-season making these areas safe and ready for our recreating public.

With the arrival of the warm weather recreation season, I remind all of you to be safe. If you will be taking a spring road trip, please buckle-up and get plenty of rest before setting out. If you will be around water, remember to wear a life jacket.

Essayons!

Hydropower key for the 21st Century



By Col. Courtney W. Paul
Commander, Little Rock District

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plays a vital role in the our country's national security plans by delivering warfighter support, providing vital civil works solutions, reducing disaster risks, and preparing our people to meet the needs of an ever-changing world. Clean, renewable energy generated at our dams is a key piece of those national security plans. This has been true for several decades and will remain true for the foreseeable future.

A major piece of the renewable energy puzzle is hydro power generated in Corps owned and operated dams on multi-use lakes, reservoirs and navigation channels. We operate and maintain 24 percent of the Nation's hydro power capacity which is no small feat given the fact that many of our dams were designed and built 40-50 years ago.

Hydropower does not exist in a vacuum. It relies upon a supply of water that has many other demands for its use. Not only municipal and industrial uses which take water out of the reservoirs, but also recreational and environmental concerns demand specific uses of the water that drives the turbines. In the world of energy production, not only is hydropower "green" but it is also one of the few sources of electricity that can be easily turned on and off to meet rapidly fluctuating demands. The ability to provide "peak power" at higher market rates only adds to the challenge of balancing the needs of all users of a reservoir or lake. While our partner agency, Southwestern Power Administration, takes the burden of marketing our hydropower produced electricity, but USACE remains firmly responsible for balancing all authorized purposes of a hydropower-equipped dam along.

We cannot perform our mission of those authorized purposes without our infrastructure and the personnel to man it. It may seem that budget constraints pit personnel needs against maintenance requirements. Reality is that leaders must make difficult decisions and balance the needs of both. With future budgets likely to be trimmed and stretched, we will have limited resources available to secure and oversee the major projects at our hydropower facilities. This uncertain future requires careful planning and near flawless execution to maximize our effectiveness. One bright spot is that SWPA's customers realize the need to recapitalize the infrastructure to sustain it into the future as it affects their ability to do business. To that end, the SWPA Customers have provided additional funding for the purposes of repairs and major rehabilitation of hydropower projects. While these funds are able to accomplish great things, we need to recognize that they are not limitless. The game remains the same: to ensure the maximum effectiveness of both Federal budget and customer-provided funds.

Within the District Budget planning starts with periodic inspections. Identifying the critical maintenance issues is the necessary precursor to building budget work packages. We look at issues identified through our periodic inspections and constantly update those issues identified and must-fixes. At every Project Review Board meeting, the District leadership reviews project schedules and prog-

See **21st Century** *on Page 21*

Canton

Continued from Page 19

of disease or pest infestations.

According to USACE officials, work on providing electric service remains underway and should be complete when Canadian "A" Campground opens for camping in April.

While water levels at the lake are currently lower than normal due to an extended period of drought, the lake continues to support a wide variety of recreational opportunities and remains a highly popular fishing, hunting and water sport destination.

The Corps used available funding to rebuild 77 sites in accordance with current modern design standards, complete with 50 amp electric service and concrete impact zones and trailer pads. There are now two prefabricated handicap accessible shower and toilet buildings and a handicap accessible playground.

The Federal Highway Administration provided $1.32 million to rebuild the damaged camping loop roads through the Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads program.

The longer boat ramp in the Canadian Day Use area, and modernized camping facilities should provide many years of recreational opportunities for the public.

Canton Lake was originally created as a result of the 1938 Flood Control Act for the purpose of water supply, flood control and irrigation. The lake is located on the North Canadian River, about 2 miles north of the city of Canton in Blaine County, Oklahoma, and about 75 miles northwest of Oklahoma City.

Initially when the campground re-opens, campsites will be available on a first-come, first-served basis only. Eventually, reservations will be available through the National Recreation Reservation Service.

Brig. Gen. David C. Hill, Southwestern Division Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers speaks to members of the Canton Community during the ribbon cutting ceremony at Canton Lake Canadian Campground "A" March 25. (Photo by Kathryn Carlson)

The rebuilt campsite at Canton Lake's Canadian 'A' campground will provide guests with modern, improved camping facilities. The campground will reopen March 25 at 3 p.m. Canadian 'A' campground was destroyed by a tornado that struck May 24, 2011. (Photo by Kathryn Carlson)

21st Century

Continued from Page 20

ress, maintenance backlogs, and ensures our strategy for getting the most effect out of our limited resources. We can't do everything, so prioritization is vital to achieving our mission to the public and taking care of our employees. The final aspect of managing our maintenance workload falls to our workforce on the frontlines performing and overseeing the work day in and day out. Without a committed team of Corps professionals at every level, the execution aspect of our operation would render the best-laid plans ineffective or worse lead to complete failure.

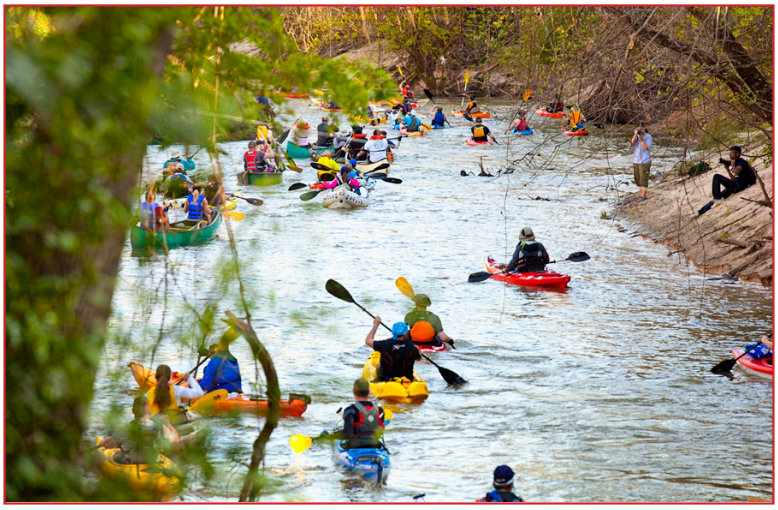
We are charged by the people of this great Nation to create and manage projects that protect people and property while generating renewable energy, among many additional uses. This is not a charge I or the men and women of the Little Rock District take lightly. We will continue to balance all the competing needs. We will meet our commitments. We will not fail. But our success requires dedication, perseverance, and excellence at every level.

