

And they're off...



An excursion on the Los Angeles River begins with equal parts portage and paddle. Participants navigate the Cattail Chute (left) and an area called Lake Balboa Ledge on July 28. (USACE photos by Dave Palmer)

By Dave Palmer

LOS ANGELES — Last summer's non-motorized pilot boating program offered 280 opportunities for a rare trip down the Los Angeles River. The coveted tickets sold out in minutes, according to Yasmin Mero-Corona, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps' Paddle the LA River project coordinator.

This year, two non-profit organizations, LA Conservation Corps and the San Joaquin River Stewardship Program received a permit from the District. They offered 2,000 seats with the same result, sold out in minutes and stand-by lists at capacity.

And interest in expanding the program to other suitable areas is growing.

"We are currently working with

the City of Los Angeles, the County Department of Public Works and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority," said Lisa Sandoval, realty specialist asset management division. "They would like to expand the non-motorized boating program to the Glendale Narrows area and we are looking to have a pilot program in place by next summer."

Mero-Corona emphasized that education is an important component of their program. This year, Wednesdays are designated for non-paid youth trips in partnership with The River Project. They present a history lesson prior to the kayaking trip and later follow up with the students for a project showcasing what they learned about the river.

"For years, the Los Angeles River through the Sepulveda Basin has been

reserved for our efforts in flood risk management," added Sandoval.

The District's own work on river ecosystem restoration and studies aim to restore a more natural habitat where appropriate, improve its water quality and enhance recreational benefits, all while maintaining its flood damage reduction capability. We are a fully committed partner to the city's Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan.

With much of the 1.5-mile course a tranquil ride, the exception is the start of the journey with equal parts portage and paddling. Boaters must navigate the Cattail Chute and the Lake Balboa Ledge within the first quarter-mile of their trip.

The tours are scheduled to run through September 30.

Open house for business opportunities

By Dave Palmer

LOS ANGELES — During an open house July 25, more than 200 business owners met division chiefs and project managers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District to learn about contract opportunities and, in some cases, simply to learn how to get started in doing business with the Corps.

Based on the sheer size of the District's area of responsibility, 226,000 square miles across Southern California, southern Nevada, a slice of Utah and all of Arizona, leadership felt it would be cost prohibitive to get everyone involved in the project process out to job sites to meet the contract partners.

"You really have to develop those relationships with the companies that do the work for us," said Col. Mark Toy, District commander. "It's (open house) a very efficient way for our contractors to meet everybody."

Major District projects are diverse; construction of the border fence for Department of Homeland Security,

rehabilitation of Veterans Affairs facilities, the California High-Speed Rail and the world's largest groundwater recharge system in Orange County, Calif.

"Hopefully we're seeing a lot of partnering and mentoring going on between larger and smaller companies," added Toy. "Not only are we increasing the opportunities for these companies to work with the Corps, we're also creating

a platform for them to do this partnering amongst themselves. And that's a good thing, too."

The open house was held in two sessions, morning and afternoon, in the District's Emergency Operations Center and adjoining conference room with project and program displays and brochures listing various interdisciplinary branches of the Corps.



Col. Mark Toy, District commander speaks with two of the more than 200 business owners that met division chiefs and project managers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District to learn about contract opportunities and, in some cases, simply to learn how to get started in doing business with the Corps during an open house July 25. (USACE photo by Dave Palmer)



John Keever, chief of the construction division, oversees projects throughout the District's 226,000 square miles spread across Southern California, southern Nevada, a portion of Utah and all of Arizona. (USACE photo by Dave Palmer)

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Dear District Teammates,

In Los Angeles, we are "Building Strong and Taking Care of People!" Part of taking care of people means that each of us has an inherent duty and responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect.

Regardless of our rank, grade, age or gender, we must strive to treat all people with dignity and respect. In fact, RESPECT is one of our seven Army Values and is defined and described in the following way:

Respect

Treat people as they should be treated. In the Soldier's Code, we pledge to "treat others with dignity and respect while expecting others to do the same." Respect is what allows us to appreciate the best in other people. Respect is trusting that all people have done their jobs and fulfilled their duty. And self-respect is a vital ingredient with the Army value of respect, which results from knowing you have put forth your best effort. The Army is one team and each of us has something to contribute.

In the description above, the part about appreciating the best in other people really resonates with me. The strength of our District is in the diversity of our people; however, although we are different, we must learn to accept each other individually for who we are and for what each of us brings to the organization. Treating people with dignity and respect is the first step of acceptance, which ultimately leads to a deeper appreciation of our people.

