US Army Corps of Engineers®

Engineer Update

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Civil Works budgeted $4.19 billion in FY04

The fiscal year 2004 (FY04) budget sent to Congress on Feb. 3 includes $4.194 billion in new federal funding for the Civil Works program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Les Brownlee said, "The Civil Works budget for fiscal year 2004 continues the approach taken in Civil Works budgets of the past two years. The focus is on prioritizing funds to complete or make significant progress on ongoing work to provide the highest value to the nation."

The budget proposes that the funding for FY04 be used to continue development and restoration of the nation's water and related resources, operation and maintenance of existing federally-owned water resources projects, protection of the nation's waters and wetlands, and restoration of sites contaminated as a result of the nation's early atomic weapons development program.

The budget consists of $2.947 billion from the General Fund, $812 million from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, $256 million from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, $34 million from Special Recreation Use Fees and, under proposed legislation, $145 million from direct financing of hydropower operation and maintenance costs by three federal power marketing administrations.

Distribution

The new federal funding will be distributed as follows among appropriation accounts:

- $1.939 billion for operation and maintenance.
- $1.350 billion for construction.
- $280 million for flood control, Mississippi River and tributaries.
- $171 million for general expenses.
- $144 million for the Regulatory Program.
- $140 million for the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program.
- $100 million for general investigations.
- $70 million for flood control and coastal emergencies.

Additional program funding is estimated at $494 million, including $143 million from the Bonneville Power Administration for operation and maintenance of hydropower facilities in the Pacific Northwest, and $278 million from non-federal interests for their shares of project costs and project-related work.

The balance of funding needed to complete the budgeted construction projects is an estimated $23 billion. In recent years, these projects have had to compete for funding with numerous new construction starts

Projects

To maximize the net benefits of the construction program and realize those benefits more quickly than under current trends, the budget:

- Emphasizes projects that are nearing completion.
- Limits funding for the planning and design of new projects.
- Redirects funding from projects that are inconsistent with long-established policies.
- Provides funding to complete 13 ongoing projects in FY04.
- Provides substantial funding for eight projects that are the highest priorities in the nation.

The eight high priority projects are:

- New York and New Jersey Harbor deepening project ($115 million).
- Olmsted Locks and Dam project in Illinois and Kentucky, ($73 million).
- Projects to restore the Florida Everglades ($145 million), and the side channels of the Upper Mississippi River system ($33 million).
- Projects to provide flood damage reduction to urban areas, namely the Sims Bayou project in Houston, ($12 million), and the West Bank and Vicinity project in

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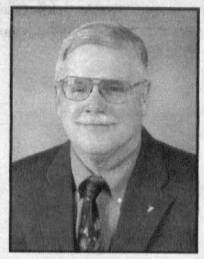
Corps chooses homeland security chief

By Scott Saunders
Headquarters
Photo by F.T. Eyre
HECSA

Edward Hecker has been appointed to the new Senior Executive Service (SES) position of Chief, Homeland Security Office in the Directorate of Civil Works at Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Hecker assumed his new position Feb. 10.



Ed Hecker.

Hecker had previously been Chief of the Civil Emergency Management Branch at Headquarters. He has now been named to head the new homeland security office, which the Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, established to deal with potential threats to USACE facilities.

The USACE Homeland Security Office is responsible for the Corps' civil emergency management and critical infrastructure protection programs.

In addition, Hecker is charged with working with elements of the new U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Army, and the Department of Defense to coordinate USACE support to the overall homeland security mission.

When asked for his first priority in staffing and organizing his new office, Hecker named two. "We need, first, to identify the individual and independent homeland security programs that exist throughout the Corps, and organize them into a single, coherent program. Secondly, we need to establish contact with our customers, stakeholders, and partners to get their views on where USACE needs to focus its homeland security efforts."

Insights

Who is prayer *really* for?

By Col. Lowell Moore
Chaplain, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

I had surgery on my shoulder last month to correct some slight but nagging pain when I tried to throw overhand or do push-ups. The surgeons and physical therapy folks in Dewitt Army Hospital at Fort Belvoir, Va., did a great job, and my shoulder feels like it belongs to me again. Which takes a load off my mind, working for a Chief of Engineers who occasionally drops folks for push-ups!

But besides getting my shoulder back, the surgery had the unexpected benefit of giving me some insight into the nature of prayer.

Probably the best thing that came out of the shoulder surgery was the required convalescence that put me in front of the TV during the National Prayer Breakfast. I was inspired by the message delivered by Dr. Condaleezza Rice, the National Security Advisor, and I was pleased to hear President Bush say that when he "works the ropes" he is encouraged by the many people who let him know they are praying for him. He even said that prayer is the best gift you can give to someone.

Since I had nothing to do but pace the floor with my arm in a sling, my mind continued to ponder the remarks by Dr. Rice and President Bush. They caused me to consider prayer and wonder how it works.

I reflected on the first mission I received from Lt. Gen. Bob Flowers when he assumed command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He told me to establish a Monday morning prayer breakfast, and the mission was to pray for the Corps. Being a smart subordinate I quickly replied, "Yes Sir!"

Although logistics changed the breakfast into a luncheon, we have met weekly ever since. The people at the Humphrey Engineer Center Support Activity wanted to get in on the action, so we have a weekly prayer luncheon for them also. The people at both locations pray for the nation and the Corps.

But I *still* didn't understand how prayer *works*.

I also considered the increased interest at many medical centers concerning the effect of prayer. People were praying for me during my shoulder surgery, and my healing is going well, so I wasn't surprised to learn that some studies seem to imply that prayer aids in healing.

However, I was *still* puzzled when I contemplated the mysteries of prayer, and I tried to understand *how* prayer works.

This was really an important question for me because prayer is an important part of my life. For example, I pray for my daughters every day. Last month, one of my daughters had an automobile accident that sent her ricocheting off two cars and spinning out of control down the center of a busy California freeway. She finally came to rest in a small grassy opening only feet from a large pole.

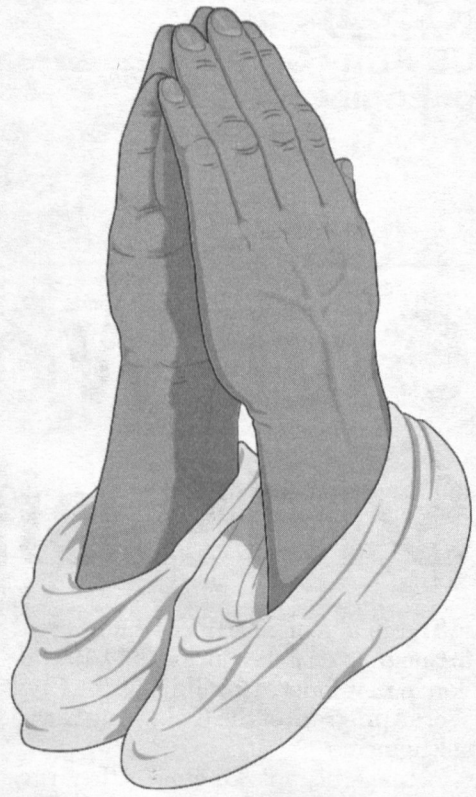
Now, I wonder. If prayer *really* works, why did she have the accident? Or, was it prayer that caused no one to get hurt, that caused only *minor* damage even though three vehicles were involved, and that caused her to miss the pole and land in the *only* clearing for miles?

I confess, I really don't know if my prayers for my daughter did any good in that situation – *but I'm sure glad I prayed for her!*

When I thought this, it hit me. *I'm* the one who benefits most from my prayer! Prayer isn't just for the person or situation being prayed for. Prayer is as important for the person praying as it is for the person prayed for. Prayer gives us a moment to connect with God. It gives us peace through faith that God will watch over the person or situation we are praying for.

Even though I still don't understand *how* prayer works, I now know that *I* need to pray.

Every religion I know about encourages some form of prayer, so I encourage you to pray regardless of your faith. Pray for the Corps, pray for the nation, pray for the President, and if you don't have anything else to pray for, pray for your chaplain. I need it. And even if you don't need it, *I* will continue praying for *you* – because I *need* to.