Galveston District joins Buffalo Bayou Partnership in supporting Texas' largest canoe and kayak race

By Galveston District
Public Affairs Office

During the year, the Galveston District carefully watches and manages the water levels in the Buffalo Bayou system that run throughout Houston. Normally it's the weather that dictates how the Corps manages the watershed; but for one day each year, staff will base their decisions on one additional factor – the needs of the recreational paddlers participating in Texas' largest canoeing and kayaking event.

"We have the dams closed and at this time storing up water," said Galvest District Natural Resources Manager Richard Long. "We will begin releasing a controlled amount of water out of the dams March 6 in order to provide an ideal flow for Saturday along the race course. Should Mother Nature provide sufficient flows, we will continue to hold water in order to assist in providing a safe water level for the participants."



Regatta: HOUSTON – Participants take part in the 2014 Buffalo Bayou Regatta. Courtesy of Buffalo Bayou Partnership. (photo by Katya Horner)

In its 43rd year, the Buffalo Bayou Regatta (a 15-mile American Canoe Association sanctioned event) continues to grow and gain in spectator and participant popularity. With nearly 1,000 boaters anticipated to attend, Buffalo Bayou Partnership organizers of the event take an active role in minimizing risk and promoting boater safety.

"We strive to make the race as safe and enjoyable as possible," said Director of Public Relations and Events Trudi Smith, BBP. "We are hoping that weather cooperates again this year."

Long said, by managing the release of water from the Addicks and Barker reservoir on the upper reaches of the Buffalo Bayou, the Corps helps make the regatta a safer and more pleasurable race that begins in San Felipe and winds its way to Sesquicentennial Park in downtown Houston.

"Without the Corps managing the flow of water, the levels would not be right for the regatta," said Long. "During a wet year, we can manage the flow to make it safer for paddlers, and during a dry year, we give the boaters sufficient water to run the race."

Smith agrees and says that the bayou's water levels for the last several years have been of a concern, but with the Corps' help the water levels on race day have been perfect.

"The Army Corps of Engineers is instrumental in helping this event succeed each year," said Smith. "The regatta is an example that when people come together they can accomplish a lot more. The Corps' involvement strengthens this event and also the Houston Community."

Ultimately, the purpose of the regatta is to shine a light on the need for the continued revitalization of the Buffalo Bayou, explains Smith. Although the bayou's environment has improved over the years, there is more to be done. It is this common concern for the bayou's health that forms the basis of the collaboration between the Corps and BBP.

"We both have a common interest in protecting the bayou for both environmental and recreational purposes," said Long. "With our continuing commitment to assisting the groups like the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, we'll play a part in helping to protect and revitalize precious resources."

The race is open to anyone 12 and up. A grand prize Styrofoam Cup will be awarded to the boat that collects the most trash on its journey, with proceeds of the event supporting the ongoing improvement and revitalization projects along Buffalo Bayou. The 330-square-mile Buffalo Bayou watershed is central to the drainage of Houston and Harris County.

DA intern participates in special developmental assignments

By Ron Wooten
Galveston District
Regulatory Division

A quick look at the diverse engineering projects headed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was all it took to convince a young engineering graduate wanting to make his mark in the profession that this is where he needed to be. However, the career path for Department of the Army Civil Engineer Intern Tom Brauer, who entered the Corps two years ago through the DA Intern Program, wasn't always this clear.

Originally entering college with every intention of using his natural abilities in art and design to become an architect, Brauer's love of math and science over-rode these abilities and he found himself changing his major in his sophomore year, noting that the switch to becoming an engineer wasn't completely without precedence.

"My grandfather on my dad's side of the family was a civil engineer working for the U.S. Geological Survey and later the CSX railroad," said Brauer.

As a DA intern, Brauer participates in special developmental assignments around the Corps that provide him with knowledge and experience he can use to assist his colleagues in the H&H Division. Currently on assignment at the Environmental Research and Development Center in Vicksburg, Miss., Brauer is working on a sediment management optimization tool, a navigation data analysis project and a Dredged Material Management Plan Sustainability Study.

"Tom has shown exceptional ability with hydrodynamic modeling," said Rob Thomas, chief of the H&H Division and Brauer's supervisor. "His work demonstrating the capabilities of RAS2D (two-dimensional modeling) enabled him to help develop new modeling methodologies. He has also shown incredible initiative, resulting in a developmental assignment to ERDC-Coastal & Hydraulics Laboratory to upgrade systems that will enable engineers, planners and operators to better plan and manage navigation projects."

