



# *The Newcastle*

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Los Angeles District

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An aerial photograph showing a large area of flooding in Las Vegas. Several buildings are partially submerged in muddy water. Debris is scattered throughout the flooded area. A few people are visible standing on a small patch of ground near one of the buildings. The text "Flooding hits Las Vegas" is overlaid on the right side of the image in a stylized, italicized font.

## *Flooding hits Las Vegas*

**Photo by J. P. Carroll**



Team mates:

I write this to all of you as I sit in LAX having missed my flight, due to a mistake by someone at Carson. I bring this up as a way of talking about customer service. As all of you know, the Corps in general and the South Pacific Division, hence LAD, is changing. Total workload is declining somewhat, and though the prospects for continued business are solid, it will be part of a lower pace of acquisition of engineering and construction services by the government. Even our traditional strong-suit of civil-works here in LAD is slowing. We have lots of seedlings in the nursery, and the passage of WRDA 99 (finally!) keeps that seed planting going. More important, the mix of business we do is changing. It is changing to become much more reimbursable-based. The key point here is that these reimbursable customers don't have to bring this work to us, they can go elsewhere. We have to go out and compete for their business; and we will only win the contract by providing a more desirable product (service) to them than they can get elsewhere.

Back to customer service; my analysis of what happened to me is that someone at Carson did not pick up on what must have been a visible discrepancy in my ticket transaction. I made a flight two hours later, but as I was waiting, fuming, I was thinking that, if I had a choice, I wouldn't use this outfit again. I think this occurred not because of incompetence, but from a lack of awareness by this individual of the tasks of those on their left and right. When someone missed a step, I paid for that error. Given that, it is probably the essence of customer service to be better at catching the (inevitable) mistakes and shortcomings of our fellow team members, I of yours and you of mine, that really leads to our service, as a team, being more desirable to our customers than their other options. When each of us combines that with a conscious effort to produce our best, THAT is a winning effort; we will make that sale!



**COL J. P. Carroll talks with Nevada Senator Harry Reid aboard a helicopter as they survey the damage cause by heavy rains and flooding in Las Vegas in July. (Colonel Carroll took the cover photo during the flight.)**

We are closing in on the end of the fiscal year. I'll go over some numbers in the upcoming town-hall, suffice to say here that it could have been better. We had the work lined up, and all the support performed to budget, and though we had some delays forced on us, we let too many schedules slip on our account. Schedules will get a lot of attention in FY00, needless to say.

I want to say thanks and congratulations to everyone on our performance on the CFO preparation. In nearly every area, we had identified our problem up front and had an effective plan underway to fix it. The team was quite impressed, frankly, by our honesty. That honesty, and the truly great teamwork between all parts of the district, lead to SPL being verbally commended (the only district, I believe) at the Corps-wide out-brief in Millington. My hat is off to each and all of you!

**TRUST, QUALITY, TEAMWORK**

## The Los Angeles District Newscastle

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## **Lower Blue Diamond Wash**

# ***Las Vegas storms damage flood control structure***

Narrative by Rob Caskie,  
Las Vegas Project Office

A large intensity storm hit the Las Vegas Valley on July 8, right after the morning rush hour and was completed shortly after lunch, excluding the runoff which occurred for some time thereafter. The storm pretty much waxed the whole valley in lieu of traditional isolated areas of the valley. According to Gale Fraser, Director, Clark County Regional Flood Control District, over 20% of their rain fall gages throughout the valley recorded rainfall levels that exceeded the 100 year event.

The Tropicana/Flamingo Wash Flood Control Project includes a total drainage area of over 160 square miles. This area is split into three areas, 1) the mountains, 2) unimproved flood plain areas and 3) improved areas. The infrastructure that we are installing under the flood control program is mostly in area 3 to date, but is moving towards area 2. Most of our improvements are towards the bottom part of the funnel that drains the 160 square mile area. The Tropicana/Flamingo Wash, located in the southwest part of the Las Vegas Valley, represents between 20 and 25% of the County's overall \$1.2 billion master plan flood control program and is .

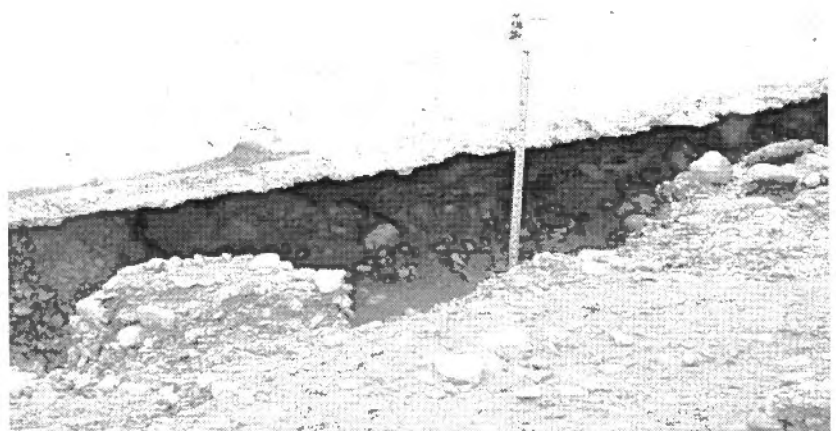
Most of the Corps structures (constructed improvements to date) are considered to be off-line structures. This means we are building channel or basins in areas other than existing washes. Until the system is complete, storm flows cannot get into our channels or debris basins with the magnitude or intensity that they are intended for. Other channels are being built across alluvial fans and receive storm waters now which they will not in the future when the system is completed as they are currently unprotected upstream. Our system is not complete. Water that got into our completed structures was either safely conveyed or safely stored as designed, however, with these structures



***Looking upstream at an area under construction. This is a transition area where the channel is changing from open rectangular to trapezoidal.***

being off line or isolated from connection with other structures they did not reach 100 year design flow/flood levels.

We have two projects under construction and are overseeing a third project which is being built by the County. One of our projects, the Tropicana Outlet Channel (TOC) is at the bottom of the funnel. A great



***The concrete, trapezoidal channel was undercut by the flood water. This type of damage resulted in some structural damage to the channel. The fix has not yet been determined.***

deal of the water reaching this channel is received from a currently off-line detention basin upstream. This detention basin (Tropicana Detention Basin (TDB)) reached 12 feet of water storage in the north bay and 7 feet of storage in the south bay. The Lower Blue Diamond Channel upstream of the Tropicana Detention Basin received a great deal of overland flow, as it too is not connected to other features of work yet.

