

# ENGINEER UPDATE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Vol. 35 No. 10 November 2011

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Photo by Marc Barnes, Belvoir Integration Office

The National Geospatial Intelligence Agency Campus East project was completed in 2011.

## 2011 was year of success

**By Nancy Allen**  
*Headquarters*

"This has been an important year for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers," said Maj. Gen. Meredith "Bo" Temple, acting chief of engineers. "2011 was the Year of the Schedule, and in addition to our regular workload, we have delivered nearly \$30 billion worth of construction in three programs – Base Realignment and Closure 2005 (BRAC '05), the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) in New Orleans, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Each of these efforts relied on the entire Corps, requiring a focused and coordinated effort to design and build multiple projects in a short time.

### Military construction

"In the past six years, fiscal years 2006–

2011, the Corps' military construction (MILCON) programs managed projects valued at more than \$93 billion for the Army, Air Force, and Department of Defense; overseas contingency operations; ARRA; BRAC '05; and the Energy Conservation Investment Program," Temple said. "We relied heavily on the standardization of processes and facilities, as well as adopting private sector best practices including expanding our acquisition strategies like design-build and early contractor involvement."

**BRAC** – The BRAC '05 mission is the Army's number-one stationing priority, incorporating vital force structure changes, implementing global restationing strategies and supporting the Army's initiative to grow a modular force.

Unlike other major construction programs, BRAC '05 had a legislatively-mandated, date-certain completion with no

provision to slip. Therefore, design and construction was synchronized into the Army effort to meet the BRAC schedule for completion in September.

USACE built the facilities portion of BRAC '05, which includes 274 of the 329 MILCON projects. The value of the 274 projects was \$11 billion. (The National Guard is executing the balance.) These include:

- Projects that enhance the transformation to the Army Modular Force, such as construction of brigade combat team complexes at Fort Bliss, Texas, and Fort Riley, Kan.
- Headquarters that are more efficient and closer to subordinate commands. Examples include the four-star headquarters for Training and Doctrine Command, Forces Command and Army Material Command.

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*Insights*

# Giving thanks in difficult times

By Col. Brent Causey  
Chaplain, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

As Thanksgiving approaches, this joyous holiday might not be as idyllic to some as it is portrayed in the news media and commercials. There are tremendous hardships that seep into our lives and sometimes it is very difficult to look beyond them. That cliché photo of family and friends smiling as they hover around an expansive table loaded with succulent dishes and scrumptious desserts culminating in pure jubilation over the tender turkey is, for some, a fantasy.

Some years ago, during one of the thanksgiving office celebrations that I attended with co-workers and friends, someone suggested that each of us share something that we were thankful for. As we anticipated the sharing to begin, most of the participants visibly withdrew into their consciousness to retrieve a comment or short story of what they were thankful for.

As we started sharing around the circle, one man, Tom (not his real name), took a slight step back as it became apparent it was his time to share.

Tom and his family had a horrible year. His spouse of 10 years had died that year. They had been a two-income family, and he was having a hard time keeping up with the payments on his house. He had recently lost his affordable childcare provider for his three children who were all under the age of seven. The childcare provider had cared for the children at his home, so this was a blow to him and his children.

So what was Tom going to say? What was he thankful for?

There are many people like Tom who have experienced misfortune. Some people might not be experiencing the cumulative events that hit Tom, but many are having a tough year. So what do you say to them? When Tom came to me, all the usual platitudes came to my mind as he shared his tragic year. "It will get better as time passes." "Life just doesn't seem fair." And my favorite, "God doesn't give you more that you can handle."

However, none of these were going to make Tom or anyone else feel better. They are just words or thoughts that people use when they don't know what to say or what to do. So what do you say?

Well, unless you are asked for specific advice, the best thing to say is nothing, just be a friend that will be there to listen, to care, and give a hug. Tom did ask me my perspective on being thankful in times of crisis and difficulty. Although I am not a philosophical genius, I do know what has given me comfort in my life, especially when tragedy hits, crisis comes or disappointment raises its ugly head.

I told Tom that I am not always thankful for the misfortunes that have occurred in my life. How can you be when your spouse dies unexpectedly or other calamities happen? I told Tom that what gives me comfort and the encouragement to go on is my relationship with God and His promise to be with me through the difficulties. (I know what some might be thinking: Why would God let us go through things like this if He is truly God? Well, that is another discussion for another day.)