I cannot end my discussion of respect without addressing the Army's policy on Sexual Harassment. In the Army's Sexual Harassment Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) website (<http://www.sexualassault.army.mil/posh.cfm>), sexual harassment is described as "a form of gender discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical

conduct of a sexual nature between the same or opposite genders when submission to, or rejection of, such conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, work performance, or creates a hostile or intimidating work environment."

In the Los Angeles District, we have a no tolerance policy.

Sexual harassment of any form undermines unit cohesion and is detrimental to the positive command climate that we strive to achieve in our organization. If any of you are subject to or witness sexual harassment in the District, please inform me or your immediate supervisor and we will take action immediately to address it.

As we head into the final month of summer, I would like to remind everyone about "Safety." I have noticed that many of our teammates are taking scheduled leave and are traveling around the country (and the world!). First off, I am happy to see many people taking time away from work to recharge and spend time with family and friends. Second, it is nice for me to

see the spirit of teamwork that is taking place as we cover down on the workload for those on leave. Finally, I am constantly amazed by the outstanding work that each of you is producing for the Los Angeles District. Keep up the great work! For those of you getting ready to take some vacation, BE SAFE and we will see you when you come back to work.



Warm Regards,

COL Toy

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Know your surroundings

What is it?

Antiterrorism awareness themes focus on instilling Army-wide heightened awareness and vigilance to prevent and protect our communities from acts of terrorism. Understanding and sustaining knowledge of the immediate surrounding environment represents the foundation of antiterrorism awareness.

Why is it important to the Army?

Because the threat of terrorist attack against our nation and our Army is real, antiterrorism awareness is a critical aspect of our profession, both on and off duty. The continued protection of our facilities and our people requires the eternal vigilance of every member of our Army family. By sustaining awareness the community acts as sensors and an extension of our police and security forces.

What is the Army doing?

In 2008, the Office of Provost Marshal General established an antiterrorism awareness initiative to instill a heightened sense of awareness and vigilance. Since that time, OPMG has developed extensive informational products and tools to assist commanders and managers responsible for the protection of installations, standalone facilities and operational forces.

A wide variety of antiterrorism awareness products and tools are available on AKO and Army OneSource. Examples of products include: antiterrorism and iWATCH Army poster series antiterrorism awareness and iWATCH Army videos and public service

announcements, active shooter brochure and wallet card, antiterrorism awareness information for parents, children and family readiness groups, antiterrorism awareness training presentations and extensive information on personal protective measures.

The primary areas of focus for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2012 theme include: understanding the threat environment, the importance of individual situational awareness and protective measures and ensuring all members of the Army community are familiar with iWATCH Army and suspicious activity reporting procedures. By assuring individual, proactive awareness of their surroundings, Army community members serve as sensors for a broad range of threats.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned for the future?

On May 3, 2012, the Army released an executive order to conduct Antiterrorism Awareness Month in August 2012 and this year marks the third annual observance. The purpose of Antiterrorism Awareness Month includes:

- Reinforcing the importance of suspicious activity reporting
- Understand the threat analysis process and indicators of possible terrorist activities
- Establishing clear understanding of procedures for dissemination of threat information
- Reinforcing the importance of the asset criticality assessments and the process

The greatest threat to America continues to be the "Insider Threat," which was painfully obvious in the Colorado movie shooting July 20.

You might ask yourself, how is this considered an insider threat?

After I explain, it should be painfully apparent! This individual was homegrown, raised amongst the people he turned against and terrorized within that movie theater.

You soon realize that much of his success as a terrorist was afforded him because he fit in and didn't raise suspicions, much like an insider could do at your facility should they but have the will to carry their action out.

That is why it is so important, even more so now, that you get involved in the safety and security of your working environment. The life you save might just be your own! See it! Report it! To your security office!

Jeffrey E. Koontz
Chief, Security and Law
Enforcement



Contact Security
at 213-452-3969
to report any
suspicious activity,
behavior or objects.

See Something
Say Something

Residents get update on Santa Ana River project

By Greg Fuderer

CORONA, Calif. — About three dozen Green River residents attended a meeting here July 25 to learn about the progress of the ongoing flood risk management project adjacent to their homes and to ask questions about construction methods and their impacts on the local community.

Chadi Wahby, a civil engineer who is one of the design engineers for the project, told residents the project is part of an overall effort to protect the banks of the subdivision and the 91 Freeway along the Santa Ana River in anticipation of possible increased future flows there due to water releases from Prado Dam.

“This is part of a much larger project for flood risk reduction,” Wahby said. “We need to be better prepared for the expected increases in release capacity from Prado in order to protect the homes downstream.”