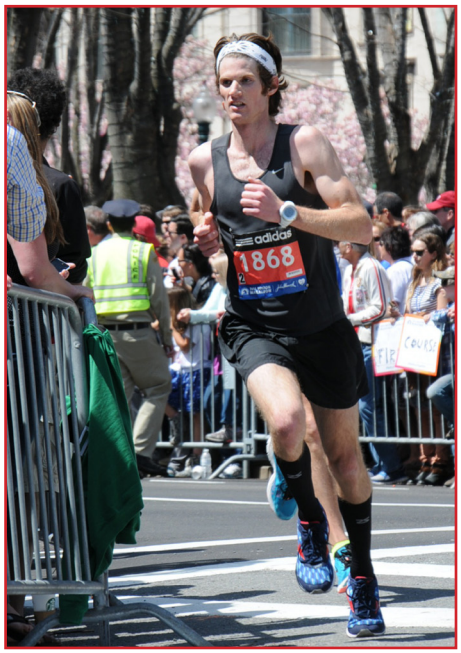
When asked what he likes most about his work, Brauer noted that he enjoys the challenging nature of the projects and tasks he is assigned to assist with.

"I enjoy being given a difficult problem and applying my technical skills to develop a solution," Brauer said.

No stranger to challenges, Brauer's dedication overlaps in his personal life in the form of distance running – a passion that began in high school while a member of the cross country team and perfected over the years as he transformed into an elite marathoner.

In January 2014, Brauer ran the Houston Marathon and finished 67th overall with a time of 2:50:35. In May he traveled to Boston for his 8th marathon, pushing himself to run his 3rd Boston Marathon at a personal best time of 2:49:08.

News of his Houston Marathon accomplishment reached USACE Headquarters and the USACE Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the USACE, Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick, sent him a congratulatory letter that read, "Truly amazing! Thank you for serving as an intern with the Galveston District. We're fortunate to have you on our team."



A quick look at the diverse engineering projects headed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was all it took to convince a young engineering graduate wanting to make his mark in the profession that this is where he needed to be. However, the career path for Department of the Army Civil Engineer Intern Tom Brauer, who entered the Corps 18 months ago through the DA Intern Program, wasn't always this clear. Courtesy photo.

Scheduled to graduate from the DA Intern Program in December 2014, Brauer is hoping he will remain in the USACE Galveston District as a civil engineer but adds that wherever the Army sends him, he's happy he chose an engineering path and a career with the Corps.

A Florida native, Brauer earned both his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (2010) and his Master of Engineering degrees in Civil Engineering-Hydrology and Water Resources (2011) from the University of Florida. When not working or training to break a five-minute mile he is either teaching Bible study at Coastal Community Church in Galveston or can be found exploring the outdoors on his mountain bike, kayak or sailboat.

Camp Integrity brings winter cheer to Afghanistan girls' orphanage

By LaDonna Davis
SOJTF-A, deputy public affairs officer

Nestled behind a large blue gate and concrete walls among the busy, dusty and littered streets of Kabul lies a sanctuary for young girls with no homes, and little to no family. This place provides a warm place for the girls to sleep during the cold Afghanistan winters, a place for the girls to play in a city ravaged by war, and it's a place for the girls to learn in a country where women are often times denied the right to an education. It's an orphanage aptly called Save the Children, and its mission: To give abandoned or otherwise misplaced girls the opportunity to create a life for themselves.

Orphans from Save the Children orphanage happily pose with a volunteer from Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan after receiving donated, career oriented Barbie dolls. (Photo by LaDonna Davis)

Save the Children was founded in 2002 and, like many social institutions in Afghanistan, is reliant on the donations and good will of others to ensure its longevity. This is where the Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan comes in. Maj. Gen. Ed Reeder, commander of SOJTF-A, has made it a personal mission of his to ensure the orphanage and the girls are taken care of and given an opportunity to thrive. As part of the Commander's Emergency Response Funding program, Reeder has been able to purchase computers for the girl's classrooms, upgrade the heating in the rooms the girls sleep and learn in, and provide necessities such as sheets, hot water, tables and pots and pans for the orphanage.

Recently, Reeder and volunteers from a military base located in Kabul, visited the orphanage to provide the girls with career-oriented Barbie dolls, hygiene items, toys and candy- all donated by The Toy Industry Foundation, a U.S. based nonprofit organization, and Mattel Inc. toy company.

One-by-one, as the girls were given a Barbie doll their eyes would light up. For many, this is their first doll. Some of the girls anxiously open the packaging, kissing their Barbie; others don't even open the packaging, cherishing the gift as if it were their first and last. But, all the girls smile and laugh as they play with the dolls, rearranging the dolls' accessories, clothes and hair.

Reeder says it's all about providing the girls a safe and secure place to learn. "It's about education for me, that's the most important thing," he said. "For an orphan girl in Afghanistan, life will be very hard. They don't have fathers to court a marriage for them, and once they turn 18 and can no longer stay at the orphanage, there's a chance they will end up being nothing more than a housewife to a man three or four times their age. That's why I want to make sure these girls are given every opportunity to get an education, go to college and build a life for themselves."

Reeder's sentiments echo those of the director of the orphanage, Dr. Sayid Reeza. As part of the girl's education curriculum, they are taught how to sew, how to do hair and nails, and how to work with a computer, skills that can help them get a job once they graduate. Additionally, many of the girls know up to five languages- Dari, Pashtu, English, Urdu and Arabic, a large feat for a country such as Afghanistan where the illiteracy rate is more than 75 percent and most people only speak the language of their tribe. The girls are also encouraged to go to college, a rarity in a society that frowns upon education for women.

Since the school has opened, 24 girls have gone to college said Reeza, and another 81 girls have been reunited with their birth families.

"When I come to the school and I see the girls playing and laughing, that fulfills me," Reeza said.

The 80 young girls that currently live at the orphanage, ages four to 18, are already thinking about their future and what they want to be when they grow up. "A teacher, a pilot, a doctor, a journalist," they each say when Reeder asks them about their future plans.