I told Tom that my favorite verse in the Bible when unwanted situations hit me in the face is Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to

those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

Notice it never says that the catastrophes that happen to us are good; it says that God will work all things together for good. It isn't good when we lose a loved one, a job, our home, a friend or some other horrific event strikes. God never promised that these things would not happen. What He did promise is that He would be with us through every situation that comes along in our lives.

As Tom and I sat in my office, he expressed that he felt that I cared about him, his feelings, and what he was going through. I told him I did not have all the answers but I was always available to sit and listen, even cry with him and possibly brainstorm with him for some answers.

Later that day, as I opened up my e-mail, a message was waiting for me from Tom. It wrote that he had discovered something that he was thankful for this Thanksgiving, and that was people who cared and would share in his concerns.

I can tell you one thing for sure...I am not anyone special. But I know that God created us to be His instruments of love and care, a reminder of God's presence in all circumstances in our lives.

This Thanksgiving, I hope that you can be there for those struggling in their lives, those not seeing what there is to be thankful for and, through you, a Thanksgiving moment will happen.

Happy Thanksgiving!

*(The opinions in this article are those of the author 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.)*

## Fire leads to first-ever agreement

By Kristen Skopeck  
Albuquerque District

Albuquerque District and the Pueblo of Santa Clara, N.M., signed a first-ever partnership agreement Sept. 21 to conduct a watershed assessment for the pueblo's lands in the aftermath of June's devastating Las Conchas forest fire.

The agreement, termed a Watershed Assessment Cost Share Agreement (WACSA) under Section 203 of the Tribal Partnership Program, is the first to be signed between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a tribal government.

The assessment will produce a plan that identifies construction and restoration opportunities for recovering the damaged environment, and provide flood protection for the pueblo's village, as well as ultimately benefitting infrastructure downriver of the pueblo in the New Mexico

cities of Espanola, Santa Fe and Albuquerque.

The program authorizes up to \$1 million a year, per tribe, for water-related planning to identify and prioritize water resources related projects that will substantially benefit Indian tribes, and are located primarily within Indian country or near Alaska Native villages. Such studies must address flood damage reduction, environmental restoration and protection, and preservation of cultural and natural resources.

The agreement stipulates a 25 percent cost share on the part of the tribe, but the cost share can be met through in-kind work or equipment contribution.

"Santa Clara Pueblo has consistently been a high quality and responsible partner," said Lt. Col. Jason Williams, commander of Albuquerque District. "Their desire to enter into this agreement will ensure a plan is formulated for work that will benefit the pueblo and numerous people

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Photo courtesy of Albuquerque District

**The Las Conchas fire lead to a historic watershed assessment agreement between Albuquerque District and the Pueblo of Santa Clara.**

ENGINEER UPDATE is an unofficial publication under the provisions of AR 360-1. It is published monthly by offset for the Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers or the Department of the Army. Letters to the editor are encouraged.

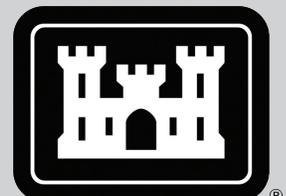
Deadline for submitting articles is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Subscriptions are available free of charge but must be requested in writing. Circulation: 35,000.

Address mail to: EDITOR, ENGINEER UPDATE, CEPA-C, Washington, D.C. 20314-1000.

Telephone (202) 761-4285. Photographs are U.S. Army photos unless otherwise credited. Available on the internet at

[www.usace.army.mil](http://www.usace.army.mil).

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# 2011

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- Facilities that transform the Army Reserves by aligning them with Air Force, Navy and Marine Reserve units to improve joint readiness and the ability to train and deploy in support of current and future missions.

To meet this challenge, USACE centralized and blended the major business lines of construction, real estate and environment, integrating the efforts of customers and stakeholders, and establishing metrics and benchmarks focused on schedule management and successful turn-over and transfer of quality facilities.

Temple noted that BRAC '05 is the largest military construction program since World War II. "The BRAC program has been a fantastic learning experience and provided a test bed for improvements in our facilities delivery processes that will be institutionalized for the long-term MILCON program," he said. "We are better postured to meet the challenges of future missions in what is expected to be a budget-challenged environment, all while strengthening our military and nation for years to come."