And thanks for all the prayers for me and my shoulder. I'm not afraid to open my mouth around the Chief of Engineers now, 'cause if he drops me for push-ups, I'm *ready!*

(The opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.)

Budget

Continued from page one

New Orleans ($35 million).

• Projects to meet environmental requirements in the Columbia River Basin ($98 million) and the Missouri River basin ($22 million).

In the Operation and Maintenance program, the budget gives priority to key infrastructure and emphasizes facility security. The budget also limits funding for operation and maintenance of shallow draft harbors and low commercial-use waterways, provides no funds for purely recreational harbors, and proposes a study of long-term options for low commercial-use navigation facilities. The budget also proposes that federal power marketing administrations directly finance the operation and maintenance costs of Corps hydropower facilities, including $145 million for this purpose in FY04.

Five new studies that emphasize watershed-based approaches to water resources problems are proposed for the General Investigations Program.

Trust funds

During recent years, both the Inland Waterways Trust Fund and the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund have built up substantial unused balances. The budget proposes to expand the authorized uses of these trust funds. The Inland Waterways Trust Fund would finance 25 to 50 percent of operation and maintenance costs for inland waterways, in addition to the currently authorized financing for 50 percent of construction costs. For coastal harbors, the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund would be used to finance the federal share of construction costs, in addition to the currently authorized financing for the Federal share of operation and maintenance costs.

In the Mississippi River and Tributaries program, the budget gives priority to flood damage reduction projects on the main stem of the Mississippi River and in the Atchafalaya River basin, Louisiana.

The budget for the Regulatory Program enables continued efforts to reduce the average review time for individual permit applications, improve protection of aquatic resources, and strengthen protection of regulated wetlands through watershed approaches.

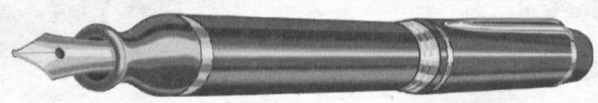
The Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies Program is budgeted $70 million to respond to major flood and storm emergencies. Although this amount is a significant increase from prior years' budgets, it represents the average annual cost for this program, and reduces the likelihood of the need to borrow from other accounts.

Management agenda

The budget supports the President's Management Agenda and includes management measures to enhance the performance of Civil Works programs. These measures include improving economic models, realigning planning expertise, independent review of project proposals, and post-facto analyses of completed projects.

The FY04 Civil Works budget information, including a state-by-state breakdown, is available on the Corps' website at www.usace.army.mil/civilworks/cecwb/budget.

Letters to the Editor



Saluting sergeant majors

A letter in the February *Engineer Update* stated that enlisted men should know better than to salute a sergeant major. This was in reference to a picture in the January issue of a line of soldiers saluting Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Dils' after his retirement ceremony.

Just wanted to state that this former infantry officer would have been more than happy to salute his honored brother-in-arms at Command Sgt. Maj. Dils' sunset farewell. It would have been a very positive and very human gesture.

Regs are regs indeed, but unrelieved rigidity is rarely constructive.

Richard Nagle
Los Angeles District

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Commentary

Jefferson presidency shaped Corps

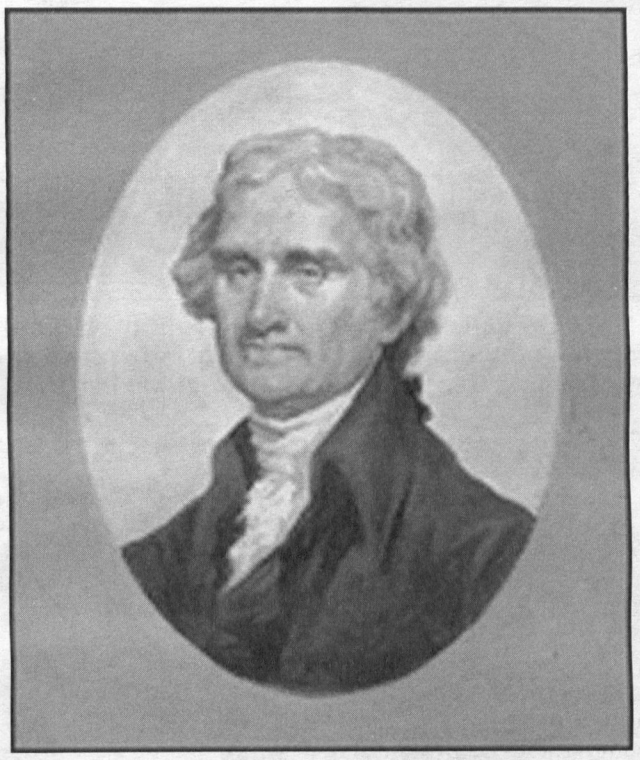
By Steve Wright
Huntington District

This year, Americans celebrate the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the Lewis and Clark 1,000 days of exploration in "the interior of the continent of North America." But the Lewis & Clark expedition was just one event during the Jefferson presidency that shaped what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has become.

President Thomas Jefferson personally assigned the mission of exploring the Pacific Northwest to Army captain Meriwether Lewis, including the mission of "finding the most direct and practicable water communication (route) across the continent."

In assigning that mission of finding a water route across the continent (often referred to in history as the "Northwest Passage"), Jefferson clearly focuses on the need to use American rivers for transportation. He also sets the precedent of looking to the military, specifically the Army, to expand knowledge of potential river travel and civil works involvement.

Besides the Lewis and Clark Expedition, three other events during the Jefferson presidency (1801-1809) profoundly affected the evolution of U.S. Army's civil works responsibilities provided by the Corps.



Corps established. After each war that America has fought, the Army has undergone a reduction in force, and the Revolutionary War was no exception. After the Revolutionary War, the Corps was disbanded in 1783, as part of the force reduction. In March 1802 Congress passed an act that again reduced the size of the Army, but Section 26 "authorized the President (Jefferson) to organize and establish a Corps of Engineers."

Military academy. In Section 28 of the same act, Congress added that the principal engineer of the Corps of Engineers would also be superintendent of the military academy. On the basis of this legislation, Jefferson reestablished the Corps of Engineers. Concurrently, he signed legislation establishing the U.S. Military Academy in 1802 under the oversight of the Corps.

As such, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point became the nation's first engineering school, and served as the nation's *only* engineering school until 1837. Trained by the academy's civil engineering curriculum, West Point graduates were largely responsible for building the bulk of the nation's initial railway lines, bridges, harbors, and roads for the first half of the 18th century.

In meeting these nation-building civil works missions, Army engineers became the nation's engineers. This was the fruition of a concept by the Secretary of War, James McHenry, who recommended establishing the military academy to produce engineers capable of serving the nation in military and civil works capacities.

"We must not conclude...that service of the engineer is limited to constructing, connecting, consolidating, and keeping in repair fortifications," said McHenry in 1800. "This is but a single branch of their profession...Their utility extends to almost every department...besides embracing whatever respects public buildings, roads, bridges, canals, and all such works of a civil nature."

Louisiana Purchase. Another key event of the Jefferson presidency was the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The U.S. wanted to acquire the port of New Orleans, and Jefferson dispatched James Madison to assist Robert Livingston, ambassador to France, with authority to acquire New Orleans for $2 million.

Controlling this key port was important to the nation. Settlement beyond the Appalachian Mountains into the Ohio Valley underscored the need for waterborne commercial transportation down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. New Orleans was the keystone of the inland navigation opportunity.

Due to a unique set of events, the French surprised the American negotiators with an offer to sell New Orleans *plus* the lands between the Mississippi River on the east, the Rocky Mountains on the west, the Gulf of Mexico on the south, and the Canadian border on the north. All for the bargain price of $15 million.

The Americans accepted this offer and, with the stroke of a pen, secured the port of New Orleans *and* doubled the size of the U.S.

Lewis and Clark expedition. Of course, such a huge tract of land needed to be explored. The Lewis and Clark expedition was a carefully planned high-tech military expedition, and its exploits are now the stuff of legend. For two-and-a-half years, Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery, soldiers and civilian team members, explored the Louisiana Purchase. They made detailed maps and scientific observations, interacted with the native tribes, and assessed the land's economic potential. Beginning this year, the nation is commemorating the expedition's 200th anniversary.