The TOC is being built in an existing wash, through a tightly developed commercial area. There is no place for the water to go except through and over the channel construction. The Contractor got buried with sediment in four different reaches of this channel. The completed flood control program will convey clean water. The uncompleted system receives dirty (sediment laden) water. The Contractor has 2-3 feet of sediment on top of concrete slabs and rebar work which is not yet completed. A lot of form work, tools and even a portable chemical toilet floated through and out of the project area to an unknown location downstream. Flows topped Russell Rd (out of the channel) and inundated a commercial strip mall with three feet of muddy water and muck. Structurally, we believe the only channel damage which occurred is the scouring away of concrete from a freshly placed invert slab.

The Lower Blue Diamond Channel project was further along in construction than the TOC. A

whole lot of the sheet flow waters got underneath the concrete trapezoidal channel upstream of Decatur Blvd for a reach of about 800 meters. During the storm, so much water was flowing down Decatur Blvd that it was starting to scour away and undermine the asphalt pavement. The Contractor diverted the water into their unfinished channel so as to relieve the flooding along Decatur.

The work which we are overseeing, that the County is administering consists of another six miles of channel. This work is off line, but crosses several active washes. The construction for this phase was inundated. There is rebar sticking out of ponded water which resembled hundreds of feet of picked fences. The running water brought a lot of sediment which will require re-excavation.

The Red Rock and Flamingo Detention Basins received about eight and seven feet of water, respectively. This is well below the spillway elevation and certainly did their job in restricting the flows downstream. The areas downstream of these two basins were very well protected - a lot more damage would have occurred had not these basins been in place. All areas under construction will require a lot of clean up and may take several weeks in some cases. The impact is less now than it would have been several years ago.



*The south side of the channel, downstream of the Decatur crossing which captures some of the scour damage which was typical in many areas of the City, this just happens to be at our channel.*

*Like the Morton's Salt slogan....when it rains, it pours.....*

**Well, it rained in Las Vegas.....**



**Photos Courtesy of Marsh  
Starks, Las Vegas Sun**

**A 100-year storm caused wide-spread flooding in  
Las Vegas. Flood waters ran deep through the  
streets and even washed mud and debris into Cae-  
sar's Palace and other places along the Strip.**





# British General visits District projects

*By Major Stuart Browse, Royal Engineers*

Early in July Brigadier General Robbie Burns, the Commandant of the British, Royal School of Military Engineering paid a visit to the Los Angeles District. He was treated to a tour of the District Projects and escorted by the British Engineer Liaison Officer from Fort Leonard Wood, Colonel Phil Lilleyman.

One of the reason for his visit was to see the work carried out by one of the officers from his school, Major Stuart Browse. Major Browse has been attached to the Los Angeles District for 18 months as part of a program of Professional Engineer Training. In that time Major Browse has been employed in the Engineering Division carrying out design work and in Construction-Operations working as a Project Engineer in the Rivers and Harbors Resident Office on an \$18 million river improvement project.

General Burns visit started with a tour of the \$150 million Port of Los Angeles, Phase 2, Pier 400 project. After a briefing by the Project Engineer Ms. Julie Martinez, Brigadier Burns had the opportunity to visit the Dredge Florida and walk on the newly constructed fill that will form the new pier.

After leaving the Port of Los Angeles he travelled to Seven Oaks Dam where Terry Bautista the



*Brigadier Robbie Burns, British Royal School of Military Engineering commandant toured the LA District's harbor deepening project at the Port of Los Angeles. Burns, left, was briefed by Julie Martinez and given a harbor tour by POLA's Don Foxworthy.*

Deputy Resident Engineer gave an excellent presentation on the history and construction of the Dam which is now nearing completion. Brigadier Burns stopped for a photo call and for lunch before heading back to visit the Los Angeles County Drainage Area Project, where he completed his tour



**ARMY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL AWARDED .....**SPD Commander COL (P) Madsen, left, presented the Army Achievement Medal to CPT Michael K. Wegler for his contribution during the evaluation of proposals and "Best Value" analysis for the Arizona/Nevada and Southern California's Multiple Award Task Order Contracts. Wegler initiated and implemented a process for ensuring that past performance was an integral part of the technical evaluation. He also developed and utilized excel spreadsheets that reduced the evaluation process time and facilitated the "Best Value" analysis process. His efforts resulted in the boards making sound and rapid recommendations to the contracting officer.

# German military students tour LA District projects

LOS ANGELES, Calif. – Six military student officers and their professor from the German Armed Forces University (Universität der Bundeswehr) Muenchen, Germany stopped at the Los Angeles District as part of their two week tour of the United States.

"The University offers a four-year engineering course exclusively for officers of the German Armed Forces and some of allies," said Professor Doctor Sven Hartmann, as he accompanied the students who 2d and 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenants in the German Military. "Their training ends with the German engineering diploma that somewhat compares to your masters' degree here in the U.S. When we return they have to take some exams, as well as complete their thesis.

"All of them are civil engineering students focussed on Hydraulics, Hydraulic Structures and Water Management, which is why we are here in your district," Professor Hartmann explained. "We were at the Waterways Experiment Station on July 12 and saw the models of the Los Angeles and Rio Hondo. We found the models to be very impressive, now we have come here to see the real thing, and compare the investigations with the real thing!"



*District Engineer COL J. P. Carroll gives each of the visiting German officers a District Pin, after explaining the meaning of Trust, Quality, Teamwork as the district's motto to them.*

Prior to their tour of the Los Angeles River Drainage Area construction, the students given the Command Briefing by LTC Charles V. Landry. Other briefings included the ongoing construction for the Port of Los Angeles and the Tropicana/Flamingo Wash Flood Control Project in Las Vegas, Nevada.



*The second annual Corps of Engineers/International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) meeting was held in El Paso, Texas. Representatives from Los Angeles, Fort Worth, Galveston, and Albuquerque Districts; South Pacific Division and Southwest Division; and the U.S. Section of IBWC who briefed everyone about ongoing projects in the area and discussed mutual projects and future water-related efforts together. The conference culminated with the signing of the Project Cooperation Agreement for the Nogales River Flood Warning System, in which IBWC will negotiate a "minute" to the existing treaty allowing for the mutual coordination with the Mexico government on the project. Left to right, Colonel (P) Madsen, SPD; Frank Krupp, General Manager Santa Cruz Flood Control District; Commissioner John Bernal, IBWC US Section; and Commissioner Arturo Herrera, IBWC Mexico Section.*

# Corps does jobs large and small

By Herb Nesmith

"Little Things Mean a Lot," the Joni James 1960 hit song went. While the song dealt with romance, it's true in the Army Corps of Engineers too.

The Corps does a lot of military construction, but it also does many smaller jobs that support projects important to installations and their missions. One example of a small-but-important project is the modernization of an armored vehicle desert firing range.

In the works for the Army's National Training Center at Ft. Irwin, Calif., is an improved firing range for armored vehicles. The NTC needs a more sophisticated weapons qualification range for tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles. But before an existing range can be renovated to bring it into conformance with new gunnery standards, the environmental impact must be assessed. That's what the Corps is doing.