## Overseas contingency operations

2011 marks 10 years since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

"USACE has been committed to military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq since the war's beginning, and we will be there as long as needed," Temple said. "Since 9/11, we have had more than 10,000 volunteer deployments, and many people have deployed more than once. It shows that the people of our country and USACE have great depth and great strength and great determination."

This year USACE shifted the command and control structure in Afghanistan and Iraq. Gulf Region District in Iraq stood down in June, and an area office was established as part of Middle East District.

In Afghanistan, USACE established a Transatlantic Division forward office to provide program oversight, allowing Afghanistan Engineer District North and Afghanistan Engineer District South to focus on project execution.

**Iraq** -- USACE has delivered more than 8,500 projects and related activities valued at \$15.5 billion in Iraq, including increased water treatment capacity for an estimated 5 million people; 7,000 megawatts of electric power added or restored to the Iraqi grid; 3 million barrels per day of oil production capacity restored; about 1,200 schools and more than medical facilities built or renovated.



Photo courtesy of New Orleans District

## The Inner Harbor Navigation Canal-Lake Borgne Surge Barrier, part of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System in New Orleans, was completed this year.

**Afghanistan** -- With the surge in U.S. forces and accelerated efforts to build the Afghan National Security Forces, the Corps' workload in Afghanistan has ramped up in the past few years. USACE staffing has increased from about 250 military and civilian personnel in early 2008 to more than 1,000 today. In addition, a second district in Afghanistan activated in August 2009 to support the increased workload. USACE has already completed more than 840 projects with a cost of \$5.8 billion.

## Civil works

The past four years have seen the highest civil works construction in USACE history, more than \$11 billion in fiscal 2010 alone. The budget appropriations for civil works in fiscal 2011 were about \$5 billion. The highest allocations were to the navigation mission (\$1.7 billion), flood risk management (\$1.79 billion), and environmental (\$733 million).

There were 1,167 civil works projects under construction in fiscal 2011, 434 of them specifically authorized by Congress. These included 191 projects for flood risk management. The flood risk management mission manages 692 dams and 11,750 miles of levees that were either built by or controlled by USACE. In 2009 (the last year statistics are available), these projects prevented \$29.5 billion in damages.

**HSDRRS** -- After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Congress authorized construction of the \$14.6 billion Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System, and USACE fulfilled its commitment by having the 100-year defenses in place by the start of the 2011 Hurricane season.

The system includes the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal -- Lake Borgne Surge Barrier, which is the largest design-

build civil works project in the history of USACE, and the West Closure Complex, which features the world's largest sector gates and pump station.

More than \$2 billion worth of HSDRRS contracts were awarded to small businesses, and construction on the 350 miles of levees, floodwalls, gates and interior pumping stations created more than 60,000 jobs.

**Outdoor recreation** -- USACE is the nation's largest provider of outdoor recreation, operating more than 2,500 recreation areas at 463 projects, and leasing an additional 1,800 sites to state or local parks and recreation authorities or private interests. USACE hosts about 360 million visits a year at its lakes, beaches, and other areas, and estimates that 25 million Americans visit a USACE project at least once a year. Supporting visitors to these recreation areas creates about 600,000 jobs per year.

**ARRA** -- When President Obama authorized ARRA, USACE provided more than \$7.5 billion of civil works and military projects to the nation. Every \$1 billion spent on USACE construction projects creates nearly 90,000 direct and indirect jobs.

## Disaster response

There were 82 disaster declarations in 2011, nearly three times the number in an average year. USACE was called to assist with record flooding, severe tornadoes, a hurricane and a tropical storm. In addition, USACE often provides assistance with disaster response and recovery operations overseas, most recently following the earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

**Operation Watershed** -- This spring and summer USACE conducted extensive flood fight operations in response to high

water on the Missouri, Mississippi, Ohio, Souris and Red rivers and their tributaries. The flooding threatened the lives and property of millions of people and impacted billions of dollars of waterborne commerce.

Record snow melt and rainfall meant that existing flood control systems were tested to their maximum capacity. Mississippi Valley Division operated the Birds Point-New Madrid Floodway South of Cairo, Ill., to relieve pressure on the Mississippi River & Tributaries (MR&T) system, as well as the Bonnet Carre Spillway and the Morganza Floodway to reduce the river's flow as it approached Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

This marked the first time all components of the system have been operated in a synchronized manner since the construction was authorized following the floods of 1927.