In the future, Reeder would like to see the school equipped with video teleconference capabilities so the girls can get lessons from teachers in the States. He is

See **Cheer** *on Page 25*

Deployed Fort Worth District member promotes overseas tour

Valerie Alleyne-Robinson, a member of the Fort Worth District for more than three years volunteered for a one-year assignment as the Forward Property Book Officer for the Transatlantic Division in Bagram Afghanistan.

A native of Wilmington, Del. she is a retired U.S. Army Sergeant First Class with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management from California Coast University. She enjoys traveling and spending time with family.

Q. When did you start your career with the Fort Worth District and what is your role?

A. June 2011 transferring from Surface Deployment & Distribution Command Okinawa Japan to USACE Southwestern Division thru Priority Placement Program.

Q. Why did you make the decision to deploy overseas?

A. To continue supporting the "Warfighter." My previous assignment from my military career and with other federal agencies has allowed me the opportunity to support the Warfighter and to deploy to countries like Turkey, Germany, Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Q. What programs or initiatives are you working on there? Why are they're important to the Corps' mission?

A. The Transatlantic Division builds facilities supporting U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel in the Middle East and Central Asia during both peacetime and contingency operations. My current duties are to provide logistical support and maintaining accountability of USACE property within the area of responsibility.

Q. Since working with the Fort Worth District, what has been your most rewarding experience?

A. The people and the mission of what the Southwestern Division people do. It amazes me of the caliber of talent and experiences of the people that we have.

Q. What would you say to one of your colleagues that were considering deployment?

A. Volunteer and make a difference. I actually recommended my coworker Kenny Hill to take the opportunity to deploy to Bagram and he is currently deployed here in making a big difference too.

Q. Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience overseas so far?

A. I truly enjoy what I do and it is an honor to be a dedicated "team player." I would like to thank my leadership and mentors: Ronald E. Richards, SWD Regional Logistical Manager and Tamara R. Mahaffey, SWF District Logistical Manager for giving me this opportunity.

An Afghan girl proudly displays her new Barbie she received thanks to the donations from Mattel Inc. and The Toy Industry Foundation, a U.S. based nonprofit organization. (Photo by LaDonna Davis)

Cheer

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also looking at getting new insulated windows for the school.

But, in the meantime, Reeder just wants each of the girls to concentrate on their studies.

"Education gives you the opportunity to do anything in life," Reeder said. "I encourage you all to study very hard, listen to your teachers, and life will present many opportunities to you."

Editor's Note: LaDonna Davis is a deployed member of the Southwestern Division.

NASA astronaut, Tuskegee Airman inspire students and federal employees at STEM and Black History Month events

By Edward Rivera
Southwestern Division
Public Affairs

As part of Engineer Week and Black History Month observances hosted by the Environmental Protection Agency Region 6, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division and the Perot Museum of Nature and Science, two U.S. Air Force pilots shared their personal stories with more than 500 students and federal workers.

The two pilots from completely different eras of aeronautics met in Dallas Feb. 26. One was Lt. Calvin J. Spann, one of the first African-American pilots in the U.S. Army Air Corps and founding member of the Tuskegee Airmen assigned to the famed 332nd Fighter Group serving in Europe during World War II. The other, Col. Benjamin A. Drew, Air Force officer and NASA astronaut, is currently the last African-American astronaut to fly aboard the space shuttle and perform a spacewalk.

The two were initially invited to speak at a Black History Month program and were also able to support Engineer Week activities in the morning at the Perot Museum with Brig. Gen. David Hill, commander, Southwestern Division. Both Hill and Drew spoke to more than 275 students, fifth through eighth graders, from three local schools focusing on the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics education to our country.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is known as the Nation's Engineers, because our nation turns to us to solve both simple and complex engineering issues," said Hill. "We built many of the iconic American landmarks like the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, but we also build things close to home, such as locks and dams, and levees and ports. It is vital to our nation's economic and technological strength that we develop robust STEM capabilities to help us continue building strong for future generations of Americans."

Lt. Calvin J. Spann's and wife Gwenelle after giving presentation at a Black history Month Program at the EPA Region 6 Office in Dallas, about his life and experiences from growing up admiring barnstormers and vowing to become a pilot to his journey to the Tuskegee Flight School to flying bomber escort missions during World War II with the 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group. (Photo by Edward Rivera)

Brig. Gen. David Hill, SWD commander, joins NASA astronaut Col. Benjamin A. Drew and Tuskegee Airman Lt. Calvin Spann along with SWD engineer Dr. Michael Sterling (center) at the Perot Museum in Dallas for National Engineers Week activities. (Photo by Edward Rivera)

Drew gave an overview spanning Space Shuttle Mission STS-133 from launch to landing to the International Space Station and Space Shuttle Discovery's final mission, narrating a video of the mission to the amazement of the students.

"Whether engineers, airmen or astronauts, we have only advanced by understanding the world around us," said Drew. "Whether you are exploring new environments or preserving our own environment, seek to understand the world around you. Follow your curiosity."

Although he did not speak, the 91-year-old Spann was recognized and his Tuskegee Airman experience, and how their courage and valor helped them to triumph was highlighted to the students. Throughout his life he encouraged students to make a commitment

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Executive secretary retires after 37 years

Jennifer Moore, executive secretary to the Southwestern Division commander, had her retirment ceremony March 30. She officially retires May 2 with 37 years of federal service. She was honored with the Bronze Order of the de Fleury and was inducted into the SWD Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees. At the ceremony were three of the 13 SWD commanders she supported. (From left to right) Former SWD commander retired Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Brig. Gen. David Hill and former SWD commander retired Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula. (Photo by Andre Mayeaux)

History

Continued from Page 28

to excel in the study of mathematics and science, and reminded them through preparation and perseverance they can succeed.