Green River is the first housing development downstream from Prado Dam. When all elements of the Santa Ana River Mainstem project are in place, Prado Dam’s release capacity will increase from 10,000 cubic feet per second to 30,000 cubic feet per second. Without fortification to the river banks and other improvements, the increased flows could potentially damage homes, businesses and infrastructure.

The segment, officially known as the Santa Ana River Mainstem Lower Santa Ana River Channel, Reach 9 Phase 2A, is part of a 30-year, \$2 billion project to reduce the risk of flood damage along the river’s 96-mile journey from Seven Oaks Dam near San Bernardino to Huntington Beach where it flows into the Pacific Ocean.

Wahby told the residents that design engineers had to consider varying conditions when analyzing design options for bank protection. Because of the proximity of the work to the river and the homes, environmental aspects, topographic conditions, scour analysis, soil conditions, bedrock elevations and condition, and right-of-way limitations, one solution could not be applied to the entire length of the project, he said.



Chadi Wahby, a civil engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, talks to residents of Green River, a 500-plus home residential community along the Santa Ana River, about the progress of the flood risk reduction project under construction adjacent to their development during a July 25 meeting. (USACE photo by Greg Fuderer)

“Some areas will have grouted stone, while others will have sheet pile, for example,” Wahby said.

Daniel Duarte, representing the contractor CJW Construction, Inc., told residents that placement of the rocks should be complete in about three months. Installation of approximately 500 sheet pilings, that are 40 to 60 feet long, is expected to take several months.

“The upcoming noise was an issue,” said Eileen Takata, the Corps’ Watershed Program Manager, “but overall it seemed they realized that it’s temporary, and the long-term benefits of flood protection would be worth it.”

Duarte said vibration monitors will record measurements during rock placement and pile driving, and noise monitors will ensure the contractor is in

compliance with noise restrictions.

“It’ll be noisy,” Green River board member Roy Kojac told the residents, “but it has to be done.”

Derek Walker, a landscape architect with the Corps, told residents about the re-vegetation strategy that will result in both riparian and upland habitats being restored.

“The vegetation should come back pretty easily,” Walker said. “It will germinate at different rates, so there will be a variety in height and maturity. We’ll also plant grasses. They’ll be annuals, so it will come back each year.”

The meeting was the third held by the Corps so far to inform residents about the project and to address their concerns.

District economist represents region in Planning Excellence award



By Dave Palmer

LOS ANGELES — When Joe Lamb graduated from college with a degree in economics, he never dreamed that he'd be using his skills to determine the best way to protect a railway while providing better beach access to residents, based

on a 50-year model, no less.

The San Clemente Shoreline Feasibility Study and its ultimate approval by the Civil Works Review Board provided that opportunity and has gotten him recognition as the South Pacific Division Regional Planner of the Year, now competing for the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers' Planning Excellence Award. The award recognizes the individual's innovation, analytical ability and creativity in developing a planning product.

"After 17 years, I now understand how special it is to be selected," said Lamb. "In particular, the award has rarely been presented to an economist."

In the nomination letter, Lamb is described as the SPD region's technical specialist in coastal storm risk management economics, serving as the lead economist for the District's largest and most complex CSRM studies. His technical expertise in economics, as well as planning and plan formulation, combined with his professional dedication, has been critical to the successful execution of the District's planning program.

Over his career, Lamb said he has always tried to broaden his knowledge base beyond economics, studying assorted topics like geography, engineering and biology.

"I appreciate the opportunity to have a job that involves working on a diverse list of projects; projects that reduce flood damages to homes and businesses, that enhance the environment, re-nourish beaches and improve water supplies for local communities," added Lamb.

Lamb also credited his mentor, Mike Hallis, who has been both a co-worker and supervisor, for providing him with inspiration and advice on improving his communication skills and the quality of his economic analysis during his 17 years with the District.

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Arizona project engineer named Employee of the Quarter

By Daniel J. Calderón

PHOENIX — James A. Moye, a project engineer in the Roadrunner Resident Office at the Arizona-Nevada Area Office, received the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District's Kevin Inada Employee of the Quarter Award for the second quarter in 2012.

"First I am honored and humbled," Moye said. "I know that my fellow teammates are also working with the same commitment and tenacity; they, too, are deserving of recognition. Larry Triphahn, Daryll Fust and I came to USACE from the same organization, looking to get a fresh start. USACE has provided us with such an opportunity."

In his position, Moye serves as a construction project engineer with contracting officer representative responsibility for all types of projects for the Tactical Infrastructure Program for Customs and Border Protection in support of the United States Border Patrol. During his seven years in the Los Angeles District, Moye has built new border fences; constructed several miles of border fence lighting; maintained and repaired fences as they were breached by cross-border violators; maintained roads; and cleared debris and vegetation caused by monsoon activity.