**Missouri River Basin** -- Northwest Division employees were fighting floods in Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas and North and South Dakota, requiring aggressive and historic releases from the main stem reservoirs.

**Severe storms** -- This spring, USACE received FEMA missions in Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri and Massachusetts following devastating tornados. Responding to the challenges of debris removal, placing temporary housing units, generating emergency power, and helping replace critical public infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and emergency services facilities, has involved more than 500 USACE professionals.

**Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee** -- In late August, Hurricane Irene affected millions of people on the East Coast. A week later, Tropical Storm Lee brought heavy rainfall and widespread flooding to the Gulf Coast and mid-Atlantic region, including the Passaic and Susquehanna rivers. USACE conducted flood fight operations and deployed multiple debris management, commodities distribution support and emergency temporary power response teams to support FEMA in the impacted states.

These are historic times for USACE, and leaders are setting a course for success.

"We will continue to seek new ways to be relevant and responsive to the American people," Temple said. "USACE is a learning organization and we must be resilient and adaptable, especially in austere times. Our workforce is 32,000 strong, representing a vast array of knowledge, skills and competencies. We will continue to develop and sustain our core technical capabilities to answer the call and be ready for the next big mission, serving our nation proudly as we have done for more than 200 years."

# Guardsmen, reservists protect USACE

By Joan Kibler

Afghanistan Engineer District - South

They come from all walks of life and all sorts of backgrounds.

They're driven by the call to serve, and willingly put their lives on the line every day.

They range in age from their 20s to their 40s.

They are National Guardsmen and reservists, and they protect members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who go "outside the wire" to project sites. Without them, Afghanistan Engineer District-South (AED South) could not carry out its mission to design and build projects that are a critical component of creating the conditions for stability and security in Afghanistan.

They're a cohesive group of Soldiers known simply as the MRAP team. In military lingo, they are the personal security detachment (PSD) for ground movements.

MRAP (mine-resistant, ambush-protected) vehicles offer protection from roadside bombs and other explosives. The vehicle, fielded by the Department of Defense in recent years, is renowned for its mobility and protection in dangerous environments. Its crew must not only possess the skill and knowledge to operate the vehicle and its weaponry, but also must maintain an awareness of the local conditions and when to engage the enemy.

USACE MRAP crews have a single mission: bring people back safely from their jobs. In the past year, AED South's MRAP capabilities have expanded beyond Kandahar. Now, MRAP teams are also located at the Qalat Resident Office in Zabul Province and at the Helmand Area Office in Helmand Province. A team is planned for deployment to Herat as well.

"With a billion-dollar program this fiscal year alone, district personnel must get to the project sites to work with customers to plan coming projects or to provide construction quality oversight," said Col. Benjamin Wham, commander of AED South. "Our PSDs provide the security we need to deliver this massive construction program to the Afghan people. These Soldiers are a critical component of our team."

MRAP teams are comprised of volunteer Soldiers and contractor personnel.

"The MRAP mission is defensive, but our Soldiers have the capability to lay down overwhelming firepower on the enemy if needed," said Lt. Col. Philip Bernier, director of Operations and Security (J3) for AED South.

## Training

All MRAP Soldiers report first to the Kandahar area and are stationed at Forward Operating Base Lindsey near Kandahar Airfield. New team members progress through a structured training program, according to Sgt. 1st Class Ramon Curiel, noncommissioned officer (NCO) in charge of the MRAP program.

"We teach them how to act and how to react," Curiel said. "We teach them how to perform the duties of all the MRAP positions. If they can't perform proficiently, they will be sent home. Our Soldiers depend on each other. They have to pick up the responsibilities of another Soldier if something bad happens. Their job is to protect their passengers and each other."

Positions include truck commander, gunner, driver, medic, communications specialist, mechanic and engi-



USACE photo

## The MRAP team based in Qalat treats Col. Douglas Hoenig during a training exercise.

neer. MRAP team members are not required to have a combat military occupational specialty "because we will make them combat Soldiers," Curiel said. Many are military police or combat engineers in their reservist or National Guard positions.

Curiel said it takes 30-60 days to train new Soldiers to be combat ready.

"We teach them how to drive the MRAPs, how to shoot all the weapons, how to react in case of an ambush, and how to react if there's a rollover," said Staff Sgt. Robert Moss, assistant NCO in charge, Kandahar team. They also get counter-IED (improvised explosive device) training, the combat life saver course, night driving and radio training.