Plans call for additional target pits, battle positions, clearing pits and spotting vehicle positions, construction of an observation building and roads, and extension of electrical power to the new target positions on the training center's Range-1.

An Environmental Assessment prepared by Los Angeles District was out for public review and comment in June and early July at the nearby Mojave Desert city of Barstow. Questions raised and concerns expressed will be incorporated into the Final EA. Few problems are expected, as the EA determination was a FONSI – a Finding of No Significant Impact. The Corps hopes to have the final assessment finished soon so that construction may begin in August.

Eleven additional target pits will be installed, each 15 feet by 15 feet by 2 feet deep, with an escape ramp for any wildlife that might wander into it. The targets themselves, plywood silhouettes of tanks, will be covered with thermal paper so that infrared sensors on the vehicles can detect if a round was on target. The pits will have target-lifting devices and appropriate pyrotechnics to simulate the type of hit.

Two new clearing pits will give Bradleys a place



*A Bradley rolls at the desert post.*

to go to clear their weapons of mis-fired rounds, then continue their firing exercise. The pits will be revetted structures about 12 feet wide, 16 feet long and 10 feet high, made of 8-inch by 8-inch railroad ties

backed up by earthen berms.

Eight more battle stations will be installed along the two range roads. They will be earthen structures that allow the armored vehicle – tank or Bradley – to enter the station, acquire a target, fire, return to road and continue the exercise.

Two spotting-vehicle positions will be installed on the range. Located in a safety zone, they will allow a soldier in an observation vehicle to monitor the accuracy of the tank or Bradley firing at the targets.



*A place for armor: an Abrams tank maneuvers at the 642,000-acre National Training Center at Ft. Irwin.*

The range already has electrical power to all its existing targets, and it will be expanded to include the new targets. They will be hard-wired into the grid.

There are currently 6.5 miles of range roads – a 1.5-mile firing-course road and approximately 5 miles of administrative roads for servicing the targets. The improvement project calls for building an additional 6 miles: a second 1.5-mile course road, two 1.25-mile return roads and about 2 miles of administrative roads for the new targets and clearing pits. The roads will be rough-graded only, with no hardened surfaces.

As a place to make minor repairs to tracked vehicles, a new 50-foot by 30-foot metal shade structure will be built. It will be on a 50-by-30-foot slab of 14-inch-thick reinforced concrete.

A 25-foot by 20-foot concrete-block building will be built on a hill at the south end of the range to help monitor firing exercises. It will have a seating capacity of 25 people, and will permit direct observation of vehicles firing on the range.

Construction to modernize the range is expected to take about one month.

As a project, an EA on upgrading an armored vehicle firing range is not a major effort for the Corps of Engineers. But it is one of many Corps jobs, large and small, that help make today's Army the powerful force that it is – and keep it that way.



# Corps contributes to space program

By Herb Nesmith

VANDENBERG AFB, Calif. – Under morning coastal fog and afternoon clear, blue skies, the Corps continues construction of the Air Force Space Command's Western Range Operations Control Center at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. Managed by Los Angeles District, work on the 118,000-square-foot, \$19.5 million WROCC is on schedule with a projected completion date in February 2000.

The facility will be sized, sited and configured to meet the Western Range missions of Department of Defense and civilian commercial spacelift, missile test and evaluation, and space-launch tracking.

The Operations Control Center will be a consolidated facility for control and management of data. The new building will house the most modern equipment available, and will parallel the capabilities of the NASA-operated Eastern Range in Florida.

It will conform to the vital Range Standardization and Automation (RSA) program, which integrates a network for mission information in order for decision-makers to better exercise command and control. The network will include all range instrumentation sites, systems and subsystems – such as radar, telemetry, optics, weather, surveillance, command, communication, control and display.

The old equipment is obsolete and expensive to maintain. And if it fails, the Air Force said, either of two things might happen, both bad:

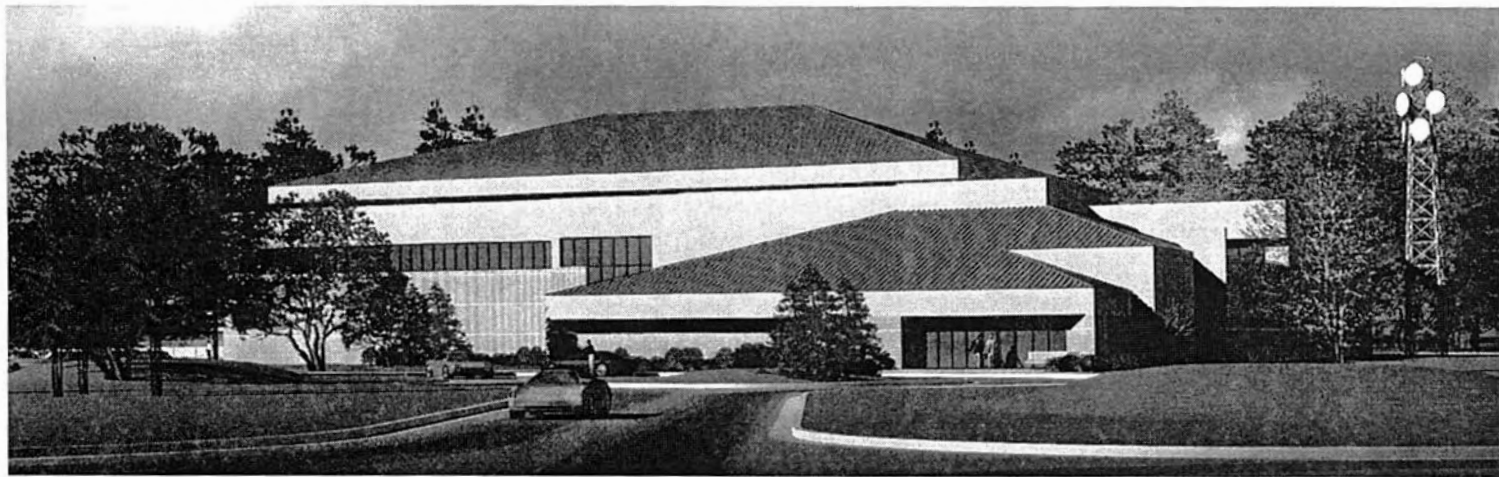
- ✱ It could destroy a satisfactorily-operating booster carrying a critical satellite payload.



*The control center's steel skeleton is ready for its frame to be fleshed out.*

- ✱ It might not be able to destroy an errant booster – which in turn could endanger lives, property and costly launch facilities, either in the local area or along the vehicle's flight path.

