



District clears debris from the Los Angeles River Drainage Area for El Nino.

Eagle's View

by COL Larry Davis, District Engineer

More Random Thoughts and Concerns

As always, there are a number of things on my mind concerning our people, the success of the District, and strengthening the team.

Fiscal Year-end Close Out. I want to thank all those team members who worked so hard to make our year-end close out such a resounding success. I personally witnessed tremendous cooperation, dedication, sacrifice, and superb technical competence. Everyone involved should be justifiably proud of your work. We delighted many, many customers, but the job isn't over. Now we must produce the designs and execute the construction to provide a quality product, on time, and within costs. We all play a role in making that happen.

Cash Awards. I am very concerned with our cash awards program. As we look across the board at becoming more efficient and cost effective, this is one of the areas that must be addressed. The DOD recommended target is approximately 1.5 percent of salaries. Last year, we were closer to 3.0 percent. For FY-98, I have directed that we budget for no more than 2.0 percent for cash awards. I am asking the awards committee to come up with recommendations that provide managers with the ability to recognize excellence while staying within budget. We must have a system that is fair, that rewards top performers, and is controllable.

Cutting Costs Without Cutting Capability. While I haven't seen the numbers yet for FY-97, last year the District spent \$117,000 on cellular phone service. Concerned about the high costs, I recently discussed the situation with Marie Lampkin in IMO. I knew what was bothering me... I didn't know exactly how to solve the problem without taking a bunch of folks' phones away from them. Marie came up with a great solution. She took the initiative to renegotiate our service rates and has literally saved the District thousands of dollars in costs without reducing our capability. It is a great success story and just one more example of how team members can make major contribu-



COL Larry Davis

tions to help the District become more efficient!

El Nino Preparations. I wish there was some way to individually recognize everyone who has been involved in helping the District prepare for predicted heavy rains this winter. The list is just too long. We have superb, hard-working crews from Con-Ops working six days a week to prepare our drainage channels. We have been running our regulatory folks ragged. Emergency Management prepared an awesome risk analysis and is conducting training exercises. Contracting has developed a tool box of capabilities to do emergency contracts as needed. PM's and Project Engineers have ensured their projects are buttoned up before the rainy season begins. The list goes on. Once again you have all demonstrated what dedicated professionals you are and once again I want to tell you how proud I am to serve with you.

Challenge. Last week the Chief of Engineers called his District Engineers to Washington D.C. It was a working meeting and I believe we gave his staff some good ideas and challenges to overcome. What was most clear, is the fact that the Corps of Engineers is changing - rapidly. We've got a chance to help play a positive role in that process. In that regard we've got three choices: LEAD, FOLLOW, or GET OUT OF THE WAY. I think we are the leaders, but none of us can do it alone. We need your good ideas, we need your vast experience, and we need to work together as a team! There's no looking back.

Society of American Military Engineers (S.A.M.E.) S.A.M.E. offers a great opportunity to get together on a professional level with some of our sister services and non-governmental counterparts. I encourage all District employees to check out the Los Angeles Chapter of S.A.M.E. You don't have to be an engineer to participate and enjoy the programs. If you'd like more information, please contact CPT Duncan Clyborne in Con-Ops or Mr. Bill Zeigler in Value Engineering. (Christmas Ball, 13 December at Ft McArthur.)

TRUST, QUALITY, TEAMWORK

The Newcastle

Commander

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Preparing for El Nino

District crews clear LA River channels

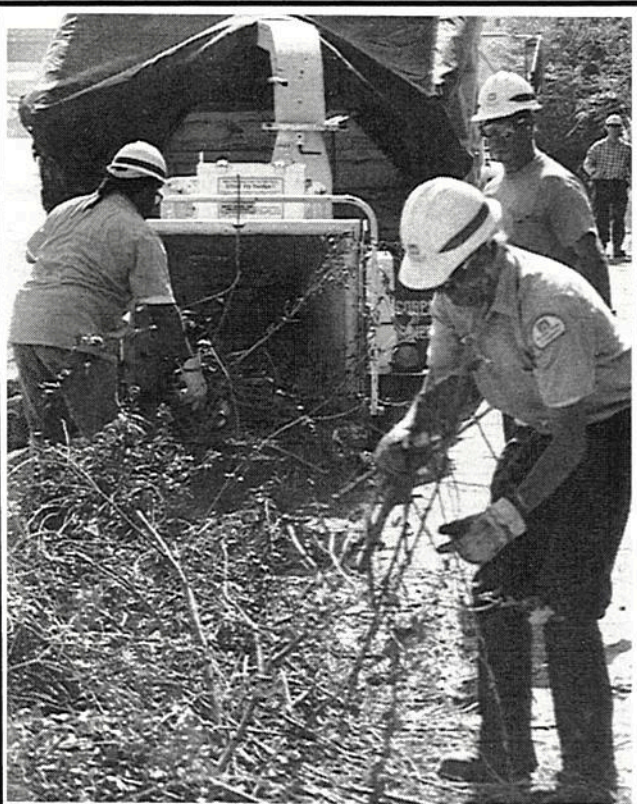
Photos by Mona Lee Goss
(L. C. Gillins is shown in cover photo.)



Working in brush has it's hazards. Insect bites are common. Workers wear full length chaps on their legs in case they encounter snakes.



Sometimes it takes two people to get the job done.



These are not the 'Chippendales but, part of the crew running branches through a chipper.

Clearing the way..... Maintenance crews from the Operations Branch are clearing vegetation and debris from the Los Angeles River Drainage Area preparing for the strong forecasted winter storms brought on by El Nino conditions. They are working in the Verdugo Wash, Compton Creek, San Jose Creek and along the river near Riverside Drive, where the I-5 and Harbor Freeway cross.

The crews will be finished with the District's area of responsibility by Christmas eve.

Killing the Beast: A cooperative approach for control of Arundo Donax in the Santa Ana River Watershed

by Dr. Eric D. Stein, Regulatory, and Valerie Vartanian, The Nature Conservancy

Effective management of aquatic invasive weeds requires watershed-scale efforts, with weed control beginning in headwaters areas and proceeding downstream to minimize reinfestation of previously treated areas. Such large-scale efforts are often beyond the resources of individual organizations and require coordinated interagency approaches. In 1992, a collection of Federal, State, local, and private organizations formed Team Arundo to focus on the common goal of eradicating giant reed (*Arundo donax*) from the 2,450 square mile Santa Ana Watershed, that runs through the largest river system in Southern California and is located in San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange counties. Over the last five years Team Arundo has realized many of their original goals and has recently reorganized to refocus efforts on continuing and emerging needs.