With these newly acquired lands, Army engineers were needed more than ever, and their work carved the Army's civil works missions in stone. Army engineers explored and mapped land. The developed rivers and harbors for navigation. They built roads, canals, locks, and dams.

Thus the Corps established its nation-building capabilities throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The Corps' civil works legacy is rooted in four events of the Jefferson presidency — reestablishment of the Corps in 1802, establishment of the U.S. Military Academy under Corps supervision in 1802, the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, and the Lewis and Clark expedition 1803-1805.

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Safety design an important part of PMBP

By Bernard Tate
Headquarters

"We in the Safety and Occupational Health Office view PMBP as an opportunity to accomplish a long-standing safety and health principle – to integrate safety and health into the project planning and design process," said Sam Testerman, Systems and Engineering Program Manager and current Acting Chief of the Safety and Occupational Health Office.

Integrating safety design into the Project Management Business Process (PMBP) makes official the philosophy that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Safety and Occupational Health Office has preached for many years.

"We immediately recognized that Safety and Occupational Health complements the PMBP philosophy," said Testerman. "It will make safety and health a part of the design process, instead of just an afterthought or add-on. In the PMBP, safety will be part of the planning and design process from the beginning. Safety and health considerations will be included in a reference document in the project management plan (PMP) for projects. Hopefully this will prevent or at least mitigate costly safety and health related work stoppages and retrofits.

"About a year ago we put together a project delivery team (PDT) of safety and health professionals and project managers to help us develop a Safety and Occupational Health Plan Reference Document," Testerman said. "That document has been approved and is currently included in the PMP."

"Besides the reference document, we also put together a team to assist us in developing a PDT safety and health training compact disk," Testerman said. "The CD was designed to help safety and health professionals coach PDTs in how and where safety and health fits into the PMBP/PDT process.

"Since most USACE safety and health offices are small (sometimes only one person), and they have a primary program management responsibility, we recognized that although they are part of every PDT, it would be impossible for *every* safety manager to sit on *every* PDT," Testerman said. "So we developed the CD to provide PDT members guidance on how and when safety and health should be applied and add value to the process."

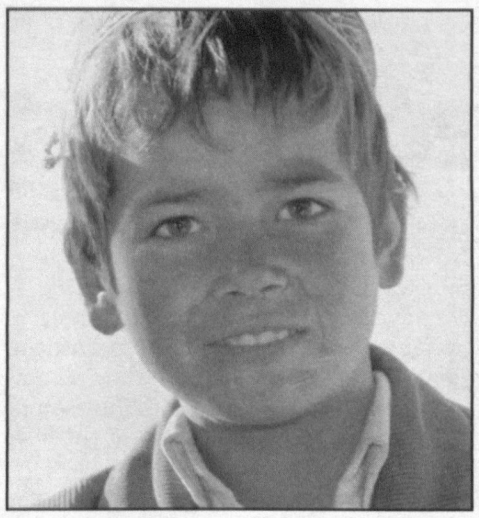
Safety managers will be asked initially to present the CD at all new PDTs, and thereafter as necessary to provide guidance and offer their services on an as-needed basis. Risk management, preliminary hazard lists/analysis, and systems safety are stressed in the CD. They also recommend that safety and health professionals sit in on some line-item reviews and project review boards so that they will be familiar with the projects underway and the associated problems.

"Besides the safety and health CD, we're also developing and requesting that safety and health professionals attend a systems safety course," Testerman said. "It will provide them with the understanding of how systems safety is applied to design projects. We're also working on a more detailed/technical systems safety course for design engineers."

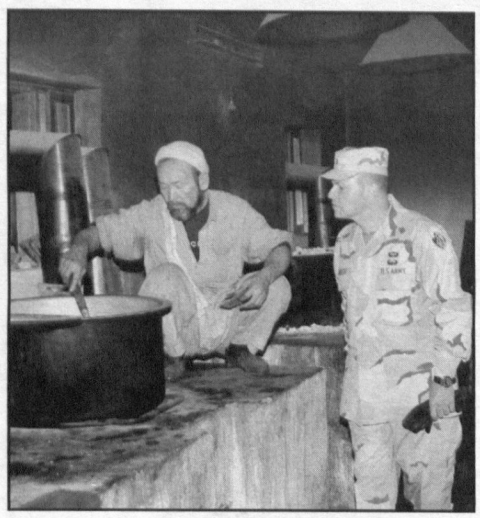
The benefits of integrating safety and health requirements into PMBP comes down to injuries prevented and money saved.

"Integrating safety and health into the PMBP will allow us a better opportunity to design safety hazards out of projects," said Testerman. "That should have a positive impact on the quality of our projects, the number of injuries, workers compensation, and property damage claims. It has always been our philosophy that safety and health should be integrated into the beginning of projects. Unfortunately, it's never really been implemented the way we would like to see until now. PMBP actually provides a definite mechanism and a method to accomplish that. That's why we're so happy to see it come around."

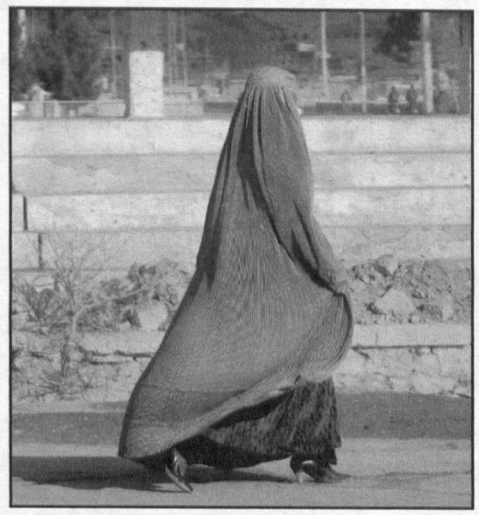
"A project manager who worked on this with us, Burl Ragland at Fort Sill, Okla., probably summed it up best," said Brian Becker, staff safety engineer. "He said that we need to stress that this is *not* something new for the Corps. We've been doing this in the construction arena for years and years, and it has worked perfectly. So all we're trying to do is apply it a little earlier in the process."



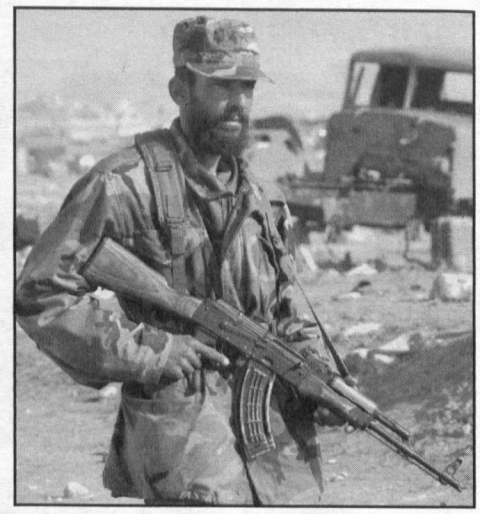
A youngster's smile shows the resilience and spirit of the people of Afghanistan.



CSM Michael Balch watches a cook prepare lunch for soldiers at the Kabul Military Training Center.