Alternatives to new construction were studied. Additions or alterations to existing facilities could not meet the needed capability, let alone absorb future changes, at a reasonable cost. Further, the range would have to be shut down for two years for systems conversion and integration. An economic analysis compared the alternatives of adding to or altering four existing buildings housing the operation, and determined that new construction was the best course. The under-construction operations control center will consolidate work now having to be done in four separate buildings. When the structure is completed, the equipment installed and the new system checked out, the four buildings will be used to house different organizations currently located in World War II wood facilities.



*What it will look like when it's finished: An artist's rendering shows the new Western Range Operations Control Center at Vandenberg AFB near Lompoc, Calif. The 118,000-square-foot facility will have a concrete foundation and floor slab, split-faced concrete masonry walls, a steel frame and a metal roof topped with tile. It will have raised flooring where needed, suspended ceilings throughout, automated data processing ar-*

*eas, a technical control center, uninterruptible electric power supply and a vault. The project includes parking, walkways, utilities and all appurtenant work. Even though located just a few miles from the usually-cool Central California coast, the building will have a 1540KW air conditioning system to keep expensive equipment (and people) operating at the proper temperature.*



# Former Deputy District Engineer looks back

*(ED. NOTE: Former DDE LTC Glen F. 'Jeff' Weien, U. S. A. Retired wrote the following at look back in our history for the Centennial and the staff of the Newcastle want to share it with the rest of our Extended Engineer Family.)*

I was the Deputy Commander for Civil Works from 1987 to 1990.

When I arrived, COL Dennis Butler had about two months left in his command, and we began immediately to prepare for his departure and the arrival of COL Tadahiko Ono as the new commander. I remained in the district through the tenure of COL Ono, and the arrival of COL Charles Thomas. When I retired in 1990, COL Thomas had been in the district for about one year. The following is a brief summary of the high points of my assignment to the district.



**LTC Jeff Weien**

Upon my arrival I found myself in the middle of the controversy concerning the 404 Permit for Pamo Dam in San Diego County. We conducted extensive cost analysis studies to determine the viability of several alternatives, but we concluded that Pamo was the best solution. The EPA did not agree, and the disagreement was elevated to the Assistant Secretary of the Army level. We were near approval of the permit at HQDA, when San Diego had a change of City Council, and a resulting loss of commitment to the Pamo Dam project. Shortly thereafter, the San Diego County Water Authority withdrew their permit application. (As an interesting "rest of the story" - my fellow Deputy Commander, LTC Ken Steele, is now the project manager for the San Diego County Water Authority Emergency Storage Project, which is the successor to the Pamo Dam project.)

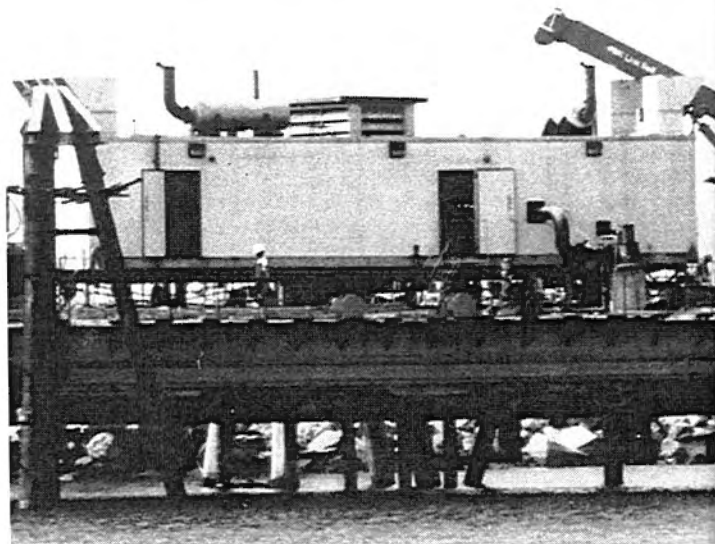
## **ASA (CW) Robert Page visits LA**

Very shortly after COL Ono arrived that Robert Page was appointed as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. It was he who determined that the Corps should implement Program Management in all districts. Early in Page's tenure, he and MG Henry Hatch visited Los Angeles, and we put on a great show for him for a couple of days. I believe we made a great impression on Mr. Page. Shortly after that, we began to implement Program Man-

agement by establishing the new PPMD organization with Brian Moore as the acting Chief of PPMD. Some-time later, Brian was promoted into the permanent position as the Chief of PPMD. We began the process of fully implementing the Program Management organization in the LA District, and today PPMD is one of the major organizations in the district, responsible for project budgets and schedules.

## **Santa Ana Mainstem**

In 1988 and 1989, the Santa Ana River project was nearing final approval, but the ASA (CW) requested an Army Audit Agency (AAA) audit of the project to confirm that the project made good financial sense. Planning Division, Engineering Division, and many others in the district worked closely with the AAA auditor to make sure the project was properly justified. The auditor asked a lot of questions of Joe Evelyn about Hydraulics and Hydrology and the validity of the models and process used to justify the project. We provided the auditor an office and extensive support. After a one year audit, the AAA conclusion was that the project was not justified! This came as a major shock and we had to pull out all the stops to get the AAA decision overturned at Department of the Army level. Ultimately the ASA (CW) did approve the



**Experimental Sand Bypass at Oceanside Harbor**

project, as you can see at the Seven Oaks Dam site today.

One of the more unusual and interesting projects was the Oceanside Experimental Sand Bypass. This test project was set up to move a barge to two different locations in Oceanside Harbor and hoist it up out of the water and then operate jet pumps to move sand out of the harbor and onto the adjacent beach. There were numerous problems with the contractor, and ultimately we



had to go to the surety to get the contract completed. The project worked, once the contractor problems were overcome, but BG Kelly (the SPD Commander at the time) was quite concerned about the project and made several visits to check it out.

### **Natural Disasters**

We had a three significant emergency operations while I was in the District. On October 1, 1987, we had the Whittier Narrows earthquake, which shook up LA and caused some significant damage. In early 1988, we had a very severe storm which caused great damage at Redondo Beach Harbor and at which we had a major emergency operation. Then in 1989, the Loma Prieta Earthquake (the World Series Earthquake) occurred, and we provided a number of people to go up to the Bay area to support those recovery efforts.

### **Financial Problems**

Early in my tenure at the district we discovered that we had very serious problems in the management of labor rejects, payroll payments to Omaha and our overall financial situation. It took us nearly three years to correct the many problems. We were lucky to be able to hire Marty Dense as our Controller. Marty led the district to an incredible recovery from major financial difficulties. The district's financial problems were turned around and now the district has excellent financial health.

### **Computers, Computers, Computers!**

During my stay at the district, we began a major improvement in the computer network and the availability of desktop computers to our employees. The district is several generations of desktop computers beyond where we were in the 1980's, but the Bayan Vines Net-

work, and the concept of a PC based (in lieu of a MAC based) network was established while I was at the district.