It's an orchestrated process carried out by the training NCO, Spec. Travis Richmond, who keeps track of every Soldier's training needs. "I coordinate for slots and availability for courses like driving an MRAP vehicle and combat life saver, which are week-long courses. Some courses require recertification, so I keep records of when Soldiers are due their refresher training. Training gives points toward their next promotion as well.

"We teach weapons familiarization, including how to break them down and clean them," Richmond continued. "We will not let a Soldier get behind a weapon to go on a mission until we are completely comfortable with the Soldier's proficiency on that weapon."

With an emphasis on weapons proficiency, MRAP Soldiers drill continuously. They go to the rifle range at least three times a month. New members initially focus on zeroing the weapon to make sure the sights are aligned properly; other training may focus on close-quarters marksmanship.

They may find themselves drilling at almost any time. Recently, while on site visits, Lt. Col. Douglas Hoenig, officer in charge of the Kandahar Area Office and also in charge of the MRAP teams in Kandahar and Qalat, announced that he was a "casualty" with severe injuries who needed medical evacuation. The MRAP team kicked into high gear to save him.

"For training purposes, they treated me as though I had a sucking chest wound and was a double amputee," Hoenig said. "Within two minutes, they had applied two tourniquets and bandaged my chest. They ripped open my T-shirt and would have cut off my new uniform, but I let them forego that part of the drill. These sorts of drills are important so that we never become complacent."

## Double duty

Training is just the beginning. Everyone has double duty to ensure that the unit is self-sufficient. In addition to preparing for and going on missions, Soldiers are designated in other positions such as training NCO, assistant NCO in charge, maintenance NCO and supply NCO.

MRAP team members are also responsible for the vehicles and weapons systems. "They prepare the vehicle when going on a mission and take care of routine maintenance, and they also install and maintain the weapons systems," Bernier said.

The unseen component of their jobs is the liaison and coordination that it takes to move, a critical process involving several commands that may take several days.

"When it's time to move, they understand the requirements of each specific mission before they go out," Bernier said. "They conduct battle drills or rehearsals before each movement. They plan what to do for certain scenarios, their order of movement and what actions they'll take on contact. They know the rules of engagement and what to do if escalation of force is required. If they must defend themselves and their passengers, they will. They know they are entrusted with the care of their passengers."

Whether transporting generals or colonels or USACE civilians, the NCO in charge is responsible for bringing passengers back safely, Bernier said. "The general will put himself in that E-7's care and follows his orders during a movement."

Once the MRAP team has transported its passengers to the project location, the team secures the area. The NCO in charge issues specific instructions to USACE employees about movement in the area, and then the team, both mounted and dismounted, carries out its protocols for maintaining security. Throughout, they ensure redundant communications while conducting the mission.

"The MRAP NCO in charge also maintains situational awareness of the security of the entire team so that they're ready to pull out on a moment's notice," Bernier said.

"The job is rigorous," Moss said. "Everyone who comes here to serve on the MRAP team volunteers for this job. When there are problems, they come up with solutions. This is not the place for anyone who wants an easy ride. These Soldiers know that. Without exception, they are motivated when they're on missions."

With uncompromising mission requirements, "MRAP team members must be in good physical shape," Curiel said. "We must carry 100 pounds of equipment as we do our jobs. The schedule is full, day in and day out."

## Always on alert

No mission is without risk.

"Our Soldiers literally put their lives on the line every day," Curiel said. "The insurgents are out there. We have to stay a step ahead of them."

Curiel's intensity about the mission is reflected in his regimented approach whether conducting a mission or drilling his Soldiers on the rifle range. He barks orders with precision. It's obvious his mind is always racing. He cares about the mission to protect their passengers, and he cares about his Soldiers, calling them his extended family.

In Helmand, Capt. John Shelton is the officer in charge of the MRAP team, with assistance from Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Burd and Staff Sgt. Christopher Binder. In Qa-

**Continued on next page**

# Alaska listeners hear 'something new'

By Curt Biberdorf  
Alaska District

Dave Luera gives Anchorage, Alaska, "something new" every Sunday night.

The human resources specialist at Alaska District is host of *Algo Nuevo* (Something New) on KSKA 91.1 FM. The music program on the public radio station plays Latin music 7:45-11 p.m.

"I enjoy the program so much that it's probably the best few hours of my week," Luera said, who never thought he would be involved in radio.