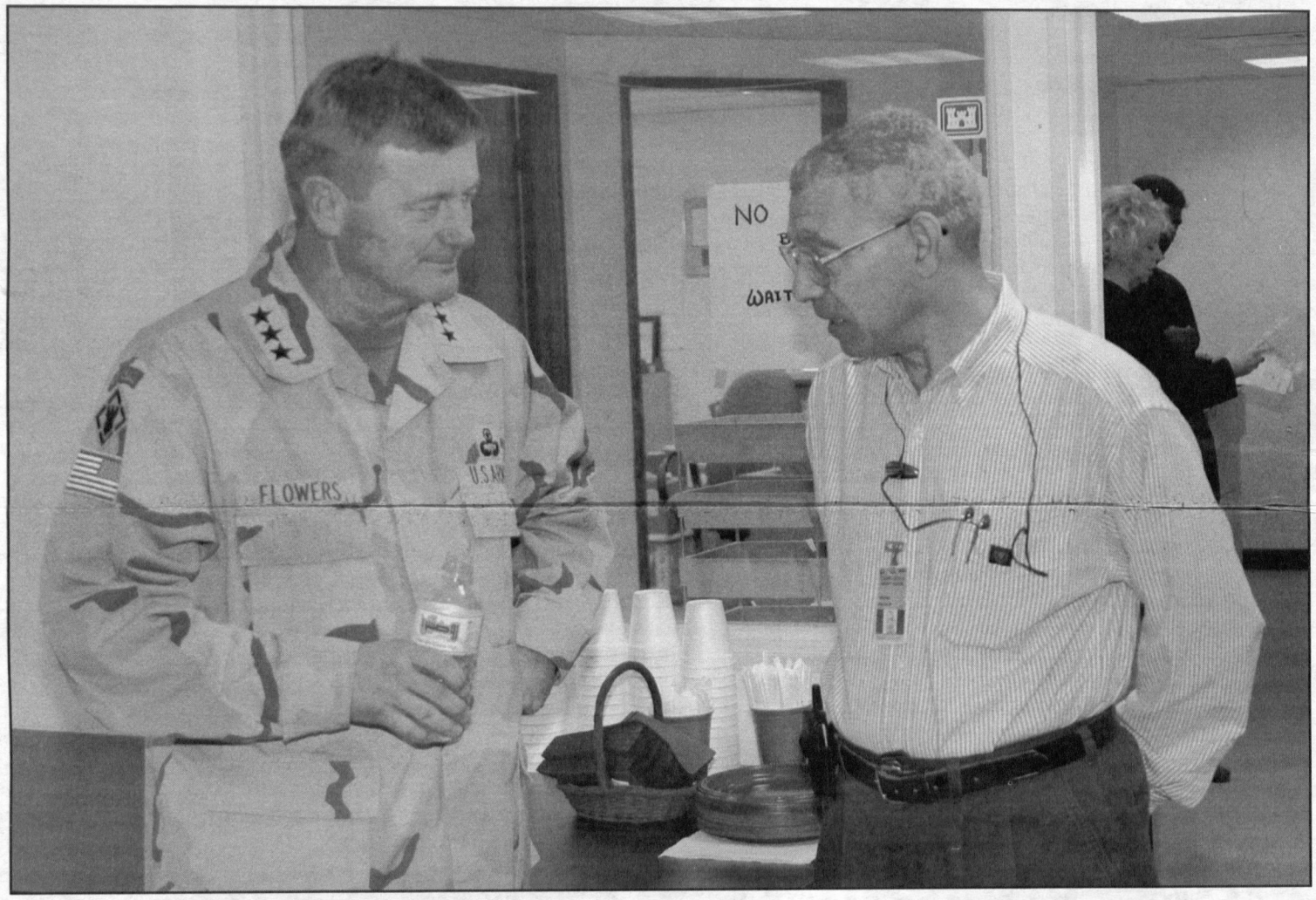
An Afghan woman mixes a traditional burka garment with modern high heels.



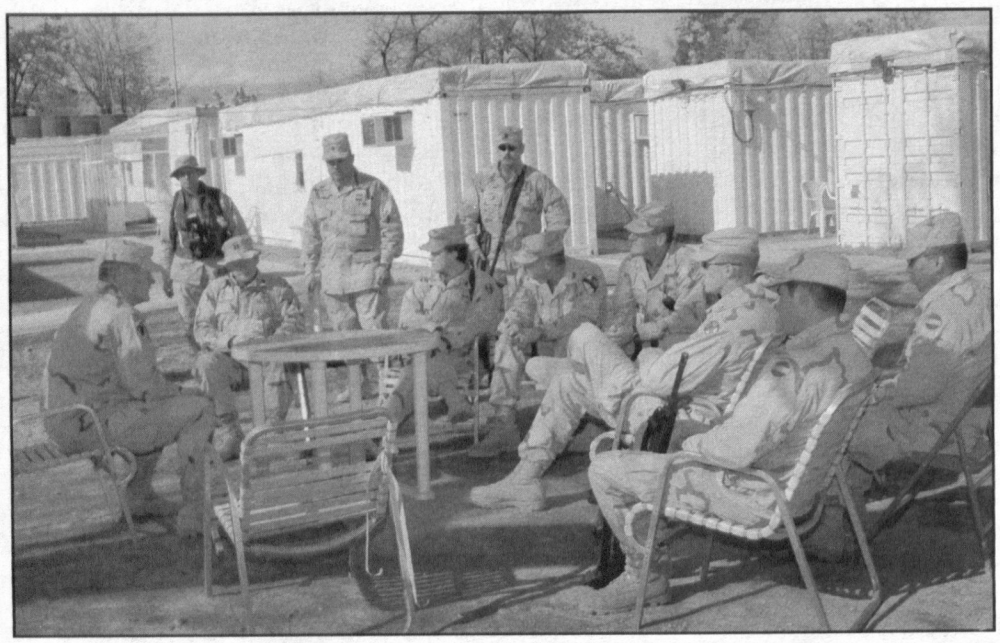
The Kabul Military Training Center is producing soldiers for an Afghan regular Army.

Chief travels to S.W. Asia

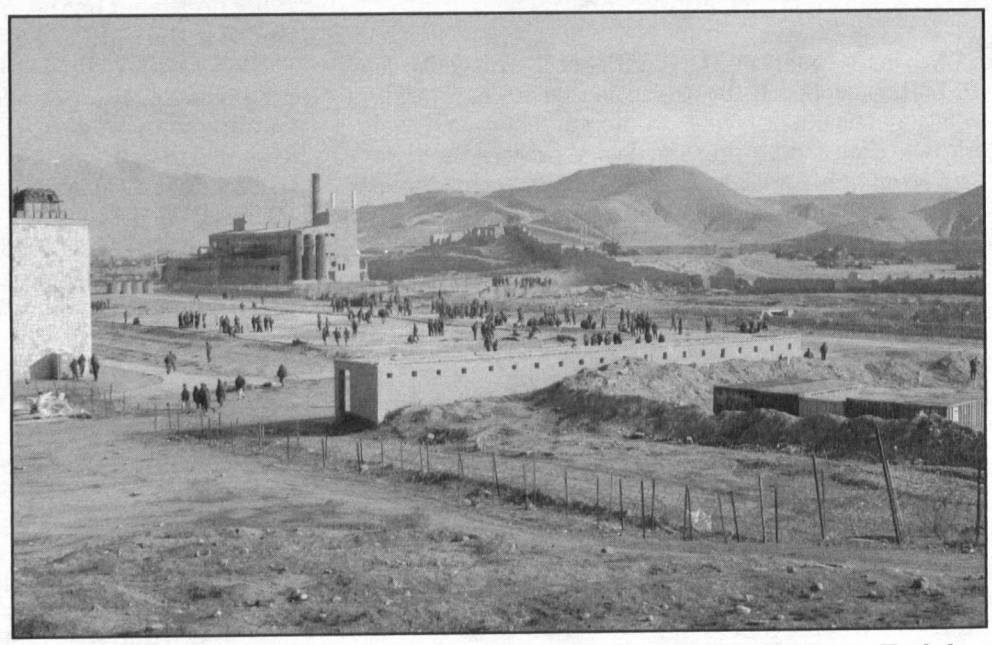
Whirlwind trip to Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Qatar



LTG Robert Flowers, Chief of Engineers, makes a point to talk one-on-one with Corps employees during his trips to the field. Here Flowers chats with Ashraf Wahba, Chief of the Kuwait Installation Support Office at Camp Doha.



LTG Robert Flowers (left) and CSM Michael Balch (fourth from left) talk with a group of junior Army engineer officers and engineer NCOs in Kabul, Afghanistan.



Transatlantic Programs Center helped renovate the Kabul Military Training Center where Battalion 3 of the Afghan National Army, assisted by U.S. Special Forces soldiers, trains professional Afghan soldiers.

Making a difference in Afghanistan

Military engineers tackle wide variety of of challenges

By Mark Davidson
St. Paul District

The expertise and people of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers make a difference in Afghanistan, according to a man who has actually served there, Lt. Col. Thomas O'Hara, District Deputy Commander of St. Paul District

O'Hara deployed out of the district from April 29 to Nov. 27, serving on Bagram Air Base, a former Soviet Union base located in central Afghanistan. The Army's mission in Afghanistan has two parts. The first is to find and destroy the al-Qaida forces, and the second is to set up conditions for the long-term development of Afghanistan.