"With the advent of the new Comprehensive Tactical Infrastructure Maintenance and Repair Program that will be administered by CBP, the routine maintenance and repair programs will be handed over to CBP, as a whole new aspect of border security will begin," he explained. "We are moving away from maintenance and repair and back into construction. What started out to be a one-man



operation has now grown into a six-man team, in which I am honored to be appointed as a team leader."

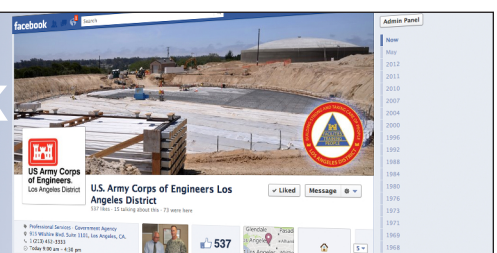
Among the new projects on the horizon for Moye and his team are remote forward operating bases and remote video surveillance tower systems. Other construction projects in support of the border patrol include; constructing of border patrol check points and improvements through construction methods and procedures to the access and drainage of two international underground storm water drainage tunnels.

The award he received also pays testament to the work Moye does for

the District.

"His many achievements in managing the Los Angeles District's diverse and complex Fence and Road maintenance contracts and countless Border Patrol Service projects during times of significant change and challenge are derived from his outstanding professional ability, noteworthy initiative and strategic vision," the citation reads. "Under these outstanding circumstances he has demonstrated an outstanding ability to lead, mentor, and coach his staff while earning their utmost respect."

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Fat: The hidden truth

By Cecy Ordenez

LOS ANGELES — The American Heart Association recommends that fat make up 30 percent or less of your daily intake of calories. Fat is a critical component to life, because it provides an important source of energy, is essential for growth and development and helps regulate blood pressure, heart rate, blood clotting, nerve transmission and temperature control. Although fat is an important part of a healthy diet, there are different types and they are not all created equal. In fact, there are good fats, bad fats and very bad fats. The type you eat plays a huge role in your levels of “good cholesterol” or High Density Lipoprotein and “bad cholesterol” or Low Density Lipoproteins.

The bad fats are the saturated fats which increase your LDL. Saturated fats are chains of carbon atoms where each link in the chain can hold a full hydrogen atom. Think of a line of office cubicles (carbon) each being occupied by an employee (hydrogen). The chain of cubicles is saturated with hydrogen on their carbon chain. These types of fats are usually solid at room temperature, like butter, cheese, cream, lard and fatty meats. They are harmful because of how they behave once they enter the bloodstream. They like to seek each other out and then stick together. This bonding eventually leads to plaque, the kind that clogs arteries and leads to heart disease.

The good fats are the unsaturated fats that help raise your HDL and lower your LDL. Unsaturated fats are missing a few hydrogen atoms on their carbon chain. In other words, the chain of cubicles (carbon) is missing one or more employees (hydrogen). Missing an employee in your team can decrease the strength of your work, so does missing a hydrogen bond in the carbon chain. Missing the hydrogen makes the fat unstable in its chemical composition, which is why unsaturated fats are found in a liquid state at room temperature. Unsaturated fats are found mainly in fish and plant-based

foods. These foods include: salmon, trout, herring, avocados, olives and walnuts. It also includes liquid vegetable oils such as soybean, corn, safflower, canola, olive and sunflower.

The very bad fats are man-made and are called trans fat or hydrogenated fats. They are a liquid vegetable oil (unsaturated) that has been turned into a solid fat (saturated). This is done by a process called hydrogenation where the structure of the oil has been chemically changed by adding hydrogen atoms that create a completely unnatural type of fat. In other words, we have empty cubicles that are filled with substitute employees who off-set their cubicle from the original chain of employees. This type of fat is appealing because it is cheap, it makes food taste good, and gives food a longer shelf life. For example, peanut butter and margarine have hydrogenated oils to keep the products solid and keeps them from separating in the jar.

Research has now shown that the trans fats are very bad because they increase your LDL, like saturated fats, but they also decrease your HDL. This coupled effect then dramatically increases your risk of heart disease. Trans fat also increases inflammation in the body. Chronic inflammation is linked to cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, acne, eczema, psoriasis and multiple sclerosis. More importantly, with its man-made properties and new molecular structure, your body does not recognize it and does not know



The CDC reports that trans fat intake has significantly decreased in the U.S. as a result of efforts to increase awareness through label changes, industry efforts to voluntarily reformulate foods, and some state and local governments' restriction of its use in restaurants and other food service outlets. (Courtesy photo)

how to get rid of it. To make matters even worse, you may not know that you are eating it. Although food labels are now required to disclose trans fat in your food, the Food and Drug Administration states it only needs to disclose those that have .5 grams or more PER serving. In other words, zero grams does NOT equal zero. If you find a label that says zero grams of trans fat, continue to read the ingredient list. If it has hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils, then the food contains trans fat.