### **Relocation**

During COL Ono's tenure we examined several options for relocating the district. The main idea was to move closer to the "center of gravity" of the district employees. Most employees were commuting from eastern side of the LA basin and it seemed to make sense to move closer to the employees to cut down on their commute. In addition, the district offices in the Federal Building were very run down, and the location was pretty dangerous. We had employees assaulted in the streets around our buildings. Related to this was the serious problem of our difficulty of hiring employees in various technical disciplines because federal pay was running behind the private sector by quite a bit. Mike Woywod and David Boals put a lot of effort into the pay issue and as a result of their efforts and the efforts of many others, a federal pay adjustment for the LA area was put into place. We did not relocate, but several years later the district did move to much better office space at 911 Wilshire.

I have many other reminiscences of my time at the district, but the most important aspect of my tenure at the district was all the friendships I established while I was in the District. The people at the LA district are hard working, smart, very capable engineers, scientists and other professionals who do a great job for the people of the Southwestern United States. It was very rewarding to be a member of the exceptional team which is the LA district. I will always have many positive memories of the many friends I had in the LA district and the great job they did while I was there, and that they continue to do now.

## **CONGRESSMAN GEORGE BROWN DIES**

Congressman George E. Brown (D-CA) died on July 16, 1999 at age 79 following complications from open-heart surgery. He was the current Ranking Democrat on the House Science Committee and a former Chairman of the committee. Brown was best known for his work on science and technology issues, including his efforts to strengthen the National Science Foundation, and create the Office of Science and Technology Policy at the White House and the Office of Technology Assessment in Congress. Brown was a great supporter of the Los Angeles District. He was instrumental in obtaining funding for the renovation project for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service's Operation Location (DFASOPloc) – San Bernardino at Norton AFB.



*This photo was taken at a ground breaking ceremony for the DFASO-Ploc building renovation project.*



*The concrete flows and workmen erect masonry-unit walls as Nellis AFB's newest dormitory sprouts in the upper Mojave Desert of Southern Nevada.*

## District does desert dorms

*By Herb Nesmith*

Los Angeles District's Nellis Project Office in Las Vegas is raising dormitories in the desert. No, not planting seeds and watering them, but building them from the ground up, the ground being the desert floor of Nellis AFB.

Under construction is a three-story dormitory to replace an old one, which has been demolished. Straub Construction of Fallbrook (San Diego County), Calif., is working on a \$6.3 million design-and-build contract that will be home for 84 Nellis airmen. The building will have 42 modules, each a two-bedroom unit with bath and kitchenette.

The new dorm, a far cry from the days of old when servicemen lived in open-bay wooden barracks with a dozen or more people bunking in the same large room. "How come it wasn't this good when I was in?" a veteran was heard to mumble to himself.

The exterior walls of the building will be split-face (textured) concrete block, colored in a "Nellis brown."

Construction on the new dorm is expected to be complete in March 2000, Corps project manager Carl Gregory said.

This is the second dormitory project for the Las Vegas office is working on. The Corps demolished another old dormitory and replaced with a new, 144-occupant building. It was turned over to the Air Force earlier this year.

Although there are no firm plans yet, Nellis AFB wants to replace more of the base's old dorms, Gregory said.

## Smile, you may be on a Corps camera

*By Herb Nesmith*

Next time you're on the elevator landings at District Headquarters, you might want to smile – you may be on TV.

On the ceilings of rooms facing the landings, attached to the acoustical tile, are innocuous-appearing, small white doodads, one per floor, with single black circles on them. Those circles are eyes, or more specifically small camera lenses, looking at the elevator landings on the 10th through 15th floors.

Their purpose: to support security requirements for the Corps of Engineers offices at 911 Wilshire Blvd., said Irvin "Dee" Delino, security and law enforcement specialist for the district.

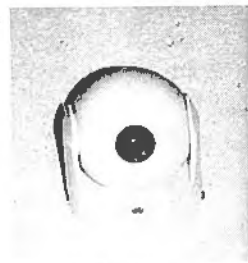
They are part of a six-camera closed-circuit television system connected to a multi-channel unit for real-time monitoring and time-lapse recording.

"The system is designed as a deterrent against pilferage, and to create a greater sense of security for visitors and employees," Delino said. "It is an advanced, cost-efficient, state-of-the-art system."

A large, high-resolution monitor in the Security Office shows what all six cameras are seeing, and, as its picture-viewing area is divided into six squares, a viewer can monitor all the cameras at once.

Security is now in a new 11th floor, located in the former RMO disbursing room. For Security clerk Cindy Le it's a bit of a homecoming. She was previously with RMO and worked in the same room.

*Here's looking at you: An inconspicuous camera monitors an area.*



*Security's Delino and Le see what each of the six cameras sees – all at the same time – on a single monitor.*



# Student Aide receives distinguished award

**LOS ANGELES**—Ms. Dora L. Zesati, an administrative clerk in the Construction-Operations Division, began work in the Los Angeles District in 1995, as a part time stay-in-school student, providing administrative support. Since then there have been three different Division Chiefs, three different Administrative Assistants and two different Office Secretaries. She was called upon many times to step in and assume the duties of the higher graded administrative positions while they were vacant, and often providing training to the new team member upon his/her selection.



“Dora mastered many of the responsibilities of these administrative positions. She worked closely with the SPD HR team and has become the Construction-Operations POC for awards and training. She recognized and developed a system to follow up to insure that all performance appraisals and awards were processed in accordance with Los Angeles District guidance,” according to Tom Trainer, Con-Ops deputy chief. “She followed up to ensure that processed awards were received. She has also developed several spreadsheets to track awards and training expenditures to insure that budgets are adhered to. This has us with a valuable tool to monitor this activity and to ensure that all team members are treated fairly and equally. In addition, she developed an internal tracking system for all personnel actions and a tracking system to ensure all scheduled training classes were attended, thus reducing the expenditure of training dollars on unattended classes. Often this required an extensive search on her part to locate an available replacement attendee.

“Dora has become a workhorse in many areas and has provided invaluable support to the development of the Construction-Operations Annual Budget. She has developed a system to provide accurate salary and step increase input into the budget preparation,” Trainer said. “She unlike many of us, quickly adapted to the numerous changes brought on by the implementation of CEFMS. On her own initiative she has provided concise instructions to our field office on how to perform those functions within her

**THIS WILL LOOK GREAT ON MY CLASSROOM WALL.....**  
*Dora Zesati tests what her Achievement Medal will look like when she puts it up in her classroom this Fall when she begins teaching for the first time. Memory of her friends at the Corps of Engineers.*

area of responsibility.

“She has always maintained a very positive “can do” attitude and needed little or no guidance to start projects. She is consistently going above and beyond the normal call of duty in her acceptance of additional responsibility and her willingness to assist others. Ms. Zesati always excels in all taskings no matter how tedious, difficult, or complicated,” Trainer said.