CJTF 180

O'Hara's initial job there was to help set up the engineer staff for Combined Joint Task Force 180 (CJTF180). CJTF 180 had the mission to control all military operations in Afghanistan and neighboring countries. The XVIII Airborne Corps from Fort Bragg, N.C., formed the nucleus of the CJTF 180 staff. It is made up of service members from all other Department of Defense forces (active duty, National Guard, and Reserve), plus service personnel from 19 other countries.

After the CJTF staff was in place, O'Hara was the Deputy Director of Engineering (CJ7). "There were 37 people working in the CJ7," said O'Hara. "I worked with Corps soldiers and civilians from Southwestern Division, as well as Air Force and Marine Corps engineers and engineers from our coalition partners."

After the CJ7 staff was organized and receiving needed equipment into Afghanistan, O'Hara and his staff worked to move equipment to more than 1,000 engineers throughout the country. "We also had to get them up-to-speed on using equipment or performing work they weren't familiar with," said O'Hara. "We also had to track on a daily basis the status of all work performed, the supply and equipment status, and where all the personnel were in the country."

Landmines

The biggest challenge O'Hara and the CJ7 staff faced was hundreds of thousands of landmines planted in Afghanistan. "We couldn't put troops on the ground due to mines," said O'Hara. "We initially had a critical shortage of mine-sweeping equipment."

O'Hara and the CJ7 staff brainstormed and put their collective experiences, training, and know-how together to craft solutions. "We turned to the training teams and expertise from Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., used equipment left behind by a Norwegian mine clearance unit that redeployed to Norway, and relied heavily on our Australian officer who conducted mine clearance in Cambodia to develop tactics, techniques, and procedures for mine-clearance," said O'Hara.

Air Force personnel on his staff worked the aircraft flow system and the prioritization of getting supplies into the country. "It took about 60 days to marshal the equipment we needed into the country," said O'Hara.

Mine clearance and building bases began in July, with clearing operations getting priority. "At the end of my tour there, engineers had cleared more than five million square meters of ground with no incidents, which at that time made it the largest mine clearing operation in U.S. history," O'Hara said.

Combat engineering

The Bagram staff also supported the engineers in-country in base support functions, traditional combat engineering, topographic engineering support such as map making, and infrastructure work, such as building dirt airfields, roads, bridges, and tunnels.

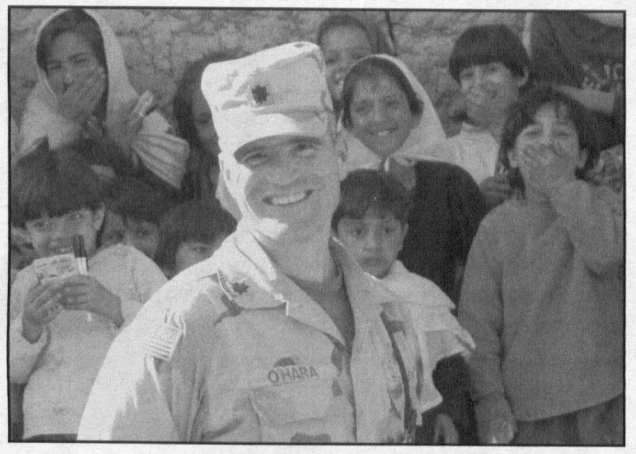
"We also assisted the engineers in the field who were destroying caches of weapons and ammunition found in caves left behind by al-Qaida," said O'Hara. "The engineers used explosives to either destroy the caves entirely or 'drop' the entrances so the caves couldn't be used again."

In August more badly-needed engineer personnel and equipment arrived in country — a construction battalion from the Louisiana Army National Guard. By September, the mine clearance operation was under control, so the engineering staff and engineers started to focus on winterizing base facilities by installing heating equipment and further enhancing the electrical capabilities in Afghanistan.

"Also, during the summer, CJTF180's civil-military task force worked with local communities to get Afghanistan contractors to rebuild schools and health clinics," said O'Hara. "We couldn't use American forces to do the construction, so we coordinated with local contractors to get the work done and put money into the local economy.

"We started out in Afghanistan with limited infrastructure," said O'Hara. "The engineers have done great work improving the theater. This was a regiment-wide effort involving active duty and Reserve soldiers, as well as dedicated civilian USACE employees."

Mine-clearing operations in Afghanistan. (Photo courtesy of St. Paul District)



Lt. Col. Tom O'Hara delivered school supplies from North Branch Middle School to an all-girls school in Bagram, Afghanistan. (Photo courtesy of St. Paul District)

Minn. school helps Afghan school

By Peter Verstegen
St. Paul District

Last November, leftover school supplies (crayons, pencils, paper, folders, rulers, and more) from the middle school in North Branch, Minn., made their way to students at a girls' school in Bagram, Afghanistan.

A lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a grandmother, and a teacher whose father fought in Desert Storm made the operation a success.

"I wanted to do some teaching in Afghanistan, but security concerns overrode that," said Lt. Col. Tom O'Hara, Deputy District Engineer in St. Paul District. O'Hara deployed to Afghanistan from last April to November, working at Bagram, a former Soviet air force base.

But O'Hara got to visit a nearby school in the village of Bagram last May, where he saw three children sharing one pencil. By the following November, leftover supplies from the desks of North Branch Middle School were in the hands of students on the other side of the globe.

"It was the end of the school year in North Branch, and students were cleaning out their desks," said Mary Kay Linder, the Executive Assistant at St. Paul District. She maintained frequent contact with O'Hara during his deployment, and heard about the need for school supplies in Afghanistan. Linder is also the grandmother of 10-year-old Allison Fairbanks.

"I sent an e-mail message to my granddaughter's fifth-grade teacher in May asking if she would collect unwanted supplies that we could send to the children in Afghanistan," said Linder.

The teacher was Melissa Lamwers, whose father is a Desert Storm veteran. "I thought it was a great idea to send school supplies over," she said. Lamwers forwarded Linder's e-mail to nearly 50 teachers throughout the school, and the collection became a school project. "The kids were pretty gung-ho on putting supplies into boxes."

Linder and her granddaughter separated the supplies, filled three boxes, and mailed them to O'Hara in Afghanistan. "Melissa and many of the other teachers were more than willing to give the kids the opportunity to participate in this lesson of giving," said Linder.

"I delivered the supplies to a small all-girls school in Bagram," said O'Hara. "By the looks on the kids' faces, the supplies were a big hit."

'I'm a cancer survivor'

By Christina Swanson
Jacksonville District

When one of the last people you will see for days has a "Caution Radioactive" sticker on his back and a Geiger counter hanging from his belt, you *know* this is *not* going to be an ordinary experience!

I had been relatively upbeat during the thyroid cancer process — sonogram, biopsy, diagnosis, removal of my thyroid and lymph nodes, feeling run-down from an ever-slowing metabolism, and diet restrictions for radiation therapy.

But now I had radioactive iodine in my veins, and I was alone and scared.

Bumpy ride

As Betty Davis said to Margo Channing in *All About Eve,* "Fasten your seat belts; it's going to be a bumpy ride."

Bumpy indeed! It all *started* with bumps (nodules) in my neck. Like other cancers, the cells go haywire and malignant nodules grow on the thyroid. No one knew why. I had no exposure to radiation or family history of the disease, so getting thyroid cancer was just chalked up to fate. Like not making the junior varsity cheerleading squad even though I could out-cheer, out-jump, and out-split them all. Yeah, I'm still miffed about it 25 years later, because it was my first lesson in "Life isn't fair."

But does it have to be ***so*** unfair?! I'm a health nut who tries to eat right (whole grains and fresh foods). I take vitamins and exercise daily. I don't drink or smoke. So the cancer diagnosis was a shock.

The mighty little thyroid

After my diagnosis, I went from not knowing what a thyroid does, to being in awe of its importance, to being scared to death of how I would function without one.