Since 1992, Team Arundo has been involved with increasing public awareness by publishing documents on problems and control strategies associated with giant reed infestation, fostering partnerships to tackle giant reed eradication by holding regular team meetings and equipment demonstrations, exploring sources of revenue for weed eradication, improving information transfer by hosting a symposium on giant reed control, helping to establish other regional teams, such as Team Arundo del Norte, streamlining regulatory processes associated with giant reed eradication, and providing innovative opportunities for wetland mitigation.

The Regulatory Branch of the Los Angeles District Corps of Engineers has been an active participant on Team Arundo and has been instrumental in the is-



Workers clear Arundo Donax by hand.

suance of a Regional General Permit (RGP) for invasive weed control and in the establishment of a wetland mitigation bank based on eradication of giant reed from the Santa Ana River.

Removal of giant reed and other invasive weeds often necessitates working in streams or wetlands subject to the Corps jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Many of the worst infestations occur in large watercourses, below headwaters, where Nationwide Permit 26 does not apply. Review of these projects indicates that most are intended to restore or enhance aquatic resources and result in minimal individual and cumulative effects on the environment. Therefore, the Corps issued Regional General Permit #41 (RGP 41) to (1) reduce unnecessary duplication and burden to the regulated public and (2) provide an expedited mechanism to authorize opportunistic invasive weed control following floods and fires, when such efforts are particularly effective. This general permit provides autho-



Giant reeds break loose from the stream bed and clog bridges.

rization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the mechanized removal of giant reed, salt cedar, common reed, tree tobacco, castor bean, Russian thistle, star thistle, artichoke thistle, thistle, and pampas grass. This RGP is valid in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, San Bernardino, Imperial, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Mono, Inyo, and San Luis Obispo counties in Southern California.

The RGP authorizes mechanized land clearing, mechanical mulching (*i.e.* Hydro-Ax), mechanized removal, chipping, and excavation of living or dead invasive plants and any associated debris. Native riparian vegetation should be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Any native riparian trees 3-inches DBH (diameter at breast height) or larger which are removed from fully infested stands, must be replaced on-site at a 2:1 ratio. The RGP also authorizes stockpiling of invasive plants and associated debris which have been excavated, except during the flood season (November 15-April 15), when stockpiling is prohibited. Stockpiles

herbicide application, and using hand-held tools to cut plants do not require authorization from the Corps of Engineers. Corps permits are necessary when mechanized land clearing, excavation, stockpiling, or other activities occur which affect the substrate of an aquatic area (*e.g.* rivers, lakes, wetlands).

Projects impacting watercourses or wetlands subject to the Corps' jurisdiction are often required to mitigate their impacts through creation, restoration, or enhancement of aquatic resources. The District views invasive weed control as an innovative and effective means of restoring degraded aquatic resources. To this end, the Corps has worked with Riverside County Park and Open Space District to establish a mitigation bank on a 174 acre portion of the Santa Ana River. The goal of the Santa Ana River Mitigation Bank (SARMB) is to reestablish native riparian ecological diversity and other riparian functions through the removal of invasive weeds. Restoration of this reach of the Santa Ana River will be part of an overall interagency plan to eradicate *Arundo* and other invasive, non-native vegetation from the Santa Ana River Watershed.

Recipients of Section 404 permits for projects within the Riverside County portion of the Santa Ana River Watershed may be eligible to purchase credits from the SARMB to satisfy mitigation requirements of their Corps permit. Use of the Mitigation Bank is contingent upon Corps approval and subject to the following conditions: (1) all efforts have been made to avoid and minimize impacts and mitigation is only being used to compensate for unavoidable impacts; (2) only impacts to riparian habitat may be mitigated at the SARMB; (3) the SARMB

can only be used to compensate for minimal impacts, individually or cumulatively, such as roadway widening, maintenance activities, bank stabilization for erosion or flood prevention, utility-line backfill and bedding, or out-fall structures.

With the achievement of many of the original goals of Team *Arundo*, the team has reevaluated its function and goals for the next five years. Today, led by the Nature Conservancy, Team *Arundo* has taken on a watershed wide approach, reaching out to land owners and managers in the upper Santa Ana River system to promote a more comprehensive effort towards invasive weed control.

must be placed in previously disturbed or degraded areas, cannot be placed within 50 feet of flowing water, and must be disposed of within 30 days of initial creation of the stockpile by either removal to an appropriate upland disposal area or by burning.

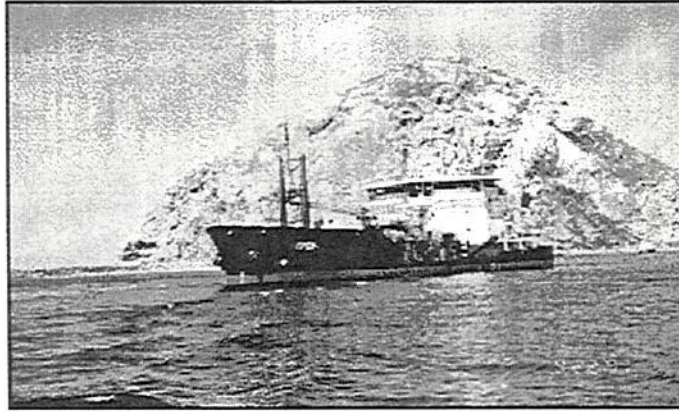
The construction of access roads is authorized under the RGP for access to the exotics removal site and that the roads must be restored with appropriate native riparian or wetland vegetation once they are no longer necessary for site monitoring, restoration, or maintenance. A Section 404 permit is not always necessary to undertake an invasive weed removal program. Prescribed burns,

Removal of vegetation by mechanical means is authorized.



Yaquina does dredging at Morro Bay

Dredging has been an on-going mission of the Corps since the 1800s. It was part of the early civil works efforts assigned by Congress, and it continues to this day. In September a Corps dredge was used in Morro Bay, near San Luis Obispo. Some members of the Corps who do not work in operations-type jobs might not be familiar with what a dredge is, what it does, or why. This report by Dan Pomerantz of the Navigation Sect. (Operations Br., C-O Div.) answers those questions.



With Morro Rock as a backdrop, the Corps' Yaquina works Morro Bay on the Central California coast.

What is dredging anyway?

Simply put, dredging involves the removal of sediment from the bottom of a body of water. One of the most important purposes of dredging is to assure that adequate depths exist for the passage of ships into and out of harbors.

The importance of dredging cannot be underestimated. Our national defense and economic well-being depend on our successful participation in the global marketplace. Did you know that approximately 95 percent of all United States international trade moves through our ports?

Also, our military vessels depend on rapid access to land-based facilities. What would happen to our national defense if our military ships couldn't operate safely in our own navigable waters?



Raising a dragarm lifts its huge draghead out of the water. Acting as a marine vacuum cleaner, the dredge picks up sand and silt from the floor of the bay.