What does all this mean? In short, your body needs fats but prefers you eat unsaturated fats, limit saturated fats and avoid or eliminate trans fat. You can do this by shopping at the perimeter of the grocery store and focus on whole food with the least amount of processing, avoid fast foods – especially fried chicken and fries – and avoid food with hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils listed in their ingredients, like baked goods, pastries, packaged crackers and cookies. Small changes can exponentially affect you and your family's health in a positive way!

Trans Fat: The Facts



Dietary Trans Fat

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010* and the Institute of Medicine recommend that individuals keep trans fatty acid consumption as low as possible.^{1,2} There are two main sources of dietary trans fatty acids (trans fat). Naturally occurring trans fat is found in small amounts in the fatty parts of meat and dairy products. Artificial trans fat comes from foods that contain partially hydrogenated oil and is formed when hydrogen is added to liquid oil turning it into solid fat. Often food manufacturers use artificial trans fat in food products because it is inexpensive and it increases the food's shelf life, stability, and texture. Foods that may contain artificial trans fat include fried items, savory snacks (like microwave popcorn), frozen pizzas, baked goods, margarines and spreads, ready-to-use frosting, and coffee creamers.

Trans fat intake has significantly decreased in the U.S. as a result of efforts to increase awareness of its health effects, Nutrition Facts label changes, industry efforts to voluntarily reformulate foods, and some state and local governments' restriction of its use in restaurants and other food service outlets. However, on average Americans still consume 1.3 grams (0.6% of energy) of artificial trans fat each day.³

The amount of trans fat can vary within food categories³

Food Category	Range of Trans Fat Per Serving
Margarine and spreads	0.0-3.0 g
Cookies	0.0-3.5 g
Frozen pies	0.0-4.5 g
Frozen pizza	0.0-5.0 g
Savory Snacks	0.0-7.0 g

What Are the Health Consequences of Consuming Trans Fat?

- Consuming trans fat increases low-density lipoprotein (LDL, or "bad") cholesterol. This effect contributes to increased coronary heart disease and death.¹ Trans fat may also have other adverse health effects like decreasing high-density lipoprotein (HDL, or "good") cholesterol.
- Further reducing trans fat consumption by avoiding artificial trans fat could prevent 10,000–20,000 heart attacks and 3,000–7,000 coronary heart disease deaths each year in the U.S.[†]

[†] These estimates of heart attacks and CHD deaths were calculated using FDA data related to current mean intake of artificial trans fat (0.6% of energy)³ as well as FDA estimates of 600-1200 heart attacks and 240-480 CHD deaths each year that could be prevented in the U.S. by a 0.04% of energy decrease in population TFA consumption.⁴ Using the estimate from FDA and adjusting to current U.S. statistics on heart attacks and CHD deaths⁵ results in the numbers presented above.

For more information

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/transfat.html>

FDA: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm079609.htm>

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity



It's An August Month, Yes?

By Steve McCombs

LOS ANGELES — If you are wondering just what the heck the title of this article means, then look up the word “august” and you’ll find its origins dating back to the Romans. It’s always the Greeks or Romans and Latin words that get all the glory. I once asked my biology professor why this was so, and the answer was so easy I was a bit embarrassed. Simply put, Latin is a dead language – not spoken outside of academic and religious circles anyway – and is therefore used to reference many modern words, particularly in the medical profession. Latin words never change their meaning, so they are perfect reference words. The word august comes from the Latin word, *sextilis*, which referred to the sixth month in the then 10-month Roman calendar. It was renamed Augustus (August) in 8 BC in honor of the first Roman Emperor, Augustus Caesar. It also means noble, dignified or imposing. I like the “noble” part since I was born this month....but I digress.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month. The modern history of vaccinating humans against various diseases is generally credited to Dr. Edward Jenner, a British physician, in 1796. He noticed that humans who had contracted “cowpox” (usually milk maids and other farm folk) rarely contracted smallpox during an outbreak. In those days, they didn’t even know what a virus was; but, he experimented and the rest, as they say, is history. We eventually discovered how vaccines work; by introducing a weakened or dead form of the germ, the human body develops an “antibody” to the organism. The next time the organism invades, the body is ready to defend itself. Because of Dr. Jenner’s work, the smallpox virus was formally declared eradicated by the World Health Organization in 1979. And since the days of Doctors

Jenner and Salk, a multitude of vaccinations have become available to prevent many terrible illnesses.