I discovered that little butterfly-shaped gland, just below the Adam's apple and wrapped around the windpipe, controls the body's metabolism, affecting everything including your heart, brain, and digestive system. It also keeps hair, skin, and nails healthy, and muscles and nerves in good condition. Its hormones even influence how you think and feel.

But having thyroid cancer does not necessarily affect hormone production, so it can easily go undetected. Mine went virtually undetected for a long time. I say "virtually" because Gladys Snare, a nurse at work, and my mom had been eyeballing my neck for about a year. They would touch the right side of my neck and mention that it looked bigger than it should. But my blood work was always normal, and I felt no discomfort, so I dismissed it as swollen glands.

Sure, I had put on about 15 pounds, but I figured that being in my mid-40s and eating 'way too many chocolate chip cookies and peanut M&Ms by the TV most evenings caused my weight gain, not my thyroid.

Tests

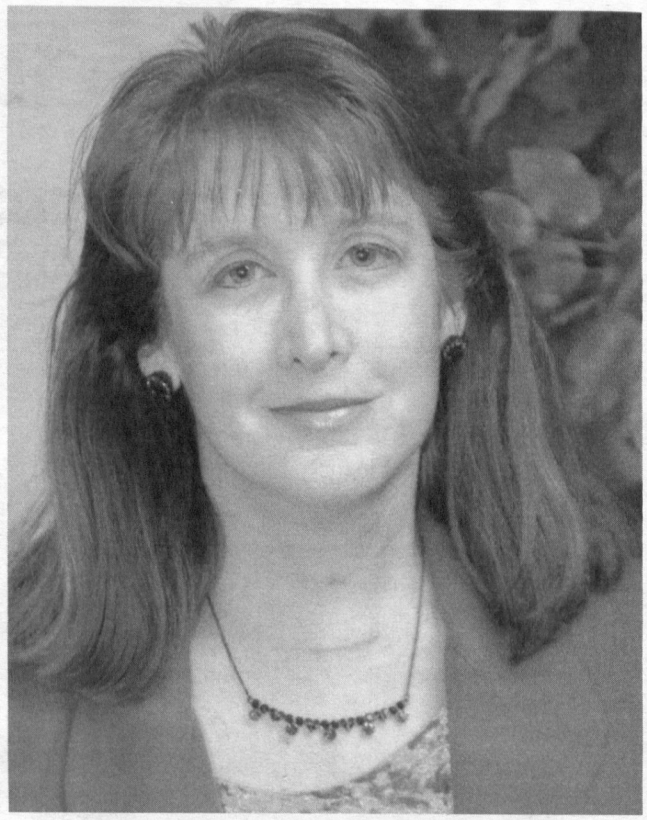
But it wouldn't hurt to have it checked, so I did. My general physician just circled "thyroid" with the other routine checks while doing my yearly blood work. My thyroid hormone production was within normal range.

About six months later I decided to see an endocrinologist for more tests. It never entered my mind that the bumps could be malignant. I just wanted to see a specialist to ease my mind (and my mom's, and my nurse's).

Again, the blood work found normal thyroid hormones. But the doctor wanted to do a sonogram, and that's when he finally saw three nodules on my thyroid. But that was still no cause for alarm, because he said that 90 percent of thyroid growth is benign.

The only way to be sure was to have a biopsy. That seemed unnecessary, since I had no symptoms. So I hemmed and hawed a few weeks, then decided to help put the doctor's kids through college and have the biopsy.

A needle aspiration biopsy isn't as bad as it sounds. An extremely narrow syringe was inserted through my neck and into the nodules to extract cells for examination. This is an outpatient procedure, and the only real pain is numbing the area before the needles are inserted.



The only visible sign of Christina Swanson's cancer surgery is an unobtrusive scar that will fade with time. (Photo courtesy of Christina Swanson)

The doctor called me at the office with the news. He was brief…"Got the biopsy results; shown to be malignant. Thyroid will have to be removed; nurse will call you with surgery time. I'll see you after surgery."

All I could say was, "Are you sure?" When he said "Yes," it sort of sunk in and I said, "Does that mean I have cancer?" Again, an unemotional "Yes."

I actually said "Thank you," and hung up the phone.

I sat there at my desk, in shock. My work partner overheard the "C" word and asked me if she had heard what

Continued on page eight

HR corner

Young leaders get unique opportunity

The 15th annual National Emerging Leaders Conference (ELC) was held together with the annual USACE Senior Leaders Conference (SLC). The ELC gives individuals a unique opportunity to discover and explore personal strengths and weaknesses, self-preferences, and leadership styles. It is a tremendous experience for those who attend.

"Speaking from personal experience, my four-year involvement with the National ELC, ranging from emerging leader alumnus, team leader, deputy coordinator, and finally as on-site coordinator has been the most life-changing experience ever afforded to me professionally," said *Sandy Campbell, chief ranger at Hartwell Lake in Savannah District.* "I refuse to call it training because, the ELC goes far beyond training. It has been an amazing journey that hopefully will continue for the rest of my career. I'm now challenged with sharing the infectious desire to learn and change with others. I'm blessed for the friendships and growth that I've gained through my participation in the ELC. Everything comes with a cost, but the ELC has definitely been worth my sacrifice and investment."

Each year, 36 individuals are selected to attend the National Emerging Leaders Conference. Twenty-four slots are allocated to the major subordinate command (MSC) commanders to designate participants. The12 remaining slots are filled through the competitive selection of nominees from the MSC commanders, Headquarters directorates and staff offices, and ELC alumni from the previous year.

Corps members GS-9 through GS-12, WG-9 and above, and company grade officers are eligible for consideration to participate. The procedures for nominations vary among the MSCs. Some districts/divisions send out a message to all eligible individuals requesting self-nominations, where others make their selections from among local emerging leader and/or leadership development programs.

Regardless of how the participants are selected, they become involved in activities designed to support the purposes of the ELC. The purposes are:

- To give individuals who exhibit leadership potential the opportunity to identify and further refine their leadership competency in a three-day leadership development position in the program.
- To provide the opportunity to apply these competencies through interactions with the ELC participants and the Corps' senior leadership.
- To gain insights and a broader prospective on the wide spectrum of command-wide responsibilities and issues addressed at the executive level which impact the future direction of the Corps.
- To create an environment that allows ELC and SLC participants to network, exchange ideas, and develop relationships.
- To provide ELC participants an opportunity to participate in Corps-wide initiatives after the conference.

Districts and divisions throughout the Corps also use the term "emerging leaders" for individuals participating in leadership development courses and training programs. These programs vary in content and length and are created at the local level. Participation in the local emerging leader programs does not guarantee selection for participation in the National ELC, although in some instances local programs serve as feeder programs for nominations to the National ELC.

One of the most frequently asked questions is "When does an emerging leader emerge?" The answer is that leaders develop continuously, so there is no magic GS or wage grade that signifies the official "emerging" of an ELC alumnus. It is important to keep in mind that learning and development does not necessarily stop at the end of the ELC. Participants are exposed to tools and knowledge necessary to become more effective leaders and individuals at work and at home. The choice is theirs…they can go back home and continue to work and live as they always have, or they can elect to use the tools and insights they have gained.

There are also numerous opportunities available to National ELC alumni to participate in subsequent SLC/National ELC activities. For example, you might find yourself shadowing the Chief of Engineers, or briefing other senior leaders. Your ELC peers and the ELC management team could vote for you to return the following year as a team leader or a shadow. From the team leaders, an on-site coordinator and deputy coordinator are selected. Additionally, EL alumni can volunteer to become a member of the Command Council Liaison Team.

For further information on these EL opportunities, please visit the Emerging Leaders website, http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cehr/D/ELC/elchome.htm.

Around the Corps

Purple Heart

On Jan. 3, William (Bud) Taylor II, a project manager for New England District and a retired U.S. Naval Reserve Officer, received a Purple Heart for an injury sustain while deployed to Haiti a decade ago. He received the medal in the office of Congressman John Oliver, surrounded by family, friends, coworkers, and fellow veterans.

William (Bud) Taylor as a Navy SeeBee in Haiti. (Photo courtesy of New England District)

"Bud earned a Purple Heart in the early 1990s trying to restore democracy in Haiti," said Oliver. "Lt. Cmdr. William Taylor received this honor for wounds he received during that action."