And dredging helps local economies. Marina del Rey Harbor, for example, provides berths for over 6,000 boats and brings tourism and commerce to the area.

More than 400 ports and 25,000 miles of navigation channels are dredged throughout the United States to keep traffic operating efficiently.

So what is our role in all of this? The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is mandated by Congress to keep certain harbors open. In the Los Angeles District, most dredging is coordinated through the Navigation Section of the Operations Branch, Construction-Operations Division.

The Navigation Section is responsible for keeping 14 harbors along the Southern California coast open and navigable. The Navigation budget for FY98 is approximately \$15 million. With the help of many people at our district, such as those in Coastal Engineering, Environmental Planning, Contracting, Cost Engineering, and others, the LA District produces plans and specifications and establishes dredging contracts.

What's a Yaquina?

Through a combination of luck and hard work, the *Yaquina* was allowed to help the dredging effort at Morro Bay Harbor. It arrived on Sept. 20, making the trip from Portland in just over two days, and departed on Sept. 30. The Seattle District had hired the *Yaquina* for 20 days, but due to weather and

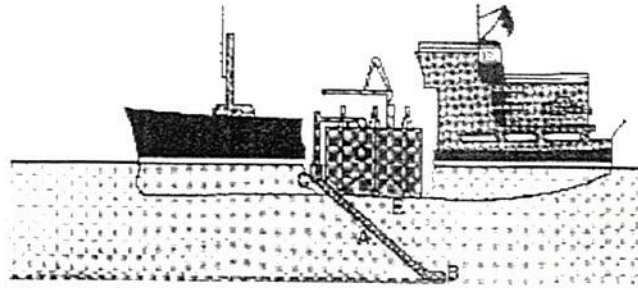
the *Yaquina* for 20 days, but due to weather and other restrictions could only use her for eight days.

The LA District was asked if they could use 12 days of free dredging and enthusiastically accepted. The going rate for the *Yaquina* is \$45,000 per day!

Over the course of a month and a half, a lot of coordination and planning had to happen. But, through the efforts of people like Cencio DiRamos and Art Shak of Coastal Engineering, Hayley Lovan and Stephanie Hall of Environmental Support Section, and Mo Chang of Navigation, everything came together.

All of our environmental clearances were met, all of our engineering design was in place, and all of our funding was in order.

The *Yaquina* is an impressive vessel. Like a giant, double action marine vacuum cleaner, it has two large dragarms – one on each side – that hang off the ship. As the vessel moves, pumps create suction in the dragarms and the silt or sand is drawn up through the arms and deposited in a big, on-board storage area called a hopper.



A schematic profile shows how the dredge works: material is picked up by head (B), pumped through arm (A) and deposited in hopper (D).

The hopper capacity of the *Yaquina* is 825 cubic-yards. After it fills up the hopper, which under good conditions usually takes about an hour, it moves to an approved relocation area. (At Morro Bay, a nearshore disposal site is located about a mile south of the harbor.)

Reaching the area, it dumps the dredged material through large clamshell-like hopper doors in the bottom of the hull. Wave action then pushes the sand toward land, replenishing the beach.

Credit Union plans to expand services

“The mission of the U.S. Engineers L.A. Federal Credit Union is to delight our members and their families every day with the very best credit union products and services.” So said María Alvarez-Kammerer, manager and CEO of the credit union serving district members.

With this in mind, she, district-elected officials and the credit union staff met recently to address issues and discuss ideas for short- and long-term goals.

There was a consensus that in order to be competitive a diverse range of services, priced to beat or compare with other financial institutions, was needed for the some 1,100 credit union members.

The Share Draft Checking program began in January 1997 now has 115 member accounts that each

month total an average of 100,000. “This is phenomenal participation,” Alvarez-Kammerer said.

There are plans to enhance the program by offering VISA Check-ATM card options, she said. Also on the drawing boards is home banking via the Internet, as well as a toll-free telephone number for in-state (California) callers.

But, she cautioned, each enhancement is good only if it is properly executed – and utilized. “The success of your credit union depends on the number of relationships each member uses,” she said.

The credit union staff can help members with questions, such as how to expand a share-savings account into checking, direct deposit, or borrowing for an unexpected tax bill, emergency or any prudent or productive purpose.

She added that the credit union welcomed comments on present services and products, and recommendations on how service might be improved to help customers.



Corps Headquarters Recognizes District's Emergency Manager

Story and Photos by Mona Lee Goss

Fortunately, most of us don't have to deal with flood emergencies and natural disasters every day of the year. But Corps manager Jim Crum, does. He faces these issues every day when he comes to work. He is the District's Chief of Emergency Management, and emergencies and disasters are his bread and butter.

Crum was recently selected as one of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Emergency Managers of the Year. His selection was based on achievements in a number of significant Corps-wide readiness initiatives.

He was cited for his "outstanding work serving as the Team Leader for the Tier III Performance Measures program for Emergency Management; his efforts as a member of the Response Planning Task Force and his contributions to the Command and Control Task Force."



Jim Crum, Corps Emergency Manager of the Year, holds the specially-designed trophy he received in Washington, D.C.

Another noted accomplishment was the design of a state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center for the Los Angeles District. Crum also participated in outside activities such as the Union Management Partnership Committee and as coordinator for the Combined Federal Campaign.

"I was very surprised to win the award – I really felt that it represented the EM Branch as a whole," said Crum.

A California native and civil engineering graduate from Loyola Marymount University, Crum went on

"The EM Branch has really been trying to keep up with the changing world of Emergency Management.....My job and that of all the team members in the Emergency Management Branch is to support the District in getting prepared for natural disasters."

- Jim Crum, Chief, Emergency Management Branch

to complete a Masters in water resources at Stanford University.

In addition to his engineering and water resource background, he has worked at the Corps for over 13 years, primarily as a project manager.

No stranger to the emergency operations, he was involved in most of the major disaster events occurring in the District in the last five years – the Floods of 92, 93, 95 and 97 plus the Northridge Earthquake.

"The EM Branch has really been trying to keep up with the changing world of Emergency Management," said Crum. "Due to the large number of disasters that occurred during the 90s, the field of emergency management has really grown.



Jim Crum, Chief, Emergency Management, going over operating procedures with EM personnel, Jackie Heard (standing), Liz Miller (seated center) and Sandra Martinez (seated r).

This is especially true with the development and use of new technology, better preparedness procedures, better coordination with local governments and higher customer expectations.

“Keeping up with these changing standards has been a full-time job of coordination, training, and educating the public,” said Crum.

Since the floods of 95, the EM Branch has held over 30 public presentations and workshops.

Some more specific projects include refurbishing the mobile communications trailer, developing an emergency database of personnel, development of a GIS database for flood control sites, developing an employee guidebook, and development of “performance mea-

asures” to align EM efforts with what really is important, according to Crum.