"Everything we do should be geared towards developing children, our future," said Spann during a previous interview. "You have to reach everyone, down to the youngest and try your best to develop their dreams."

After delivering a STEM-filled presentation to wide-eyed children Spann and Drew shifted audiences and addressed more than 200 federal employees as guest speakers for a co-sponsored Black History Month program at the EPA's Region 6 office in downtown Dallas.

Spann's wife, Gwenelle, gave a presentation about her husband's life and experiences from growing up admiring barnstormers and vowing to become a pilot to his journey to the Tuskegee Flight School to flying bomber escort missions during World War II with the 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group.

While assigned to the 332nd, he flew in the longest bomber escort mission of the 15th Air Force, a 1,600-mile round trip mission on March 24, 1945, from Ramitelli, Italy, to Berlin, Germany, to destroy a Daimler-Benz tank manufacturing facility under the leadership of his squadron commander, Capt. Roscoe Brown. Both would engage German ME-262 jet fighters with Brown shooting down one of three jets knocked out of the sky by Tuskegee Airmen that day.

From Spann flying the then state-of-the-art P-51 Mustang fighter in the 1940s, Drew would bring the audience beyond the sky and into space via the Space Shuttle Discovery. Similar to his earlier presentation to kids at the Perot Museum, the astronaut would provide a firsthand account of his Space Shuttle Mission STS-133 to the International Space Station.

Drew acknowledged his predecessor Spann's heroism and sacrifices to make things easier for the following generations of African-Americans wanting to serve their country and reach to the sky and stars.

"We stood on the shoulders of the accomplishment of people like the Tuskegee Airmen so that today we no longer have to carry the words first or only as part of our accomplishments," said Drew.

Two pilots, two eras and two different experiences, together, inspiring our youth to dream big and pursue STEM careers, additionally reminding the adults how far we have come from years of segregation on earth to diversity is space. The two airmen captivated the audience triggering reflection and inspiration.

"It was an honor to witness the two accomplished guest speakers who have left their mark on American history," said Ronald Richards, Southwestern Division Regional Logistics manager about the presentation during the EPA's program. "As I listened, I recalled my own history of great black Americans and their contributions to our country's success. My father taught me and my siblings to study and be the best that we could be; and my grandmother's nephew, Lt. Col. Bradley Biggs, was the first black commander of the all-black "Triple Nickels" 555 Airborne Battalion during WWII."

Capt. Edwin Jimenez, aide-de-camp to Hill, said he was honored to meet the two American heroes. "They pursued their dreams and broke barriers at the same time. Their commitment to this country in light of the social prejudices that existed is truly inspirational."

Fort Worth District recognized for best Antiterrorism Program

By Denisha Braxton
Fort Worth District
Public Affairs Office

The Department of the Army's main goal for its Antiterrorism Program is to encourage Army-wide community awareness and outreach efforts to address important topics related to protecting our Nation from terrorist acts.

Leading by example on these critical efforts, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District was named the 2014 Best Antiterrorism Program during the Army Worldwide Antiterrorism Conference Feb. 3 in Orlando, Fla.

"As part of the Department of the Army we are held to the same regulations and standard as fully operational units with limited exceptions. What the District has accomplished in today's fiscal environment is a testament to the District's tenacity and complete understanding of Army mission requirements," said Mike Kingston, chief, Emergency Management Operations, Fort Worth District.

In addition to receiving the award the District also received the same achievement for the USACE Antiterrorism Awards Program. The USACE Antiterrorism Awards Program was established to recognize significant achievements in the Antiterrorism field and those who work hard behind the scenes to protect USACE personnel, family members, facilities, and assets.

District Emergency Management Office staff members also received individual awards. Robert Eisenberg, Security Officer, Fort Worth District received the USACE Best Antiterrorism Manager Award and All Hazards and Contingency Operations Program Manager Jeffery Mahaffey was inducted into the USACE Antiterrorism Honor Roll.

"With the help of the Emergency Management staff especially Jeff Mahaffey we were able to completely overhaul the Antiterrorism program; this lead to the district successfully passing its Headquarters inspection in 2013 on all of our security programs. It also helped to completely energize the program district wide. I am very proud to be part of the team that helped win the Army-wide AT award for the district," said Eisenberg.

The Fort Worth District handles more than 4,000 contract packages per year. In order to fully integrate the AT and OPSEC programs into the USACE Acquisition Process and improve the process, the Security and Emergency Management team trained 19 District members. By exporting the training to the district headquarters, this action saved the district about $26,500 in travel costs. This significant training allowed the team to reduce the turn-around time for contract AT and OPSEC reviews from seven to three days and has ensured all contracts are compliant without any delays in awarding new contracts for district projects.

During Fiscal Year 2014, the Security Office completed a Risk Assessment of all the project offices, dams and hydropower plants in the district. This was the first complete assessment of all 25 lakes and dams and three hydropower plants, eight of which are listed as national critical infrastructure. The detailed assessment process shaped the new integrated Protection Plan to rank order the district lakes and hydropower plants based on their vulnerabilities and threats. In the end, it allowed the District Commander and the Operations Division Chief to assign limited district resources to lessen identified vulnerabilities at the District's most vulnerable critical assets.

All of these significant achievements were instrumental in creating a cohesive and manageable Antiterrorism program that is an effective tool for safeguarding all district offices and employees.