If you’re a veteran like me, then you’ve been vaccinated against a laundry list of diseases. The moment you get off the bus at Boot Camp, they line you up and you get stuck in both arms about half a dozen times. And that’s just round one – some vaccines require several doses. As a Navy corpsman, one of my responsibilities was to keep the crew’s vaccinations up to date. This was not only for their general health, but also as a control measure should enemies decide to do the unthinkable and release a biological weapon.

Sadly, in my point of view, there has been a significant opposition to vaccines in the past decade or so, and the internet is full of sites that purport everything from conspiracy theories to outright lies. The result has been a number of people who will not get vaccinated or have their children vaccinated. It should be no surprise that there has been an increase in these often-deadly diseases. And most of us remember Joe Mauhar, a valued member of Asset Management who contracted the H1N1 virus (Swine Flu) and passed away. There was no H1N1 vaccine when this disease reared its ugly head and killed Joe. There is one now.

This link is to the Centers for Disease Control website regarding some common misconceptions about vaccine use: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/6mishome.htm>

This link, also from the CDC, provides general information and links to a multitude of topics: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niam/default.htm>

Educate yourself and speak with your medical professional.

Below is a list from the CDC of all the health and age factors that are known to increase a person’s risk of getting serious complications from the flu.

And, as always, drive safe, drive sober and buckle up! ~ Steve

Asthma

Blood disorders (such as sickle cell disease)

Chronic lung disease (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] and cystic fibrosis)

Endocrine disorders (such as diabetes mellitus)

Heart disease (such as congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease)

Kidney disorders

Liver disorders

Metabolic disorders (such as inherited metabolic disorders and mitochondrial disorders)

Morbid Obesity

Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions

People younger than 19 years of age on long-term aspirin therapy

People with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

People with weakened immune systems due to disease or medication (such as people with HIV or AIDS, or cancer, or those on chronic steroids)

Other people at high risk from the flu:

Adults 65 years and older

Children younger than 2 years old

Pregnant women and women up to 2 weeks from end of pregnancy

American Indians and Alaska Natives

Fight the flu

- Protect yourself, protect others—
get a flu vaccine every year.
- Prevent the spread of germs—
cover coughs and sneezes.

To learn more, visit www.cdc.gov/flu

THE FLU ENDS WITH 
Get the flu vaccine, not the flu.



**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

District Toastmasters looking forward to distinguished recognition



The award-winning Essayons Club #988. Front row, from left: Christina Chavez, Guest - Charity Hanson, Cynthia McManus and Stephanie Eaves. Back row, from left: Guest - Arnel Bicol, Alexander Rosas, Sam Weatherly, Robert Stuart, Edward Louie, Benjamin Nakayama and Guest - Mark Ching. (Courtesy photo)

By Essayons Club #988

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District's Toastmasters International club, the Essayons Club #988 is looking forward to receiving the "President's Distinguished Club" designation from Toastmasters International.

"With a 2012 deadline of June 30 to meet the requirements, we accomplished the last of the series of goals on June 14, making us eligible to apply for this prestigious award," said Stephanie Eaves, the club's vice president of education. "We are slated to strategically arrange to meet these goals for a second year in a row, giving us the Presidential Distinguished Award for two years in a row."

There are three levels of recognition that can be earned by a single club each fiscal year; Distinguished Club, Select Distinguished Club, and the highest recognition of President's Distinguished Club. In order to receive the recognition, clubs work to achieve as many of the 10 goals of individual communication and leadership achievements outlined.

Each award recognizes achievements by club members throughout the year. Clubs receive the Distinguished Club award by achieving five of the 10 goals. The Select Distinguished Club is

awarded to clubs completing seven of the ten goals. Only clubs carrying out at least nine of the goals achieve the President's Distinguished Club.

"Being the group of over-achievers that we are, we were aiming for the highest recognition," said Eaves. "Over the past few months, the Essayons Club has held bi-monthly working-lunches focused on achieving the President's Distinguished Club award."