The Performance Measures project was directed by HQUSACE and will be used for all Corps’ Emergency Management offices across the country.

Referencing Crum’s team leadership of the Tier III Performance Measurement group, his nomination cited his “can do” attitude together with his undeniable team spirit - drawing together a wide variety of personnel with different perspectives to build a product that can be applied nationwide.”

Besides the Performance Measurement group, Crum serves on the Response Planning Task Force (RPTF), a national level working group which advises headquarters and develops products related to the Federal Response Plan Public Law (P.L.) 93-288, P.L. 84-99 authorities and other disaster response issues.

According to his nominating citation, sharing ideas and lessons learned at this forum helped Crum successfully conduct several exercises in L.A. District, including a pilot exercise using the draft Readiness Earthquake Tabletop Exercise Manual.

“My job and that of all the team members in the Emergency Management Branch is to support the District in getting prepared for natural disasters.

“ We are currently working with our pre-designated shift teams by holding EOC orientation briefings with some follow-on live exercises,” said Crum.

With the threat of flooding in an El Nino winter this year, training personnel for duty in the EOC is a key element of the District’s preparedness plan.

While an actual need for full staffing of the EOC is still in the future, for Crum, it’s an everyday reality.

However, Crum did take time out of his busy schedule to travel to Washington, D.C. There he received his award, a specially-designed trophy, at the Corps National Awards ceremony honoring its top professionals. National award categories ranged from civilian of the year to the Woodrow Berge Award for Real Estate.

“I was very honored to be part of the ceremony and nervous! Needless to say, I am very motivated to continue our work with the District for the upcoming El Nino winter season,” said Crum.

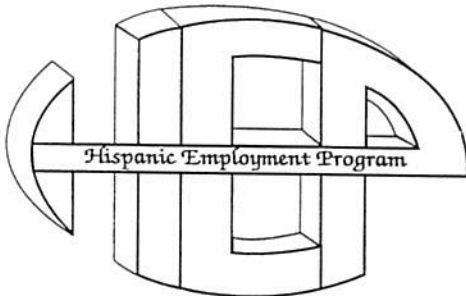


Dr. Raymond Landis, a guest speaker, shows off his District Coin he received for his contributions to Minority Engineering Programs.



One of The Three Mariachis seemed to be a little afraid.

Hispanic Month Opening Ceremonies



Dynamic speaker Ray Gallegos receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Liza Lugar, HEP Manager, for his part in the annual celebration.



District Engineer COL Larry Davis gave District pins to the El Mariachi Erwin for their great performance.



Rosemarie Sandoval, LMO, was recognized by the Hispanic Employment Program Committee for her accomplishments and contributions to the advancement of Hispanics in the Los Angeles District.

Hispanic Heritage Activities Inspire District Members

By Mona Lee Goss

Attendees at the opening ceremony, Sept. 17, for Hispanic Heritage Month got a bargain deal – two dynamic speakers instead of one at the special observance. Dr. Raymond Landis, Dean of Engineering and Technology at Cal State Los Angeles, and Ray Gallegos, with the Nissian Corporation information technology management department, spoke at the event. Each speaker addressed the theme for this year's celebration, Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, "Excellence in Education: Building Opportunities for our Youth."

COL Larry Davis, District Engineer, welcomed both keynote speakers, special guests and attending District personnel. The program also included a children's Mariachi musical group and presentation of the annual HEP award recognizing individuals who contribute to the advancement of Hispanics within the Corps.

Response to each of the program offerings was very favorable according to Lisa Lugar, HEP manager.

"Many people in the District reported they not only enjoyed listening to the children's music, but they also felt personally inspired and motivated to make changes in their own lives after hearing the two speakers and the HEP award winner," she said.

Although each speaker built their speeches around the same theme, they each spoke from different perspectives.

Landis, a nationally recognized expert in minority precollege and university student education, founded the state's first Minority Engineering Program or MEP, at California State University. He talked about the importance of mentoring minority youth seeking an engineering education and explained that unfortunately, such youth are not usually aware of the career possibilities open to them.

"It's our job to show them what a career in engineering can be and help them along the way. Engineering can be very rewarding and there is a large demand for engineers in today's job market," said Landis.

He stated he would like to see the Corps continue to support the MEP program by hiring Cal State students and suggested the Corps sponsor a day where young students could "shadow" an employee to learn what an engineer does.

The second speaker, Gallegos, also spoke about the need to "mentor" minority youth. Gallegos learned from his experience on the Presidential Task Force for Race Relations that "many times children do not feel

they have a choice and aren't aware of the many career possibilities open to them." He spoke about the need for Corps and other adults getting involved to keep youth off the street and away from gang life.

"Too often, kids think they don't have the opportunity to go to college and have a career. Because they don't think they can do it, they don't even try," said Gallegos. "We need to let them know they can achieve their goals and that they do have a chance." He encouraged the Corps to open its door to the youth of the community so they can see for themselves the possibilities.

Each speaker received a certificate of appreciation from EEO and HEP plus a LAD Eagle Vision coin from COL Davis.

Also receiving an award for her work promoting achievement opportunities for Hispanics was Rosemarie Sandoval, Logistics Division chief. HEP presents the annual award to help recognize and encourage District members in their efforts to advance Hispanic employment and cultural awareness. The recipient receives a \$100 donation to a charity of their choice and a certificate.

In accepting the award, Sandoval echoed the appeal for Corps team members to work with community young people.

"We need to reach out to youth needing our guidance and counseling. I've worked with youth for many years and will continue to do so as long as possible," said Sandoval. "They are a very important part of the future success of our culture and our community." Sandoval donated her award to Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission for the Elderly.

The awards and presentations at the opening ceremony elicited a rousing "**HORALE!** (Mexican slang for right-on!)" from one enthusiastic attendee.

District members also had the opportunity to participate in several other activities sponsored by the HEP committee during Hispanic Heritage Month. They organized a Goal Setting Workshop by the Consumer Credit Counsel Service of Los Angeles, an Individual Development Plan (IDP) Workshop presented by Phyllis Alexander, Human Resources and a Brown Bag lunch with COL Davis.

"All the activities were the result of a team effort," said Lugar. "The hard work and dedication of the HEP committee members made each event a great success!"

District closes out on FY 97 money

Los Angeles District closed out Fiscal Year 1997 successfully, said Dan McKercher, Contracting Division chief. "Overall, it was a good year," he said. "We did not lose any federal dollars by not getting contracts awarded on time."

Money appropriated for a project in a given fiscal year can be taken away if it is not officially obligated by Sept. 30, the end of the federal fiscal year.

In the three years he has been with the district, McKercher said, "Not once has a customer lost a project due to a failure on the part of the Contracting team's part. This year has been no exception."