"The Fort Worth District Security team worked diligently to heighten awareness of military, civilians, and family members to the nature and dangers of terrorism, while also increasing the overall security of this large, diverse District and help promote a synchronous effort across USACE," said Lt. Col. Neil Craig, acting commander, Fort Worth District.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District was named the 2014 Best Antiterrorism Program during the Army Worldwide Antiterrorism Conference Feb. 3 in Orlando, Fla. (USACE photo)

Q & A
Frederick Olison
Chief of Staff
Southwestern Division

Frederick Olison has been the Chief of Staff for the Southwestern Division since graduating from the U.S. Army War College in 2012. He has been a USACE employee since May 2006. Ollison manages two careers as a Federal and State civil service employee an officer in the National Guard for more than 25 years. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Louisiana State University in 1991. He completed post graduate education at the Air Force Institute of Technology in Environmental Science. He also holds a Master of Science degree in Project Management and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. Besides spending time with his family he enjoys fitness training, wood working and yard work. :If someone would have told me 25 years ago tht I was going to enjoy landscaping and planting flowers I would have laughed," said Ollison.

Q. What first led you to take on the leadership role that you are now in? What is your motivation to continue?

A. *One of my faculty advisers at the War College had been a Chief of Staff while he was on active duty. I spent a good bit of time talking about his role and became extremely interested serving in a role that allowed me to work with and help more people. When I returned home from the War College, the Deputy Division Commander offered me the opportunity to serve as the Acting Chief of Staff. At some point, the Division Commander made the assignment permanent. What motivates me is being a servant, helping to shape the organizational culture, and working to ensure senior leaders and employees having the information they need to succeed, which ultimately mean the mission succeeds.*

Q. What would you say are the most important aspects of SWD that drive you as well as your subordinates?

A. *Taking care of people and helping other employees do their jobs better, which includes freeing up the Commander and Deputy Commander from daily operations and routine management of SWD, coordinating staff actions and training, advising.*

Q. You are a member of the Air National Guard, how does that experience enhance you Army Job, and vice-versa?

A. *Yes, I'm a member of the National Guard. I have been a member of the guard for over 27 years. I started out enlisted in the Army National Guard 1988. Went on to get a commission in the Army Guard as a Combat Engineer in 1991 and did a service transfer to the Air Nation Guard in 1996. With the exception of about 18 months as a Bioenvironmental Engineer and serving as the Medical + Readiness Officer in the 113th Medical Group, I have spent all my time as an engineer officer in Civil Engineering. I have been blessed with the experience I have gained from both jobs. My civilian career has greatly benefited from the leadership skills I learned in the military, and my military job has benefited from my civilian experience as an Environmental Engineer. Throughout my careers, each job has benefited from the other. For example, I first got introduced to strategic planning as a military technician working for the Louisiana Air National Guard. I went on to use what I learned and learned even more about strategic planning when I worked for the Department of Justice and the Federal Aviation Administration. My time at the Army War College afforded me the opportunity to really increase my understanding of strategy and integrate military and business principles. I now have the planning knowledge and experience I gained in my current job as the Chief of Staff. It is a combination of my military and civilian experiences that have made me a better professional at both jobs.*

Q. What advice would you give someone going into a leadership position for the first time?

A. *Read, find a mentor and don't let your own biases get in the way of your objectivity.*

Q & A
Steve Perrin
Park Ranger
Fort Worth District

Fort Worth District Park Ranger Steve Perrin is the Lead Ranger at Lavon Lake. He is from Benbrook, Texas and has been with the District for 12 years. He has a Bachelor of Science in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Sciences from Texas A&M. He also has a Mastrs of Business Administration in Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management from University of North Texas. His hobbies include building and painting plastic models. "My son and I are putting together an F4U-4 Corsair right now. It's his first model and he is pretty excited." He also coaches his son's soccer team.

Q. What are some key initiatives that you are working? Why is it so important to the Corps' mission?

A. *We are in the middle of the lake's first Master Plan update since the 1970s. It's exciting because we are working with our stakeholders and the public to position the lake to weather coming storms like increased urbanization and increased demand for utilities. We recently brought on an outreach volunteer, Marylin, to create the messaging. Marylin has helped us by taking a vast number of really good photographs, linking in with our partners to document their events, and coordinating with partners, volunteers, and stakeholders to develop some really creative videos that showcase who we are, what we do, and why prospective volunteers would want to be part of the Fort Worth and Lavon teams.*

Q. What are some of your day-to-day duties in the office?

A. *I am responsible for the Safety, Security, Water Safety, Volunteer, Partnership, and Real Estate programs at Lavon as well as patrol of public lands and waters. I maintain my programs and I make adjustments to the programs that prepare us for the future. Working with the Lake Manager, I program and prioritize our volunteers' efforts to ensure that priority projects in all of the Ranger programs get scheduled and accomplished. I also serve as the senior ranger, acting as advisor and coach to other team members to build the bench and continue improving our programs and ourselves.*

Q. You do a lot of events on recreation and water safety at Lavon, why is it so important to the community?

A. *We want our visitors to enjoy themselves and to understand what the limits to using our facilities are as well as why those limits are important. Education and outreach are the best ways to convey that information. We also want our visitors to come back again. Teaching them about how to stay safe in and around the water and how to execute a rescue safely, should the need arise, helps them do so. Also, I enjoy it! Watching folks play and learn at the same time, seeing them smile as they do well at a task, listening to the ribbing they get from friends when they don't – all of that lets us know that, not only are they learning, they are enjoying it.*

Q. Tell us about your most rewarding experience, your proudest moment, since joining the Fort Worth District.

A. *I was blessed with the opportunity to work with a great team from across the country to teach water safety to Boy Scouts at the 2010 BSA National Jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill. I earned my Eagle Scout and made a promise to give back more to scouting than it gave to me. As a scout, you learn how to swim and the basics of a water rescue. We built on that and taught additional water safety information and tactics to a huge number of boys and leaders. I enjoyed doing my job and working toward fulfilling a lifelong promise at the same time.*

Q. Before working for the Corps of Engineers Fort Worth District, what was the most interesting job you've ever had?

A. *I worked on the Trail Crew at Yosemite National Park, building and repairing backpacking trails for several summers during college. We covered a lot of ground and saw some areas of the park that most people never will. We also rerouted and built new trail through an area impacted by a large wildfire and an area heavily damaged by flooding from spring snowmelt. Building those sections of trail to account for the landform, reduce erosion, create mystery and interest in what was around the next corner, and to look as close to natural as possible was a challenge.*

Q & A
Leslie Olsen
Civil Engineer
Galveston District

Leslie Olsen is a Galveston District Supervisory Civil Engineer in the Souther Area Office. She has been in her current position under a year. SHe has been with the U.S. Army COrps of Engineers for more than 5 years, more than 2 years with the District. She enjoys learning about sports, history, medecine, random trivia and more. She also likes camping, going to the beach, reading and playing video games.