Instead of giving an elaborate speech, Taylor remembered a young soldier, Steven Checo of New York City, who recently died in Afghanistan.

Taylor said that the public doesn't realize what U.S. Service-members serving in the war against terrorism are going through. The soldier will receive his Purple Heart posthumously and it will be awarded to his family. "I just thought we'd think about him today, because his family certainly is," he said.

The Order of the Purple Heart for Military Merit is an American military decoration created by Gen. George Washington to reward the common soldier. The Purple Heart is one of the oldest military decorations in the world. It is awarded to members of the U.S. armed forces who are wounded in action, making it specifically a combat decoration."

Boston Harbor dredging

New England District is proposing to perform maintenance dredging of the federal navigation channel and anchorage in Boston Harbor. The proposed work would involve dredging a total of about two million cubic yards of material from several areas of the federal project to restore the channel and the anchorage to authorized dimensions.

"Shoaling has reduced depths in the channel as much as four feet in places, creating draft restrictions and significant time delays for deep draft vessels using the project," said project manager Mike Keegan.

Disposal of the dredged material will be at the Massachusetts Bay Disposal Site 11 miles southeast of Manchester Bay, Mass. A mechanical dredge using clamshell buckets would remove material from the bottom and place it in scows. The scows would be towed to the disposal site. The work is expected to take about 12 months.

Photo contest

The Corps' Water Safety Committee photo contest focused on promoting water safety. Mike Watkins, a wildlife biologist in Kansas City District, captured three first place and two second place awards in the Spring/Summer category.

"Taking photographs for the water safety photo contest has been a wonderful learning experience," said Watkins. "It heightened my awareness of my own personal water safety habits, and made me aware of the tremendous need for additional water safety education at our lake projects."

Mike Smith of Mobile District captured first place in the Fall/Winter Scenic category with a display of fall colors at Lake Walter F. George.

Charles Lee, Vicksburg District, captured two second place awards with entries in the Spring/Summer Special Events and Scenic categories.

Lockmaster Gary Harding with Nashville District took both first and second place in the Fall/Winter Boating/Recreational category with boats in Wilson Lock on the Tennessee River in northern Alabama.

Mark Calamar, Omaha District, captured a first place in the Fall/Winter Visitors Recreation at Corps Facilities category.

Park ranger Dawn Kovarik of St. Louis District took first place in the Fall/Winter Corps Employees in Action category, plus an Honorable Mention.

Tim Bischoff, also with Louis District, earned a second place and an honorable mention in the Fall/Winter Scenic Category.

Rosie Lemons, a contract employee with Little Rock District, earned second place in the Fall/Winter Employees in Action category, and shares an honorable mention with Valerie Gaines.

Other single category winners were:

- Pam Doty, St. Louis District.
- Jolene Cox, Omaha District.
- Craig Lykins, Seattle District.
- Frank Robbins, Rock Island District.
- Sherrill Storm, Wilmington District.
- Kevin McDaniels, Wilmington District.

All winning entries are featured at http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/photocontest

Project of the year

Researchers from the Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) recently received 2002 Project of the Year honors from the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP). SERDP identifies, develops, and transitions environmental technologies that relate directly to defense mission accomplishment.

Dr. Judith Pennington, a biologist in the Environmental Laboratory, and Dr. Thomas Jenkins, a chemist at the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory, and a multi-agency team of investigators, received the SERDP Compliance Project of the Year for their work in the "Distribution and Fate of Energetics on Department of Defense Test and Training Ranges."

The project provided definitive data concerning explosives contamination of live-fire training ranges and contributed significantly to sustaining military readiness. The team's research focuses on providing DoD with techniques to assess the potential of groundwater contamination from residues of high explosives at testing and training ranges.

The project promises immediate benefits, such as guidance for characterizing contamination in an efficient and cost-effective manner, descriptors for determining environmental impacts, and management tools to minimize the potential for explosives contamination of groundwater and to sustain range use for testing and training.

Dr. James Brannon, Environmental Laboratory, participated as a co-principal investigator.

Providence dredging

After a decade of building consensus and identifying bold engineering solutions, Rhode Island's principal commercial waterway will soon get a face lift, thanks to a project cooperation agreement between the state and New England District.

The $43 million project (the state's share is $7.5 million) will dredge more than six million cubic yards of material to return a seven mile stretch of the authorized federal navigation project to full authorized dimensions of 40 feet deep and 600 feet wide.

About 1.5 million cubic yards of material will be placed in confined aquatic disposal (CAD) cells, and about 215,000 cubic yards of clean sandy material from the CAD cell excavation will be used as fill at Fields Point by Johnson and Wales University. The rest of the maintenance material and CAD cell material will be placed at an offshore disposal site in Rhode Island Sound.

The Providence River is the principal commercial waterway in Rhode Island. Shoaling has reduced depths in the channel more than eight feet in places, creating draft restrictions and significant delays for deep-draft vessels. If the harbor and channel continued to shoal, more severe restrictions would have been placed on shipping. Eventually it would not be economical to use the port.

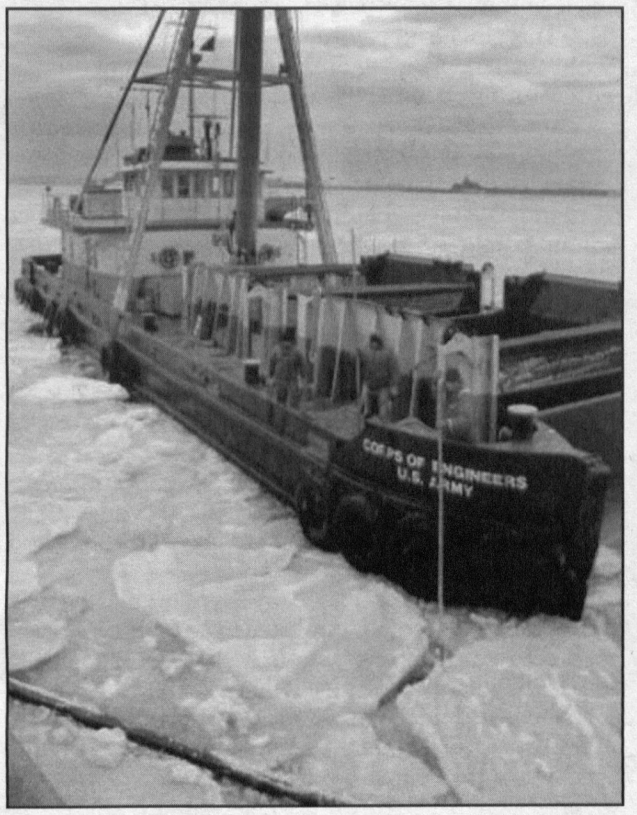
The final environmental impact statement was completed in August 2001. Bids for the work opened on Nov. 27, and the apparent low bidder is Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company for just under $43 million. The Corps will have 24-hour supervision of the project by on-site dredging inspectors. The inspectors will insure the contractor complies with environmental requirements. The work is expected to take 18 months.

Sewage project

St. Paul District recently completed an emergency streambank protection project at St. Cloud, Minn., in record time. The need to protect the riverbank was immediate, as a major sewer line was about to erode into the Mississippi River. From planning and design to construction, the project took eight months.

"This is one of the fastest projects you'll see happen at the Corps, except for flood fighting," said Stu Dobberpuhl, hydraulic engineer. "Nobody wants to be responsible for 2.5 million gallons of sewage flowing into the river."

The Section 14 project, located near the Highway 23 De Soto Bridge, included clearing 1,200 feet of the bank and placing around 30,000 tons of rock fill to an elevation of 989 feet above sea level. The project cost around $1.5 million, with the Corps paying 65 percent and the city paying the rest.



REUTERS/Mike Segar

'Icebreaker'

The Corps boat *Driftmaster* clears ice floes near a ferry terminal at the World Financial Center in lower Manhattan on Jan. 28. Sub-freezing temperatures gripped the northeastern U.S. for more than two weeks in January, causing the Hudson River to freeze in many places.

What FAIR Act is, does

By Lois Small
Headquarters

With the Army's Third Wave and the President's Management Agenda, there have been a lot of questions lately about the FAIR Act and what it is.