Preliminary statistics for FY 97, as currently reported in the Army-wide Standard Army Automated Contracting System data base, show the district's workload at more than \$270.5 million.

Figures are subject to correction if necessary, McKercher said, but he believes the final figures will show little change. "If (they are) not perfectly accurate, they are close."

A summary of the FY 97 statistics, shown below, indicate that with a lone exception the district exceeded its target goal percentages in contracting with small and disadvantaged businesses (SDB).

Actions	Amount	Target/ Actual %
Total for FY 97	\$270,628,516	
Total for Small Business	\$135,223,523	35 / 50
Small Business Set-Aside	\$8,506,860	10 / 3.1
Total SDB	\$82,576,093	6 / 30.6
8(a) (a section of SDB federal law)	\$70,316,871	3.5 / 26
Woman-Owned Businesses	\$9,576,876	3 / 3.5
Total Competed	\$217,833,339	80.5*
<i>*80.5 percent of all contract actions were competitive</i>		

Like most federal agencies with contracting responsibilities, there was a flurry of activity in September, the last month of the FY, to get needed contracts awarded before the year expired. Of the above totals, \$58,762,00 were in contracts awarded in the month of September.

Awards made in the last week of the FY totaled \$43,297,016. On the last two days of the month, awards were for \$19,487,437. And on Sept. 30, the final day of the FY, the division closed out the year with a flourish, awarding contracts totaling \$13,153,446. The last award was processed at 11:59 p.m.

Because of the late award, the last of the Contracting Division members finished their long work day at 12:30 a.m.

They were back in the office the next morning at their usual times, ready to start the new fiscal year.

Speaking to his Contracting Division members, McKercher said, "From the comments and LAN messages I have received from various co-workers expressing their appreciation it's obvious your efforts have not gone unnoticed by your fellow District team members."

In a LAN message of his own to division members, he said, "The customer needs are being met as a result of your efforts to award of contracts, delivery orders, and task orders.

"You have also contributed to meeting district needs and goals such as participation in the small business program, A-E contracting-out percentages and the execution and obligation targets for the district, and at the same time providing the supplies and services required for the day to day operation of the district."

He concluded his thanks to Contracting Division members with, "Happy new [fiscal] year."



District host 1997 SPD Officer Professional Development Seminar

by Captain Herb Chong

SAN DIEGO, Calif. - The Los Angeles District hosted the 1997 South Pacific Division's Officer Professional Development (OPD) Seminar here at the Naval Air Station North Island recently.

More than 35 active duty officers, Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMA), IMA coordinators and a Engineer Branch representative attended.

This was the first time for Albuquerque District to attend the annual seminar so BG Richard Capka, division engineer, led off with an overall briefing about the division. Each district engineer followed with their command briefings.

The seminar also included finance/personnel training; update on Engineer School training available; and an update by the Department of the Army representative from the Engineer Branch. Everyone turned out for a physical fitness test on the last day.

A big highlight of having the seminar at North Island was the chance for the group to tour the Navy's Aircraft Carrier Homeporting Project for Nimitz class carriers. It is a huge dredging project and the Navy is using the dredge material to replenish nearby beaches.



District and Deputy District Engineers listen to Division Engineer Richard Capka during a break in the Division OPD in San Diego. Left to right: COL Larry Davis, LA DE; LTC Richard Thompson, SF DE; COL Peter Topp, SPD DDE; LTC Douglas Gault, SAC DDE; LTC Steve Wagner, ALB DE (seated); and BG Capka. (Photo -Egeler)

District Safety Awards presented to winners for '96-97

Congratulations to all the winners of the Los Angeles District Safety Awards of the Year, covering a period from April 1996 thru May 1997. Plaques were awarded during the annual picnic held at Knotts Berry Farms. The winners are as follows:

Safety Area Office of the Year:

Southern California Area Office
(Area Engineer: John Keever)

Safety Resident Offices of the Year: (tie)

Santa Ana Dams Resident Office
(R/E: Terence King)

Las Vegas Resident Office
(R/E: Robert Joyner)

Safety Engineer of the Year:
William Gallegos

Safety Coordinators of the Year: (tie)

Mel Weiss
Ernest Saenz

Safety Inspectors of the Year: (tie)

Glynn Alsup
Gregory Elliot

District Anniversary pins are in

Lapel pins for the Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers 100 year celebration are now available. Call (213) 452-3111 and leave message with your order.....or see

Roni Vasquez.....11th Floor, Examination Section

Joe Mauhar.....10th Floor, Contracting Division

Lety Zarate.....15th Floor, PPM

The price is \$3.25 each or 4 for \$10.00 Supplies are limited.....

Are you ready for ... Computer Security Day?

By Phoebe Chen
Info Sys Security Officer
Information Management Office

Nov. 30 is once again Computer Security Day. This is the opportunity for us to focus attention on the awareness of and critical areas of computer security.

"Improving Awareness" is the theme of Computer Security Day 1997, and "Individual Responsibility" will be the theme of 1998. A poster will be posted on the Bulletin Board on each floor to remind you of these themes and their importance.

Computer Security Day is an annual event that was established in 1988 by the Association of Computing Machinery. This year more than 1500 organizations from all around the world officially join the observance.

Computer Security Day reminds us that everyone who uses a computer should take appropriate measures to protect their computer, programs, and data.

Of course, we must also maintain our vigilance the rest of the year if we want to be able to rely on our computers. We must practice computer security not only in the office, but also at home, in a library, or anywhere else. And don't forget to remind others about Computer Security Day.

Here are a few basic ways to participate:



- Check for and report computer viruses.
- Back up your data (after being certain that it is virus-free).
- Put write-protect tabs on all diskettes and back-up tapes which are not to be written to.
- Eliminate dust, dropping of food and drink from computer areas.
- Use Government resources for "Official Use" and "Authorized Purposes" only.

Some other tips are:

Never post your password in your working areas and secure all your keys.



Verify your inventory of computer applications, utilities, software, and hardware.

Consider the privacy aspect of the data on your computer and protect it.

And never send classified information through E-mail.

Any questions, concerns, or suggestions? Send me an e-mail message, call me at X-3203, or visit me in Room 10P07.

For technical support and problem solving, call the IMO HelpDesk at X-3218, visit them in Cubicle 10028, or send them an e-mail to their LAN address: HelpDesk@IM@SPL.

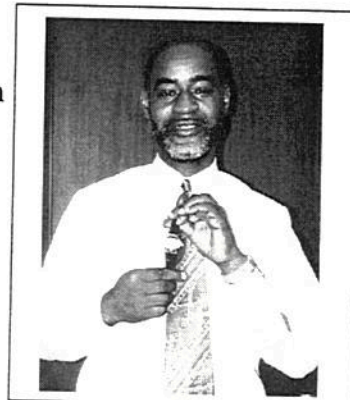
Evans earns Eagle Award

John Evans of the Real Estate Division (Mgt. & Disposal. Br.) won the Commander's Eagle Award for his support to the Army Women's Executive Leadership Program.