Q. What is your role with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers?

A. *My role is to perform efficient and effective development of Operations and Management for Civil Works projects for the Southern Area Office by ensuring we develop projects that promote safe and efficient navigation through the Federal Channels of the South Texas coast. In order to fully develop those projects, I work with my team to collect, analyze, and disseminate data that enhances and broadens our understanding of the regular conditions and behaviors of the channels in our area.*

Q. What do you enjoy most about working on your particular project(s)/tasks?

A. *I enjoy working with a broad group of individuals from across the District to develop projects that meet multiple intersecting purposes; from navigation interests to environmental and economic impacts, our projects are critical to the success and prosperity of South Texas.*

Q. What do you like about your current job?

A. *I really enjoy the development and application of tools that can help explain the natural and man-made conditions of our channels. It's my hope that these tools will lead to a better understanding of how and when our dredging operations can be made more efficient and therefore more cost-effective for the Government and the taxpayers.*

Q. What's the most interesting thing you've encountered or who's the most interesting person you've worked with during your tenure at the Corps?

A. *Most interesting person I've worked with during my tenure with the Corps has easily been Edmund Starnes, P.E.; a former supervisor and mentor of mine. Ed always had a way of making complex work issues seem like just another problem to solve and he was instrumental in shaping my career and perspective.*

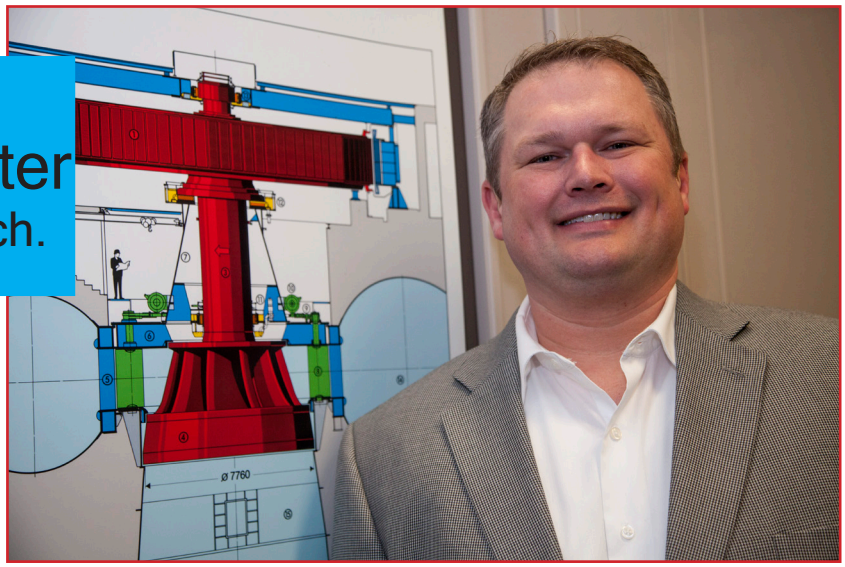
Q. What's your most memorable moment working with the Corps?

A. *Most memorable moment with the Corps has to be my time spent overseas. There were so many varied experiences – from the insanely mundane to the almost heartstopping – that I can't imagine a richer total experience being possible in only a year and a half. One of the more entertaining occurrences was when the Explosives Ordnance Disposal team decided to detonate a 500 pound Soviet era bomb…at 3 in the morning…with no warning. Needless to say, the range of emotions that day was pretty extreme.*

Q. Why did you choose this field?

A. I'm an engineer; there's just no two ways about it. At a Women in Engineering weekend sponsored by what would become my alma mater, I discovered that engineering was the technical term for the way my brain was already wired to think. The next step was obvious: turn my passion and innate ability into a rich and fulfilling career.

Q & A
John Carpenter
Engineering Tech.
Little Rock District



John Carpenter is an Engineering Technician with the Little Rock District. He is from Robbinsville, N.C. and has been a federal employee for six year, all with the District. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Lenoir-Rhyne University, Hickory, N.C., in 1999. In 2007 he received an Associates of Applied Science degree in Industrial Maintenance Technology – Power Plant Option from Ozarks Technical Community College, Springfield, Mo.

Q. What was your position and duties while working at Table Rock?

A. *At Table Rock I was a power plant trainee. My duties included completing a generalized combination of training as a power plant electrician, mechanic, and operator. This training included one year of rotational on-the-job training in the operation and maintenance of hydroelectric power plants plus one year of instruction, tests, and various work assignments.*

Q. When did you start work in the Little Rock District and what are your job responsibilities?

A. *I began working in the district Office in February 2010. My job responsibilities include serving as the North American Electric Reliability Council coordinator/alternate regional compliance program manager, alternate hydropower business line manager, asset management/facility equipment maintenance system hydropower subject matter expert and point of contact, hydropower training program point of contact, and the district hydropower Operations and Maintenance Business Information Link point of contact. I also serve on the national Hydropower Operations and Maintenance Business Information Link product delivery team and the division asset management project delivery team.*

Q. What is the most challenging part of adapting from working in a plant environment to working in an office environment?