The FAIR Act refers to Public Law 105-270, the Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act of 1998, and it requires federal agencies to annually submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a list of activities that the head of the executive agency determines are not an inherently governmental function. Or more simply, these are activities that could be performed by a contractor.

The act also requires the agency to notify the public of the list's availability.

For the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the head of the executive agency, for reporting purposes, is the Secretary of Defense. Therefore, we report the civil works inventory through the Department of the Army, and Army reports to defense and defense reports to OMB.

Policy and guidance for submitting the report is in OMB Circular No. A-76.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) also publishes guidance for preparing the Inventory of Commercial and Inherently Governmental Activities (ICIGA). The ICIGA is a list of all authorizations with commercial activities function codes (CAFCs) and commercial activities reason codes (CARCs) assigned according to the instructions and subordinate component clarifying instructions. The list includes *all* positions — inherently governmental, commercial reviewable, and commercial exempt.

The Hon. Thomas White, Secretary of the Army, has assigned responsibility for policy, guidance, and reporting to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASA(M&RA)). An activity/function is considered reviewable unless the ASA(M&RA) issues a determination that it's inherently governmental/exempted.

The ASA(M&RA) permits USACE to assign CAFCs and CARCs to the civil works inventory, subject to their review and approval. The military programs funded report is coded entirely at the Army level. We are afforded an opportunity to review and discuss their re-coding of the CW inventory and their coding of the Army inventory.

An exemption determination means either the activity/function has been exempted from White's Non-Core Competencies (NCC) initiative, or (in the case of the ICIGA), exempt from competition under the rules of OMB Circular No. A-76 ***but*** still subject to some form of competition under other Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) provisions.

OSD has established a website that lists all Department of Defense commercial and exempt activities.

The competitive sourcing initiative in the President's Management Agenda and Army's Third Wave NCC take the process a step further and requires agencies/organizations to compete a certain amount of positions during the next few years.

The inventory is available at http://web.lmi.org/fairnet/ More information about the FAIR Act inventory is also available at the website.

The format of the inventory is not intended to and does *not* support identifying exact positions at exact major subordinate commands, field operating activities, or Headquarters.

(Lois Small is the Deputy Strategic Sourcing Program Manager in HQ.)

Omnibus Bill addresses CoE privatization

On Feb. 20, the President signed the fiscal year 2003 (FY03) Omnibus Bill to fund the federal government through 2003. In addition to an appropriation of about $4.6 billion for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works mission, the bill also contained language restricting the privatization of Corps missions and functions.

Specifically, Section 109 of the bill states, *"None of the funds appropriated herein or hereafter in this Act, or in any other Act, shall be used to study or implement any plans privatizing, divesting, or transferring of any Civil Works missions, functions, or responsibilities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to other government agencies without specific direction in a subsequent Act of Congress."*

We are working with Office of Management and Budget, Congress, and the Army General Counsel to determine exactly how this language will affect our efforts.

In a recent opinion provided to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), the Army General Counsel noted that the statute prohibits the use of FY03 funds to "privatize any civil works missions, functions or responsibilities. This language does not preclude the transfer of certain tasks or assignments to the private sector, as long as the Army retains control and oversight.

The Corps is committed to supporting the President's Management Agenda and the Army Third Wave and, with that in mind, we are moving ahead to develop an implementation plan for the Corps. In first week of March, Corps Headquarters held a workshop with major subordinate command representatives to refine the competitive sourcing plan and to develop an implementation strategy. This group addressed many issues — how best to package the functions to be competed, the types of review and competition for various functions or business units, how the reviews will be conducted, resource requirements, and more.

Cancer survivor

Continued from page six

she thought. I said "Yes," and she burst into tears.

She came over and, between sobs, wanted the details. I said in a voice unfamiliar to me that I had thyroid cancer and it will have to be removed. As she cried, I kept saying, "Don't cry; I'll be all right."

She went back to her desk, and I looked down at the work waiting on mine. Then it hit me — ***I could die!***

...And I started to cry, too. My daughter would not have a mother to guide her in her youth. My parents would not have a daughter to help them in old age. I would never be a grandma. That's what hurt, feeling that I would not be around to enjoy and help the people I love.

I didn't want to tell them.

It took about a week to tell my parents and daughter because I wanted to learn everything about thyroid cancer and the procedure so I could answer their questions.

Diagnosis

Surfing the Internet, I learned there were four types of thyroid cancers. Two, papillary and follicular, have a high recovery rate. The other two, medullary and anaplastic, are almost certain death warrants.

Although various websites say thyroid cancer is rare, the National Cancer Institute listed more than 19,500 new cases of thyroid cancer each year in the U.S. Women are three times more likely to get it than men.

Armed with this information, I called the doctor's office. Fortunately, I had the most common type — papillary thyroid carcinoma. If you have to get cancer, this was the one. It has a high cure rate if detected early, and can be easily treated with surgical removal and radiation therapy.

Surgery

So I had surgery to have my thyroid gland removed. I have a scar on my throat, from collarbone-to-collarbone, but I'm told it will fade to near invisibility with time. The other aftereffects of surgery included a sore throat, neck numbness, difficulty talking, and a change in the tone of voice when it returns.

Radioactive

Those side effects didn't bother me much. My *big* challenge was radiation therapy.

Mr. "Caution Radiation" handed me a cocktail of radioactive iodine to chug down. Because my cancer was more aggressive, I got a *big* dose. Iodine homes in on the thyroid gland. It would glom onto any remaining thyroid cells, and the radiation would kill any cancer in them.

I heard clicking noises from his Geiger counter (Keithley meter) as the technician measured my room's radioactivity while inching toward the door. He stuck tape to the floor and labeled it with the levels. The tape indicated how close a nurse or doctor could be when I was in bed.

And then it hit me... ***I'm radioactive!***

The technician's instructions were to drink lots of liquids, especially water, to flush the radioactive iodine out of my body. The more I drank, the quicker I could leave.

At first I thought, "This isn't so bad." As a single mom, I could use some relaxation and alone-time away from phones, stoves, computers, house, yard, career, and parenting. For the first time in a long time, I could watch talk shows and just veg-out.

Well, that lasted about two hours. Then I began to feel bloated, nauseated, and dizzy from radiation sickness.

I'll spare you the grimy details, but the next 72 hours were *not* pleasant! My heart rate soared, I couldn't keep anything down (not even water), and the anti-queasy medicine they gave me just made me more dizzy and nauseated.

Somehow, I kept down enough liquids in the next three days to be released from the hospital. But everything I had in that room had to be destroyed. I was *that* "hot."

The technician said my "rays" were acceptable to be out and about, but I still felt radioactive enough to glow in the dark. I couldn't kiss or hug anyone, and I had to stay away from children or pregnant women for at least 10 days.

There were other precautions — wash my clothing separately, use only throwaway dishes and utensils, and flush several times after each bathroom visit. That may sound easy, but it was awkward remembering to bring my own plate, silverware, and cup to get-togethers and parties, and eating with plastic as others dined off china.

Results

About two weeks after my hospital stay, I had a full-body scan to locate any remaining cancerous spots. The scan took about three hours, and getting the results took more than a week.

My scan *did* show hot spots, but the endocrinologist said that wasn't unusual. The malignant cells do not immediately disappear when zapped with radioactive iodine. I'll have another body scan in six months.

Recovery

Presently, I'm adjusting to synthetic thyroid hormones. There were horror stories on the Internet about replacement thyroid hormones. Patients complained of being hypothyroid (too little) with weight gain, bloating so bad they couldn't fit their shoes, extreme fatigue, difficulty remembering and reasoning, depression, and anxiety.

If I received *more* synthetic hormone than my body needed (hyperthyroid), I could be nervous and irritable, perspire easily, have a rapid and irregular heart beat, and experience weight and hair loss.

Although the worst is over, it's never *really* over. Blood will continually be drawn to check thyroid hormone levels, body scans and chest x-rays will be annual events for years to come, and more surgery and radioactive iodine may be necessary.

It has been and will continue to be an emotional whirlwind. I now have a new label to add to mom, career woman, writer, and daughter — I'm a cancer survivor. Hopefully, I can say that for many years to come.