Evans was mentor to Linda Morton, real property officer at Ft. Myer, Va., during her month with the district Real Estate Div. Her time with LA was part of her year-long career-development assignment.

"His overall approach and enthusiasm made the program a success," the citation read.

Evans was nominated for the award by Nate Govan (Engr Div.), EEO Committee member.



Fred-Otto Egeler

John Evans (RE) sports his Commander's Eagle Award, a wristwatch with the LA District logo.

HAPPENINGS.....

Tabafabai receives Achievement Medal



Dr. Tabafabai proudly displays her Achievement Medal that she was presented by the LA District Engineer COL Larry Davis in a recent ceremony at District Headquarters. (Photo - Egeler)

Dr. Farinaz (Fari) Tabafabai, Con-Ops Regulatory Branch, recently received an Achievement Medal for Civilian Service. The award was for helping to pioneer mitigation banking in the LA District and Corps wide. She identified this important concept early and subsequently completed her doctoral dissertation on evaluating mitigation banking, especially on the Santa Ana River, while continuing her work as a full-time project manager.

She assisted in development of the National Interagency Model Banking instrument. She also co-authored many related professional papers and is a valuable member of the National Mitigation Project Team, according to the citation that was presented with the Achievement Medal.

Dr. Tabafabai travels to Corps Districts and gives presentations and training workshops on the subject.



Coins to classifiers.....Two personnel classifiers from SPD Human Resources presented a class to district managers on how to classify positions within their area. They did such a great job that District Engineer COL Larry Davis presented Kathy Schultz, left, and Debbie Yaworsky, right, with a District coin for their work. (Photo - Egeler)

District employee honored

Petra Castillo, Information Management Division was recently honored at the Hispanic Traditions & Heritage Council's annual Black and White Independence Ball of Los Angeles. As a native of Los Angeles, Petra was profoundly influenced by her grandmother who was a tireless worker in her community helping those in need.

After attending local schools and graduating from Belmont High School, Petra began her career with the federal government. Petra is presently a computer specialist with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and has continually upgraded her skills by taking special college courses in her field. In addition to her duties as a computer specialist, Petra is a special task team instructor for the new organization structure for USACE.

Petra's community service, included founder of St. Casimir Elementary School's Parent Council. Since 1993, she has served on the Executive Board of the Hispanic Women's Council as Treasurer, Secretary and Co-Chair of YES, Youth for Education and Success. She was inducted into the City of Los Angeles Hispanic Women's Hall of Fame and continues her volunteer efforts in the Hispanic Community.

For 22 years, Petra has been married to Gerardo Castillo. They have two daughters, Carmen, a student at University of California San Diego, and Elizabeth, who attends Cal State University, Los Angeles.

Schwichtenberg graduates from CEEP

By Jennifer King, Waterways Experiment

Bradd Schwichtenberg, Los Angeles District will receive his Master's of Engineering degree through the Coastal Engineering Education Program (CEEP) in December.

CEEP is a partnership between WES and Texas A & M University (TAMU) through the WES Graduate Institute. Students spend the fall semester at TAMU and the spring and summer semesters at WES. The Study at the WES Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory under adjunct faculty from the lab. They then travel to Duck, N. C., for three weeks to complete field work at the WES Field Research Facility. The master's degrees are awarded from TAMU.

The one-year program is designed to provide students with the basic academic course work and practical training essential for solving modern-day coastal engineering problems. Although the program was developed based on the needs of the Corps, it is not limited to Corps employees.

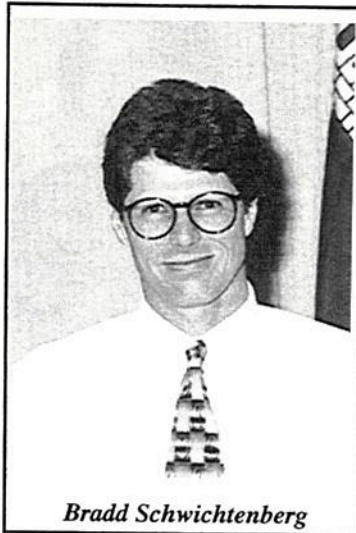
"The program was designed originally for the Corps' coastal districts," said Dr. Jim Penington, Director of the WES Graduate Institute.

The program began in 1991 when LTG E. R. Heiberg III, then Chief of engineers, noted the Corps of Engineer's unique role in developing the field of coastal engineering during a speech to the Coastal Engineering Research Board (CERB). He also recognized the need for maintaining Corps expertise in this area. He believed the Corps should "grow our own" coastal engineers. CERB was encouraged to make recommendations on how to provide the needed education and training using a combination of staff, academia and facilities. CEEP was the result.

In order to be accepted into CEEP, the applicants must be accepted into the TAMU Ocean Engineering Program. To be qualified, the applicants must have a

Bachelor of Science in Engineering from an accredited institution or approval of the TAMU program director if the degree is other than engineering, a satisfactory scholastic record which gives evidence of the applicant's ability to perform successful graduate level work, and acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination.

(ED. NOTE: Anyone interested in the WES Graduate Institute or Coastal Engineering Education Program can contact Dr. Jim Penington at WES at 601 634-3549.)



Bradd Schwichtenberg



Fishing fun aboard the Gale Force out of Ports O'Call.....Dam Foreman Ed Kohnman, left, has organized several fishing trips for the District's Extended Engineer Family. He is shown with one of his many Yellowfin Tuna while retiree Lowell Flannery does a fish dance and tries to figure out what he's going to do with the fish he just caught.



VETERANS BENEFITS:

Are you missing yours?

When a veteran thinks about the benefits they are eligible for, you can bet he or she are thinking about their retirement check or their Veterans Administration check. What many veterans don't know and lose out on are the benefits provided by the state they live in.

Many of the states have provided a "bonus" for serving overseas in a combat zone. Other programs can include a wide range of state benefits that are offered to surviving spouse, dependents, and in some cases, parents of veterans. Your *Newscastle* staff has researched and found the following benefits offered by states within our boundaries.