Dora consistently volunteers her time in support of various activities from being the Construction-Operations POC for Saving Bond Campaigns, Combined Federal Campaign to organizing the District’s Children’s Christmas Party for the past three years. “I will sure miss her smiling face this Christmas,” commented Santa Claus (Fred-Otto Egeler). “She has always been one of my favorite elves, because she has such a great rapport with kids. I feel she will be a great teacher and a loss to the district.”

In recognition of Ms. Zesati’s conscientious and dedicated work in providing both the Construction-Operations Division and the Los Angeles District the best possible support, she is hereby nominated for the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service. District Engineer COL John P. Carroll presented it to her at her going away party the end of June.

## *Dredging clears Oceanside Harbor for small boat traffic*



by Hayley Lovan,  
Environmental Resources Branch

**OCEANSIDE, Calif.** —Maintenance dredging occurs twice a year at Oceanside Harbor to remove approximately 400,000 cubic yards of sediment from the harbor to ensure that there is continued safe navigation for various military, private, and commercial harbor crafts that use it. Material is placed south of the harbor, either directly on Oceanside Beach, or in the nearshore, parallel to the beach.

Oceanside Harbor is a small boat harbor and marina catering to the recreational boater and sport fishing enthusiasts. There are more than 900 small craft mooring sites, and approximately 40 sport and commercial fishing vessels use it as homeport. The entrance and navigation channels also provide access to Camp Pendleton's Del Mar boat basin, used exclusively by the military.

The semi-annual dredging relieves shoaled conditions in the harbor before and after the majority of winter storms. Both dredging episodes are scheduled to avoid breeding seasons of sensitive species. California grunion, for instance, occasionally use the beaches in the Oceanside/Camp Pendleton area for spawning from March through mid-September, with a peak in activity between April and June. These fish lay their eggs on sandy beaches during night-time spring tides. The eggs are buried in the sand and hatch when the next spring tide occurs, approximately 14 days later. The grunion is a species of concern due to its unique spawning behavior and is carefully managed as a game species by the California Department of Fish and Game.

Other species include the California Least Tern, a federally and State-listed endangered species, and the Western Snowy Plover, a federally-listed threatened species. An important breeding colony is located about 1.5 miles south of the harbor, and the birds are known to forage for small fish in nearshore waters around the project area.

Silt is sucked up by a Corps contractor's dredge 'The Florida', above, forced through a pipeline and deposited on the beach through the outflow pipe on.





# Students see real-world application

Story and photos by Herb Nesmith

VANDENBERG AFB, Calif. — "I thought it was a real learning experience. It was fun," said 17-year-old Sean Thomas, as he took a final look at the steel skeleton of the under-construction Western Range Operations Control Center. "I got to see how things went together — all the things we've been learning about."

Thomas was one of group of 27 seniors in the advanced placement calculus class at St. Joseph's High School in Orcutt, a small city just a few miles from this sprawling Air Force base on the Central California coast.

These are bright kids. They're taking college-level mathematics while still in high school. Next fall some will be going to Stanford University, while another turned down a scholarship to Stanford because she preferred to attend Yale.

They were on a site visit to an Army Corps of Engineers project at the 105,000-acre AF Space Command base. The trip was arranged by Jim Mills, a Corps construction representative with Los Angeles District's Vandenberg AFB Resident Office and father of a sophomore at St. Joseph's.

He thought it would be good for the students to see first-hand how what they were learning in class applied in the real world.

And they saw it, as workers this day were pouring and finishing some the almost 9,000 cubic yards of concrete the plans call for.

That, of course, meant somebody had to translate square footage into cubic yardage — one of the many things engineers do.

"I thought it was interesting to see from a practical application what we've been learning about in school," said Philip Halbig.



*Avoiding fresh concrete work, Mills takes the seniors on a tour of the under-construction project.*

When the \$19.5 million contract is completed in February 2000, the structure will house the Operations Control Center for the Western Range missions of Department of Defense and civilian commercial spacelifts, missile testing and evaluations, and space launch tracking. The control center, the Space Command's top priority for construction, will parallel operations of the Eastern Launch Range in Florida.

The day before the student's visit, Mills had been to their classroom with the design analysis and lots of technical drawings to explain to them what they were going to see.

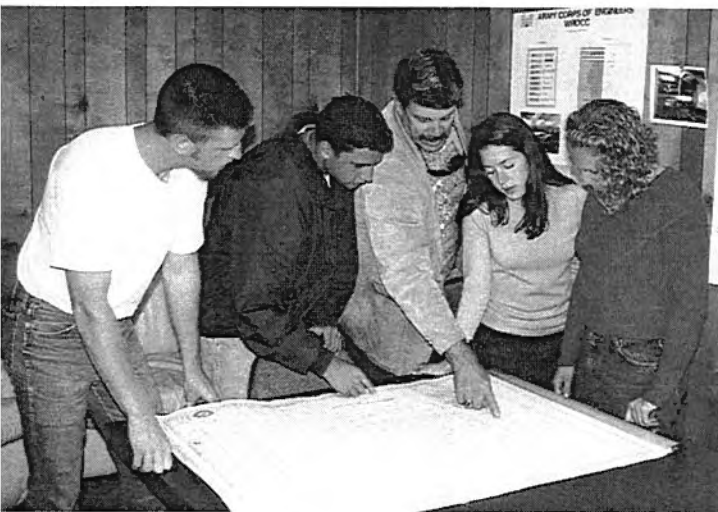
"We saw a lot of numbers on paper that didn't really mean much to us," said Gene Beltrán. But when he saw how those numbers translated from the plan to the actual construction, it made him appreciate more work engineers.

"I never realized how much work went into it or how complex it was," Halbig said.

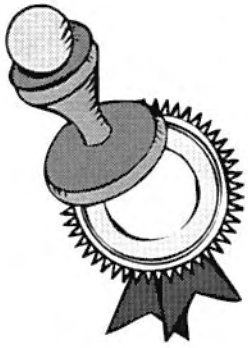
Now he and the others do.



*Students chalk their names on steel supports before the columns are enclosed.*



*Mills gives the visiting local students a last-minute, up-close look at plans.*



## District Receives Stamp of Approval

The Los Angeles District received the green light after a recent audit by the Army Audit Agency. The first phase of the audit, referred to as the internal control testing phase took place on 24-27 May. We were one of eight district/labs audited. The team reviewed the districts internal control business cycles such as expense and disbursements, revenues and receipts, budget, payroll, property plant and equipment, and information systems.

The team of auditors included 2 females and 5 males from Virginia and Huntsville. They determined the accuracy of our books and records, and they developed a standard to base their standings. A major task involved reviewing our CEFMS records and substantiating electronic records through documents on file in various departments.