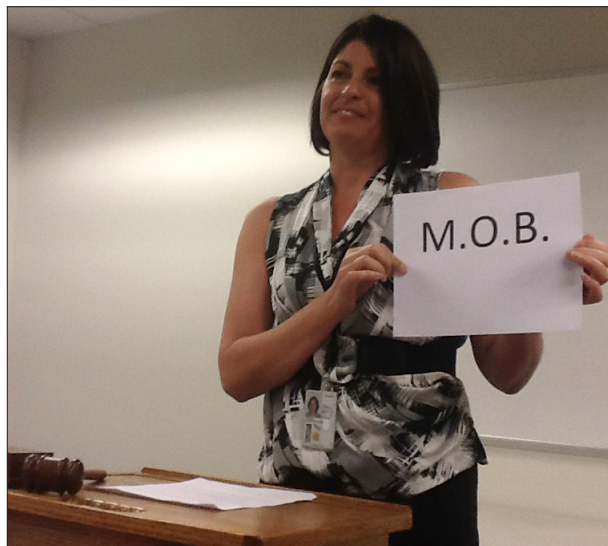
The Essayons Club was founded more than 55 years ago by members of the Army Corps of Engineers and is now home to well-seasoned members and some "newbies."

The group accomplished all 10 goals.

Among the achievements:

- 4 members completed Competent Communicator requirements
 - 2 members completed Advanced Communicator requirements
 - 2 members completed Competent Leadership requirements
 - 9 new members joined
 - 5 officers educated through weekend training twice
 - 2 reports were submitted on time
- "Congratulations, Essayons! Good job pulling together to meet all of the requirements and working in unity towards this prestigious recognition," Eaves said. "Stay tuned for our progress as we run this relay, passing the baton from member to member to strive for the Gold."

Eaves said the club is always looking for and welcoming new members to join them. District employees who are interested in joining or receiving more information should contact Ed Louie at 213-452-4002.



Christina Chavez giving a speech entitled, "M.O.B - Mother of the Bride." A Toastmasters meeting is a learn-by-doing workshop where participants sharpen their public speaking and leadership skills. (Courtesy photo)

Hard work recognized

District employees recognized as South Pacific Division nominees

LOS ANGELES — This year's Engineer Day featured 28 employees being recognized for their years of valuable service.

Another group of individual awardees were mentioned as District nominees for various awards, but they can now be recognized as South Pacific Division recipients of the following awards.

Civilian of the Year

- John Keever

Project Manager of the Year

- Karl Ahlen

Construction Management Excellence

- Ellie Encinas

Planning Excellence Award

- Joseph Lamb

Installation Support Professional of the Year

- Randi Elder

CP-18 Activity Career Program Manager of the Year

- Rick Leifield

CP-18 Senior Journeyman of the Year

- Doug Chitwood

Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Award

- Betty Melendrez - Professional Achievement Award
- Juan Dominguez - Civil Engineering/Environmental Distinction Award

Project Delivery Team of the Year

- Fort Irwin Hospital

Chief of Engineers Design and Environmental Award

- Tropicana and Flamingo Washes
- Tres Rios
- Fort Irwin Hospital

Lean, Clean and Green Award

- Fort Irwin Hospital

Green Innovation Award

- Fort Irwin Hospital

Green Dream Team Award

- Fort Irwin Hospital

Outstanding Planning Achievement Award

- San Clemente Shoreline Feasibility Study



Public Affairs Recognition

The District Public Affairs team received honors in the Herbert A. Kassner Public Affairs Competition that recognizes superior achievement by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers public affairs specialists. The team won first place in the Website Category.

Daniel Calderon took first place in the Commentaries and Television Sports Report categories. His entries went on to the Army-level competition and the TV Sports Report earned a third place award.

Brooks Hubbard was honored as producer for the first place Command Information Campaign, "Building Strong People," which went on to win first place in the Army-level competition.

The Army-level competition is the Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition.



Familiar faces vie for table tennis glory

By Dave Palmer

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District and URS Corporation have held ping pong leagues for several years and ultimately hold a championship tournament on the seventh-floor patio of their downtown Los Angeles office building.

This year's Ping-Pong Extravaganza men's championship was held July 26, featuring a chili dog lunch to raise funds for and promote membership in the District-sponsored Toastmasters club.

"Another great year," said Ed Louie, member of Essayons Toastmasters Club 988 and One-Alarm Chili chef. "We had some scheduling issues, so only the men's final was held today."

In the men's division, it was an all-District final as ACE-IT contractor Bee Cha (above left) won three sets to one against David Coltharp of the asset management division.

Corps vs. Corps lined up as the women took the table on July 31. Perennial finalist and 2006 champion Rosa Ramirez, programs and project management division lost a hard fought



battle to Roxanne Vidaurre (in white), engineering division.

This fun rivalry got its start when Ed Louie attended a Toastmasters meeting in URS' conference room and noticed a ping pong table in the patio area. A URS Toastmasters member asked him if he would like a quick game after the meeting. After the match, the two decided it would be fun if the district and URS challenge each other to a friendly ping pong match. From that

point in 2006 to present, it's two wins for URS men and five wins for the Corps men. For the women, its four wins for URS and two wins for the Corps women. The Corps is looking for future men and women players to join.