Veterans Homes: AZ, CA

Veteran/spouse public employment preference: AZ, CA, NV

Reemployment rights: AZ, CA, NV

Employment assistance: AZ, CA, NV

Qualified dependent Ed. Assistance: CA

Property tax exemption/reduction: AZ, NV

Loans, grants, financial assistance: CA

State retiree military credit: AZ

Reduced/free license plates: AZ, CA, NV

Commemorative license plates: AZ, CA, NV

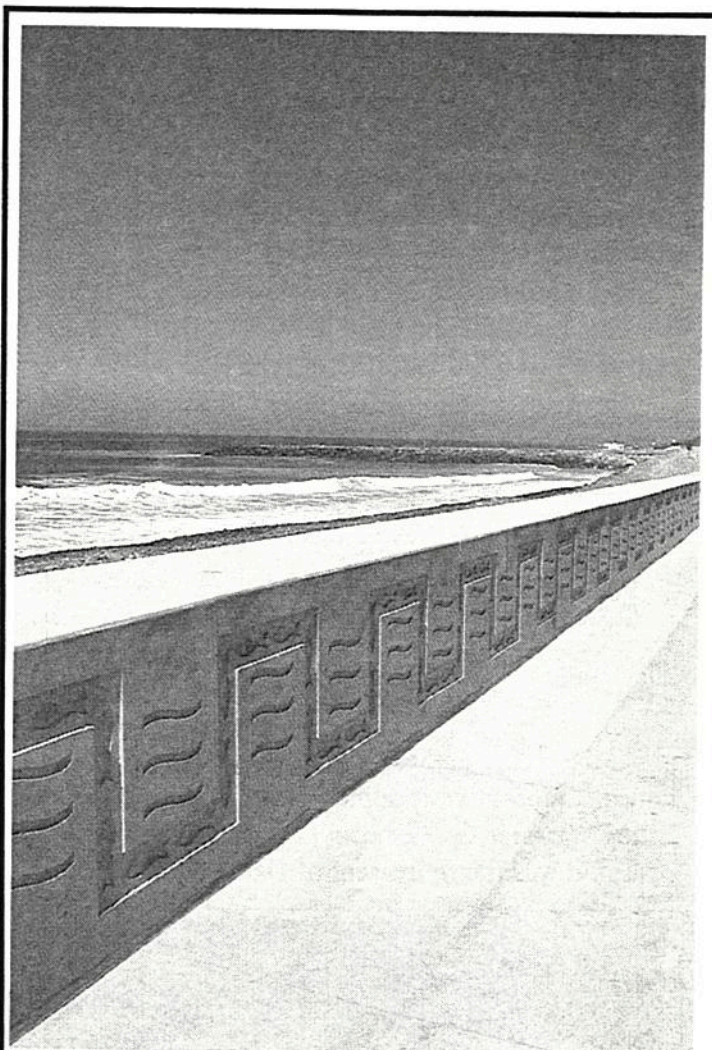
State income tax exemption: AZ

For more information contact the following state offices:

Norman O. Gallion, Director,
Arizona Veterans Services Commission
3225 N. Central Ave, Suite 910
Phoenix, AZ 85012
TEL: (602) 255-3373 FAX: (602) 255-1038

COL Jay Vargas, Secretary,
Department of Veterans Affairs
1227 O St., Room 300
Sacramento, CA 95814
TEL: 1-800-952-5626 FAX: (916) 653-2573

Charles G. Abbott, Commissioner,
Commission on Veterans Affairs
1201 Terminal Way, Room 108
Reno, NV 89520
TEL: (702) 688-1155 FAX: (702) 688-1656



Final product is a work of art..... The Carlsbad Seawall (Shore Protection Project) took only eight months to build, "but it was worth the wait," according to many beach goers.

The construction of the seawall solved two problems; sand blowing across the road and silting up Agua Hedionda Lagoon, an important aquaculture and public fishing area, and protecting Carlsbad Boulevard from being undercut by coastal flooding. The boulevard runs along an artificial spit of land that separates the lagoon from the Pacific Ocean. The spit has two openings for water to flow to and from the sea. Without the road, traffic would have to travel around the lagoon.

A corps contractor built the 3.5-foot-high seawall along 3,500 feet of the beach and constructed footings at the jetties with geotextile material and rock to protect them and the boulevard.

(ED. NOTE: The artwork was conceived by Raul Guerrero. The black and white photo does not pay justice to it's beauty and we suggest you take a trip to Carlsbad, and see it for yourself.)

WE GET LETTERS

Just received the Retirees Directory and I appreciate you sending it. It is interesting to see who has retired since I left.

As I think I mentioned, I am living in Tennessee. It is just beautiful and there are lots of fish. It helps to be living just 0.3 of a mile from the lake.

I have not built my still yet, but I have ordered the plans and specs from the Government Printing Office.

Pete Reyna
Springville, Tenn.

It's OK, Pete. We're COE, not ATF.



At the recent gathering at Paul and Cheri Berger's house ... present were some of the "Friends of Gordon Lilley" (former C-O Division assistant chief), and the occasion was the retirement of Dan Gee (PPMD).

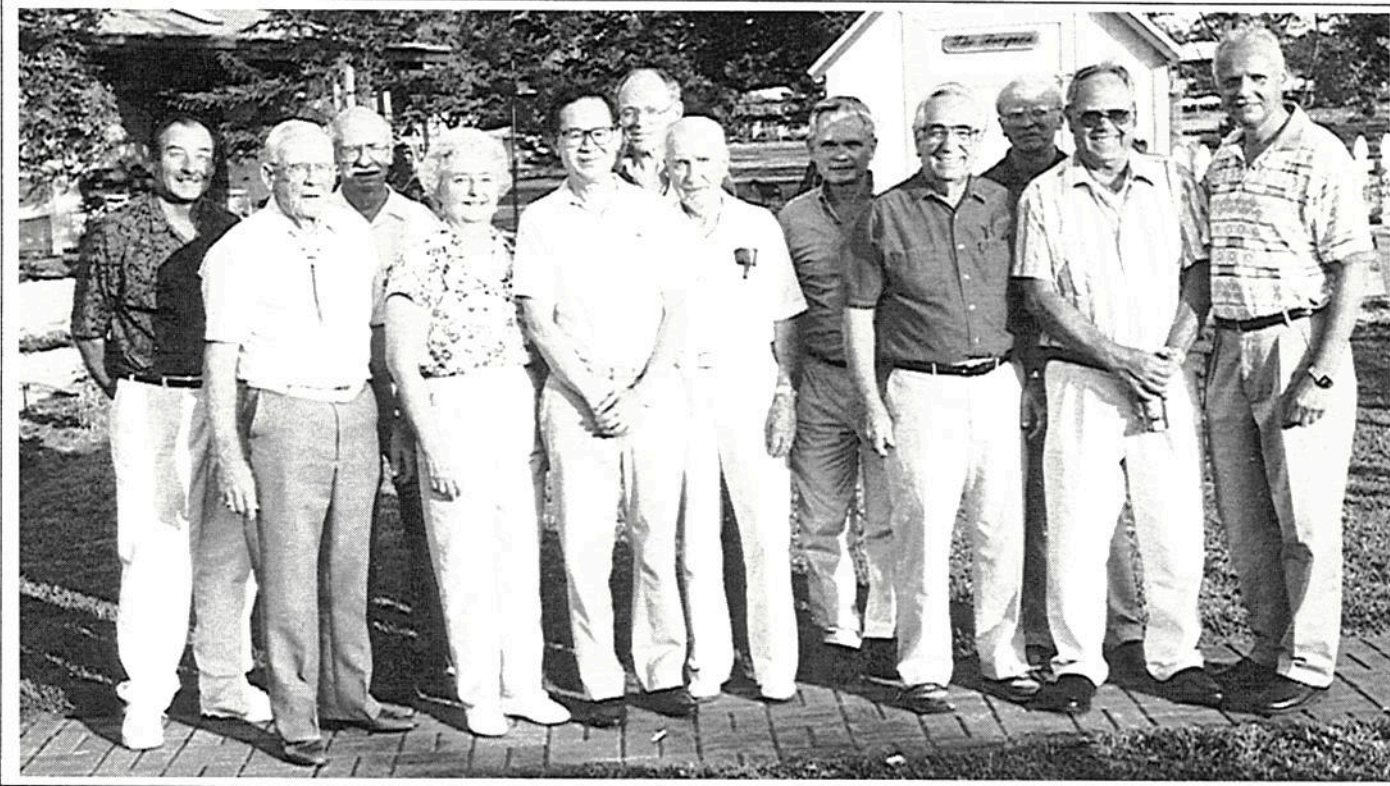
Paul is to be congratulated on gathering this self-named group (see photo below) because "Danny" was a favorite of Gordon's and because all of us recognized how important Dan was to us over the years.