One of the ways we prepared for the audit was to insure that Standard Operating Procedures within the

various departments were in line. "We knew where our deficiencies were from previous audits, so it was our job to insure that these inaccuracies were no longer present" commented Gary Burger, Internal Review Officer.

The emphasis of the audit focused on the Certified Financial Officer (CFO) Act, a Public Law containing 21 items. Each item was reviewed and checked for compliance. Some items include: Inventory of Property and Book Assets, Construction in Progress (the way we track project costs and close out completed projects), Accounts Receivable (tracking the collection of delinquent receipts), and labor cost transfers (accurate recording of T&A charges).



The second phase of the audit is in progress, however our district will not be involved. The report of findings is due out in January 2000.

### Is this the Midnight Mission?

*(ED. Note: The Corps is often telephoned by people who have the wrong number. In one case, though, an LA District member wonders if maybe the caller wasn't that far off.)*

*By Ed Louie*

One Friday afternoon I received a call from a woman who asked, "Is this the Midnight Mission?" My immediate response was, "No, this is the Army Corps of Engineers." The caller laughed, apologized by saying, "Gosh, do I have the wrong number," and hung up.

Hmmmm, I thought to myself, how far wrong was the number? I started breaking down the missions of the two agencies, which got me thinking:

- ♡ We both provide relief and protection to people from the natural elements.
- ♡ We coordinate with other agencies for assistance with our program.
- ♡ We're both a public service-oriented agency.

♡ In times of disasters, our own staffs have shown exemplary care to customers (offering shelter and holding food and clothing drives).

♡ We're both known throughout the various towns, cities and states of the U.S., and often times receive public recognition through newspapers, radio, and television.

♡ We both receive funding from outside sources for our tireless efforts.

♡ We both are available and on call 24 hours a day.

♡ And importantly, we both advocate being a family ... a team.

So perhaps I misconstrued her question. Often times, our missions will take us through midnight, all hours of the day, during times of disaster. Perhaps my response for future calls may be: "This is the Corps of Engineers – no mission is impossible!"



# AROUND THE CORNER

by Jessica Jacobs

Since all retirees are sitting on their hands, we have had no news. I did have a note from Robert Weise. He went to Phoenix, Ariz. for a retirement luncheon and was going to see his boss Fred E. Tatum. But after seeing his son Terry, he changed his mind and said he wanted to remember him as he last saw him.

Last weekend I received a letter from Terry, Fred's son. Fred went to the hospital for three days and then passed on, May 5, 1999. The group from the place where he lived had a memorial service on May 12. His remains were sent home to Nora Springs, Iowa, where he's buried next to his wife Norma in the family plot. Terry is staying on at Glencraft where his friends continue to support and help him when needed.

Terry is asking his friends to remember him by sending memorials to:

BRYAN ADRC  
2200 WEST MAIN ST.  
SUITE A 2-30  
DURHAM, N.C. 27705

Goodbye Fred, we'll miss you.

I still hear from Herman Wildermuth. His Wife, Lee Had to go to the hospital so his daughter took Herman to her home. This is sad news also. Lee passed away April 9, 1999 and Herman stayed on with his daughter. They sold his home in Yucca Valley. Here is his new address:

HERMAN D. WILDERMUTH  
3342 BELLE RIVER DR.  
HACIENDAS HEIGHTS, CA

Now for some cheerful news. I speak to Lillian K. Ramsey in Las Vegas. She either calls me or I call her. She's well. Still bowling twice a week and playing the slot machines. She's lucky. Well, that's my news.

Last month Sandra (my daughter) fell out of her wheelchair going up a wobbly ramp at the shoe store. Thank goodness, no broken bones, but bruised and her back still hurts. We hope to take a few days off

next month and go Las Vegas. Will see Lillian and a cousin of mine. Don't hold your breath. We might make it there.



You asked for retiree news, so some of my old friends might be interested to hear of the death of my husband, Joseph Warren Quinn.

Warren was a Flight Instructor in the U. S. Army Air Forces Reserve during World War II. He retired as a captain. He then joined the Civil Air Patrol where he was very active as a Search and Rescue pilot, sometime serving as Mission Coordinator. He attained the rating of Major. He was well known and highly respected pilot in the Los Angeles flying community. He had about 18,000 hours of flying time, and was experienced in mountain flying. He made his last flight at the age of 92 and was active and alert until the age of 95 when he fell and broke his hip. He was 96 when he died.

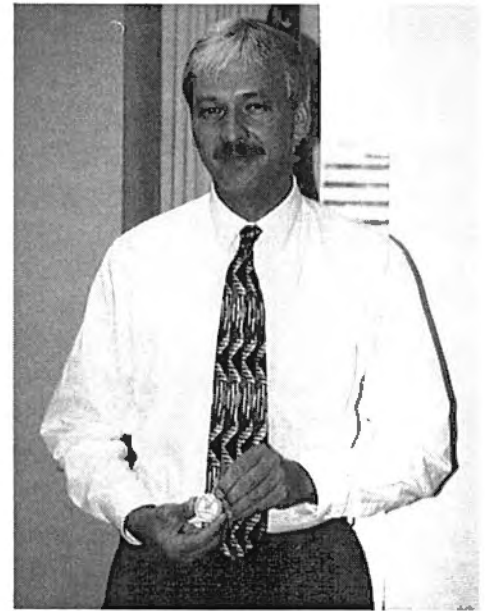
Margaret Riordan Quinn

*Luncheon September 22<sup>nd</sup> starting at 10 a.m. Luminaria's in Monterey Park. \$25.50 per person as the price Hope to see you all there.*  
*Please send your nominations for the Gallery of Distinguished Civilians to the Public Affairs Office not later than September 1st.*

## Happenings

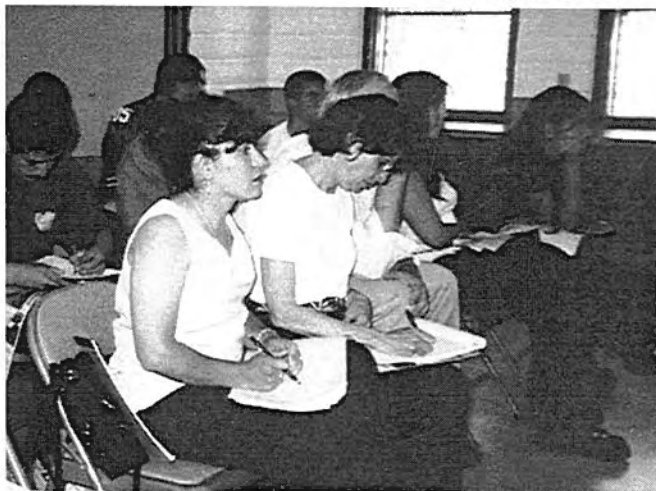


**MORRIS PROMOTED TO LTC.....** Ken Morris, center, is surrounded by both of his military bosses, as they promote him to Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army Reserve. To the left of the photos is his commander in the Engineer Support Group-West, COL Neil W. Gafney and on the right side is LA District Engineer COL John P. Carroll. Morris manages all southern California Army Reserve Centers as Team Leader for the LA Facilities Engineer Team, ESG-West.