A. *The most challenging part of adapting to an office environment is the sedentary lifestyle associated with office work. The plant environment required a lot of physical activity. In order to successfully manage the challenges associated with the office setting, it is important to find other ways to be physically active while in the office. This includes using the fitness center during your lunch break and/or taking short walks outside when the weather is nice. In addition, it is important to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible at our various projects.*

Q. What are your future career plans with Little Rock District?

A. *My future plan is to continue working in the Hydropower Section and become the reliability compliance program manager.*

Q. What do you like best about your job?

A. *The people I work with and getting out in the field. During my time at Table Rock Power Plant and in the district office I have been privileged to work with individuals that have a team and mission focus. When the occasion presents itself, it is nice to visit the many beautiful projects and parks throughout our district.*

Q & A
Chris Keeler
Power Plant Supt.
Tulsa District

Chris Keeler, power plant superintendent for the Tulsa District has been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers since 1996. He gained employment through the Hydropower Cooperative Program beginning his Corps' career at Broken Bow Lake, then moving on to Keystone Lake. He is from Coweta, Okla., and has a Associates of Applied Science degree in Electronic Engineering Technology and Industrial Electrical Technology from Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology - Okmulgee.

Q. What does being the Power Plant Superintendent entail?

A. *I am responsible for the operations and maintenance, and budget execution at four power plants in the Tulsa District, which include Fort Gibson, Eufaula, Tenkiller and Keystone Dam. I am also responsible for their related switchyards and flood risk management facilities.*

Q. What unique challenges does Hydropower face?

A. *The biggest challenge is the age of the plants and the infrastructure. We are doing as much as we can to maintain structures until major work packages have to be accomplished. As a mechanic or electrician, you struggle to complete routine maintenance and inspections and stay on top of the identified areas needing extra attentions. So you try your best to identify and address issues early on so that they don't become big problems.*

Q. How are power plant Operations and Maintenance funds recouped?

A. *When we perform maintenance, all of those costs allow the power plant to operate which contributes to generating power for customers. Everything we do in the power plant is 100 percent paid back to the treasury.*

Q. You are the program manager for the Southwestern Division Hydropower Board of Governors. What are some issues the BoG are trying to address?

A. *One of the biggest challenges is hiring electricians and mechanics. The BoG is attempting to develop a more regionalized approach to training programs across the division, so there is less guesswork about what skills an electrician or mechanic possesses from district to district.*

Q. What type of person does it take to maintain hydropower dams and equipment?

A. *It takes a high level of dedication. Our electricians and mechanics have to be self-starters because if something doesn't look right then it's probably not right, and it's probably getting worse the longer you take to work on it. We want people who are going to take ownership and follow their job to completion. There is no shortage of work that needs to be done.*

Pacesetter Points

Galveston District

Congratulations:

❑ Tiffany Mimms is the first district employee to receive the DoD Financial Management Level II Certification.

❑ The USACE Galveston District's Safety Office was awarded the Safety Award of Excellence, earning them the recognition of being one of the top five safety offices in the entire Corps. HQUSACE Chief of Engineers' Awards for Safe Performance. The award was developed to recognize USACE commands and organizations that have demonstrated exceptional operational excellence by sustained mission success with simultaneous exemplary safety performance. This award is presented each fiscal year by the Chief of Engineers to recognize one USACE MSC, one USACE center/activity and one district that have demonstrated the highest degree of excellence in the management of safety and occupational health programs and excellence in team member performance toward meeting program goals.

❑ Tricia Campbell on her promotion to an operations manager. Tricia will continue to work on the Houston Ship Channel and Galveston Harbor navigation projects as well as lead various studies/programs including the Houston Dredged Material Management Plan, Bayport Bend-easing and the district's Regional Sediment Management Program.

Welcome:

Matthew Duke
Sherman Holman
Richard James
John Long
David Solomon

Farewell:

Lavonne Collins (retired)
Casey Cutler (retired)
Louis Esqueda
Diane Kovacevich (retired)
Karyn Toso

Condolence:

❑ Isidoro Martinez passed away Feb. 2. He retired from the Galveston District in May 2011, after 54 years of service as a structural engineer. During his tenure here he touched nearly every structure that this district is responsible for. He was integral in changing our mooring buoy system to make it safer and more reliable. He was the structural engineer on the second outlet at Clear Creek, Sims Bayou, Greens Bayou, White Oak Bayou and Brays Bayou and worked on the Hurricane Flood Protection Systems for Port Arthur and Texas City. He was a designer on Wallisville Lock and Dam, Brazos River Flood Gates, Colorado River Locks and the Neches River Salt Water Barrier. He loved to mentor young engineers and encouraged people to pursue their education. He was tenacious and unrelenting when it came to his job and doing what was right.

❑ Buddy Deckard, husband of Legal Assistant Tencha Deckard, passed away Nov. 2.

❑ Bert Scott's brother, Courtney Scott, passed Feb. 11.

❑ Charles Scheffler's mother passed away Feb. 12.

❑ Angela Zahid mother passed Feb. 15.

Southwestern Division Office

Welcome:

Crosby Herbert
Readiness and Contingency Operations Contractor

Kellis Nobels
Business Technical Division

Lynn Ray
Military Integration Division

Demitra (Demi) Syriopoulou
Business Management Division

Farewell:

Dr. Ann Bargains
Equal Employment Office, National Employee

Rustom Contractor
Readiness and Contingency Operations Contractor

Debra Jones
Civil Works Integration Division

Jennifer Moore
Executive Office