Most of the guests were "from the field" (had been with field offices) and most of them had had Dan as their "co-ordinator" (a former term for project manager) at one time or another. All agree that Dan was the best of the coordinators in the Construction (Service) Branch.

Dan, like Gordon, is among the few whose ego never becomes a factor in their work. Both were always considerate of others but fully capable of being tough when the occasion arose. I consider myself honored to have worked with both.

Marjie and I wish Kim and Dan a happy retirement.

Dick Young
Claremont, Calif.



Some "Friends of Gordon Lilley," all retired, traveled from locations in three different states, toget together in Apple Valley. They were (from left) host Paul Berger, Les Lorvig (Phoenix area), Bob and Helen Magstead Derr (Hemet), Dan Gee (Monterey Park), Ron Brusha (Glendale), Jim Page (Las Vegas), Dick Young (Claremont), Ray Coker (Phoenix area), Bob Hansen (Santa Maria), Voye Watson (Nipomo) and Curt LeBlanc (San Dimas).

Around the Corner



by Jessica E. Jacobs

DESERT HOT SPRINGS, Calif. — I recently received a call from Curt LeBlanc asking if he could come out and discuss something he was working on. Of course I said yes; everyone is welcome here. Sandra and I enjoy company.

We were going to lunch at Billy Read's, but on the way we got caught in a flash flood. It lasted for about a mile. First time for both of us being in one. We drove both cars so he wouldn't have to go back.

Spent a nice couple of hours. He had hoped to present his project at the October Retirees' Luncheon, but that unfortunately had to be cancelled because of lack of response from retirees.

I came home to find the mail. A letter from Florida, from Bud Thomas, the chief of OAS before Chriqui, before he went to Huntsville, Ala.

He has been traveling. Here was his itinerary:

- 1 Europe, eight countries and 23 cities.
- 2 Alaska, an 11-day trip. Took a bus from Fairbanks to Seward, where they got on a ship and stopped at the main cities. Then a stop at Vancouver, and finally home.

Next year they plan on several islands, then through the Panama Canal. That will take care of their traveling for awhile.

A final travel note though: they were in Hawaii this year and stopped off in Honolulu and spent a whole day with Katherine Li. She lives in Kaneohe. She worked in Real Estate, then transferred to Huntsville.

When not traveling, Bud, who was treasurer for his condo association for 10 years, plays golf four or five days a week. His wife gives two days at the hospital, and works and the women's club at her gardening. They live in Crystal River, Fla. Sounds like they are enjoying their retirement.

Bud says he enjoys the *Newscastle* ... he can keep up with people he knows.

I just got off the phone, speaking with Bill and Jean Vinci. They were leaving for a trip around Cali-

fornia with family and friends. Then on to Oregon and Washington.

Last night I received a call from Glen Bulow. I had been trying to contact him to see how June, his wife, was. She's in a convalescent hospital. She is well, and doing as well as her condition lets her.

Drop him a note to let know you think of him. He is in the Retirees' Directory.

Every once in awhile I speak to Lillian Ramsey in Las Vegas. She's fine. Still bowls and, of course, visits the machines as we all do. Plan on taking Sandra there her birthday for a few days.

Our sad note is about Blanche Merrill in Real Estate. Annie Polk called me and gave me the sad news. I called PAO and learned she was in an auto accident. They operated and she was critical ... then there was the call that she had had passed.

To the Merrill Family our deepest sympathy. She will be missed.

Hobbies help health And can be fun too

Having a hobby or an avocation is not just the stuff of rich folks who collect expensive things and amuse themselves with the arts. And it's not just for overzealous eccentrics. Today, hobbyists have grown in both numbers and respectability.

One reason: mental as well as physical fitness are important. Aerobic exercises help the body, and they help the mind too, but not enough. The psyche needs its own breaks from duty and routine. Without some healthy interest in something, people can fall into indifference and decline.

Winston Churchill said, "The cultivation of interest is a policy of first importance. To be really happy and really safe, one ought to have at least two or three hobbies."

When the tough prime minister who led Britain through its darkest days during World War II retired from public life, he took up ... painting.

But whether painting, toy-collecting, astronomy, quilting, bird-watching, woodworking or whatever, pastimes seldom bring monetary rewards. They do something better. They enrich the soul.

HOLIDAY SPIRITS or "ESPRIT DE CORPS"

Just in time for the upcoming holidays, a limited edition of glassware will go on sale in early December. The glassware is a 15-oz. "beer" mug with a beautiful flag logo designed in two colors, red and blue. The silk-screened logo will not scratch, chip or wash off.

The mugs are selling for \$7 each. A discount is available for the purchase of two or more mugs, priced at \$6.50 each. The "beer" mugs will be available for sale and distribution Dec. 3 through the holidays. The sale is sponsored by Essayons Toastmasters Club No. 988, and NFFE Local 777.

Please order via LAN or "snail" mail and include the information listed below, or see Cindy Myrtetus at: A-E/Contract Compliance Branch (10th floor), (CT-A) P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325, Tel: (213) 452-3247.

Name Phone Number

Office Location/ Mailing Address

Please indicate how many mugs you would like to order.

One "Beer" mug for \$7 - or - ____ "Beer" mugs for \$6.50 each =
\$ _____

Make checks payable to NFFE LOCAL NO. 777.

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