**Dan Hanas, SADBU, shows off his LA District Commander's Coin that he received his portion of the 4th Annual International Trade Conference.**

### Dam students learn about Hansen



In June a group of San Fernando High School Seniors sat in and listened to discussions of status and issues during a weekly construction meeting for the Hansen Dam 10.5-acre recreation lake. After the construction meeting, the students visited the construction site. These group of seniors were part of a service learning program that is a proven teaching and learning strategy that inspires young people to learn about, and serve their communities through experiences directly tied to their school curriculum.

Service learning is a method where the San Fernando High School seniors were given an opportunity



**Former DE COL Larry Davis was back in the District for a short period of time in June. Here he is visiting with SAME members (l to r) John Kelly, Gail Portrey, and former DDE LTC Jeff Weien, USA Retired.**

to learn and develop through active participation in a thoughtfully organized service that it is conducted in and meets the needs of a community. In this particular case, the students were informed that Hansen Dam used to have a beautiful recreation lake until about 15 years ago. Their assignment was to find out what happened to the original "Holiday Lake", and help develop a plan for a new area where their own families and friends could have fun. Their information sources were the World Wide Web, and talking to the local newspaper and people who are knowledgeable with the history of Hansen Dam.



# A LETTER FROM John H. Hutchinson in Canyon Country.

Dear Doctor E:

A priest friend of mine informed me, sixty years ago, of an 'old wives' tale concerning a person's initials. His own name was J. Emmett Wainwright, and he advises that he majored in the Old Testament whilst in seminary, including the Hebrew Language. There is a connection, I suppose, if one believes in 'old wives' tales. Personally I do NOT believe in 'OLD WIVES' tales, which should put your middle at ease in the case of your own personal initials.

I usually am out of town, frequently out of the country, during the months of May through September inclusive, tending to one of several properties elsewhere. It is highly unlikely that I shall be in California at the time of your proposal for the Engineer Day Awards Ceremony and Picnic.

In fact, in view of your cited budget restraints, it is highly unlikely that it will behoove you in the future to send my anymore announcements of said Awards Ceremony/Picnics. Now at the age of 76 years, I am sure that I need not go into detail.

The vast majority of my old friends at LADR, or who will probably be at the picnic, has diminished sufficiently that it would serve no worthwhile purpose for me to attend. My time is otherwise preoccupied. Your own and your staff's efforts for the retirees' benefit is sincerely appreciated, however.

RESPECTFULLY YOURS,  
/s/ John H. Hutchinson, P.E.  
STPADDY@pacbell.net



Marie Plageman, r, hands over the Jimmy Stewart Marathon Baton to Mary Zander, the District's new Fit to Win Coordinator.



First TRAVLCHEKS issued in District..... LMO Chief Rosemarie Sandoval, right, issues the first transportation subsidy checks to Sabino Rodriguez, Debbie Lamb and Maria Montez-Alverado who utilize public transportation to get to work.



WHEN GETTING PAD-DLED DOESN'T HURT.. Brian Moore, chief, Con-Ops accepts the winner's paddle from the "First Annual Cardboard Canoe Race" on behalf of the winning team at the district's annual Engineer Awards Day.

## Emergency Response Exercise

# Monterey Flats '99 a success

In July South Pacific Division (SPD) conducted an operational emergency exercise utilizing the the HQUSACE Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) currently assigned to the Los Angeles District. Key personnel tested the capability to respond to a disaster in the field utilizing the RRV.

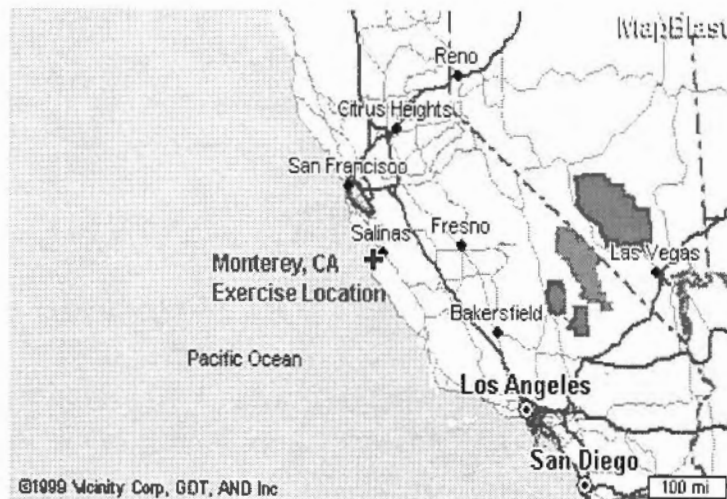
"The exercise was jointly conducted by SPD, San Francisco District and us," said Jim Crum, LA District EM chief. "SPD-EM served as the "Division Forward" response element. SPN-EM operated as the local Emergency Response and Recovery (ERRO) Office District representative supporting the field operations. And, we served as the lead "Support District" deploying the RRV. Our team consisted of the members who have been designated for ERRO support and participated in RRV training earlier this year."

The exercise was held in Monterey, CA, in conjunction with the SPD Officers Professional Development Seminar and included deployment of the RRV from Los Angeles, establishment of operations, and testing of all systems. It afforded all the military officers in the Division a chance to tour the RRV and learn how it can be used in support of emergency operations.

*Procedures.* The RRV deployed on Monday at 1000 hours and traveled to the exercise location in Monterey, Ca. The trip took approximately 9 hours and tested the vehicle in traveling across coastal, desert, and mountain highways. The distance from Los Angeles to Monterey is approximately 350 miles. The next morning, the RRV was put in full operation and a systems test was conducted. The systems test included a series of communications and ADP equipment testing using the equipment provided with the RRV including laptop computers, radio equipment, television, fax, copier, phone connections, computer server, GPS, and modems.



**Paul Dobie, SPD Exercise Director, briefs officers attending the OPD Seminar.**



**Duke Roberts, SF District EM Chief explains some of the workings of the RRV to SPD Commander COL(P) Peter Madsen.**

Overall, the RRV exercise was a tremendous success in operationally testing the many RRV systems and understanding the full capabilities of the RRV for emergency operations. SPL truly appreciates the "team-effort" by SPD and SPN for participating and supporting the exercise. In addition, HQUSACE, SAD and Mobile District should be commended for designing and providing such an outstanding capability in the field for emergency response command and control. SPL-EM will perform follow-up actions with the RRV Center of Expertise at Mobile District over the course of the next two months on lessons learned items.