"If this year is any indication, the men and women of the Los Angeles District and URS Corporation will continue this friendly challenge, and I may have to add another 'alarm' to my chili," added Louie.

Words are relative – *beware multiple meanings*

By Daniel J. Calderón

Brilliant.

If someone said that in a conversation (or out of one, for that matter) it could mean a number of things. It could be a reference to the clarity or color of a gem. It could be about the intelligence of a specific person. And, with that meaning, it could be used sarcastically. Then, there's the Harry Potter version which could mean "cool" (another word that doesn't really maintain its original meaning) or it can be just an expression of frustration used to end a conversation.

When we have a great understanding of the language it's only too easy to assume that we understand it all. Words are not the only thing we have to listen to when we have a conversation. We have to "listen" to body language, the tone with which the words are imparted, the context around which the conversation runs and even the environment in which we are having the conversation in the first place. Conversations don't always occur in person. So, we also have to mind the media (since it may end up in multiple forms – print, phone and even face-to-face) in which we are conversing.

Sarcasm is a hard thing to convey (believe me, I try very hard) in a print medium. If you're trying to be funny with a snide remark, it could very well fall flat if you're trying to do it via e-mail or in another kind of writing, like social media. This is especially true if you're new to an organization or if the person you're writing is not familiar with you. It's best to be straight forward and as unambiguous as possible when you're writing. If you're trading e-mail barbs, make sure it's with someone whose quill is as sharp as yours and someone who understands your particular brand of quip. Otherwise, you could have some awkward moments explaining things later on.

The same is true with snarky comments made in person or over the phone. Although you might think it's an A and B conversion and anyone else can C themselves out, the fact is there are lots of people who do pay attention to the conversations of others. If they don't get your humor or can't hear the other side of the conversation, you may end up with an annoyed or offended eavesdropper.

That, however, brings up another point. We're far too sensitive to what people say and do right now. To be honest, I think we've let the constant influx of communication, mostly from electronic corners, thin out our skin to the point where it's almost non-existent. Jokes aren't just jokes and people who are upset demand for comics or anyone else they feel have wronged them to publicly apologize. It seems like we're constantly looking for ways to become offended and almost hungry for things that offend us so we can vent our righteous indignation at such an outrage.

If someone touches on a hot-button issue, like the notion

of limits on something like gun control or the possibility of homosexual marriage, the whole piece - no matter which side you happen to be on - is thrown out or marginalized with ridiculous stretches into mockeries of logic that have nothing to do with the ideas being presented. Conversation ends and discussion degenerates into name calling and posturing. It gets silly and, quite frankly, a little more than sad. I think we have forgotten how to accept ideas and words for what they are – opportunities.

New ideas, whether we agree with them or not, are chances to gain some new insight into the wider world. Words are

how we shape ideas and figure out whether or not we can make those ideas a reality, whether or not we can incorporate them into our world view. Change is frightening. I understand that. But words, with their multiple meanings and the ideas they help frame, are our best hope of allowing us to manage that fear and use it for the benefit of us and for our posterity.

Look back to the changes, the words, the ideas that have come before. It wasn't easy and it took an almost inconceivable amount of courage to work against the grain of conventional thought when the changes were both proposed and implemented. As an example, democracy was a radical idea

in the age of monarchies. Rule by the people, the mob? An absurd and dangerous notion when it was first proposed. Yet, here we are. Another example? Women voting and working outside the home were notions considered against both nature and society. God made women second to men was the conventional thought and having a woman educated enough to have a voice in society and to have a seat in the workplace would upset the balance of nature and thwart the will of the Almighty. So, since the time those ideas were stood upon their head and tossed away, has the world ended or society collapsed? Not that I can see.

Words are important and the ideas born from them can change lives. Use them both carefully. Don't be afraid to think and to speak; but, use your words well. I'm not advocating a total ban on flippant speech or writing. I'm not saying anyone should take political correctness to heart and just say "nice" things. Sometimes things are said in anger and sometimes misunderstandings occur even when the communicator thinks the meaning of the words and the thoughts behind the ideas are as plain as possible. Mistakes are made and should be expected.

However, learn from what you say and what you do. It's an easy thing to learn from your mistakes. After all, if you're paying attention, you'll see where you went wrong and (hopefully) take steps to not do the same thing the next time you're in the same situation. If you're truly brilliant and open to the people around you, however, you'll learn from the mistakes of others and not follow their errors. Words are strong. Be brilliant with yours. Just a thought...





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