Luera, 54, was born and raised in Deming, N.M. Spanish was spoken at home and English became his second language. In 1977, he enlisted in the Air Force, serving his first 18 years in vehicle maintenance before switching careers to become a first sergeant for his last four years.

His final duty station was in Alaska, where he retired in 2001 and settled in Anchorage. After trying several jobs, Luera pursued a career in human resources and eventually landed a position with the Army's Civilian Personnel Advisory Center for Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. He was assigned to Alaska District in March 2010.

"It's been awesome," Luera said. "I really enjoy it here."

Although he had no radio background or broadcasting ambition, music has always been an active part of Luera's life. He and his brothers learned to play the guitar while growing up, and he played in several bands and made a 45 rpm record with one of them.

Luera gave up playing in bands when he joined the Air



Photo courtesy of Alaska District

## Dave Luera records his radio show "Algo Nuevo" at the KSKA studios in Anchorage.

Force, but his music collection flourished. He owns about 400 each of 45 rpm records, LP records and cassette tapes, as well as nearly 1,000 CDs and counting.

When KSKA canceled its Hispanic program in 2007, an opportunity opened. Some friends told Luera that the show had a limited music selection and encouraged him to contact the station with an offer to share his variety of tunes. In July 2007, he called the station's program director, Bede Trantina, who invited him to the studios at the

Alaska Pacific University campus for an audition.

All Luera desired was to lend his music collection, but he agreed to make an audition CD. At the tryout, Trantina told him to go past the planned cutoff time. Twenty minutes stretched to 40 minutes. Afterward, Luera figured that was the end of his venture into radio.

Trantina was puzzled that Luera listed his experience as "none," but the 32-year radio broadcasting veteran was impressed with his announcing skills and music selection. Three days later, Trantina invited him to start a two-hour program for the coming Sunday.

"My head was spinning," Luera said. "Here I was just going to present music for a program and now I have to produce it? It was thrilling and nerve-racking. I wanted to prove to myself that I can do it."

He chose the name *Algo Nuevo* because it was a new show. It was a fresh start for Hispanic radio in Anchorage and filled a vacant market niche. Each edition is recorded during the week, which allows Luera to listen and critique his performance. Extraneous studio noises picked up on the microphone and seconds of dead air were eliminated, but he still finds ways to refine his skills.

"I've learned a lot of little tricks," Luera said.

He spends almost six hours weekly filling out a playlist, answering e-mail and preparing the studio. Playlists with the name of the song title, artist name, album title, CD label and duration are archived on the KSKA Web site.

Luera announces first in Spanish and then English, but admits he sometimes "gets carried away" and forgets the English. During breaks, he mentions the show's sponsors, thanks the audience, and gives "shout outs" to friends and listeners for special occasions and song requests.

Listeners are invited to send Luera e-mail, and he receives about 10-15 messages weekly at the station address [algonuevo@alaskapublic.org](mailto:algonuevo@alaskapublic.org). Many of the notes merely extend greetings, but sometimes they are more memorable. E-mail is the easiest way to request a song, but finding it is not always simple. When a woman requested a song to dedicate to her husband but only knew the band name, Luera bought a CD of the artist, listened to it and guessed the right song.

"She was so impressed," he said.

Another listener asked if Luera could provide the lyrics to one of the songs on the show so that guests could sing it during a family member's 75th birthday party.

With the Internet, people can listen to his show online wherever they are connected. Last year, Luera received a note from a woman that he thought was from the Lower 48, but she was actually tuning in from Nicaragua. One way the show gains listeners is when they search for an artist's name online and find it in the *Algo Nueva* playlist.

In September, the DAR.fm podcast service ranked *Algo Nueva* number three out of 24 Latin radio shows, topped only by stations in Mexico and Canton, N.Y. It ranks number 35 out of 133 Anchorage radio shows.

"If they could only add another zero to my pay," said Luera with a laugh. It's a joke because he works as a volunteer. At least the radio show is the least expensive of his hobbies, which include drag racing a car he built himself, and restoring a 1968 Chevrolet Camaro Z28.

Last year *Algo Nuevo* expanded to three hours and 15 minutes. Luera thinks the show has a future, but his one wish is for an earlier time slot. That would make it easier for more people to experience "something new."

## Protection

Continued from previous page

lat, Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Allen leads the team, assisted by Staff Sgt. Alberto Garcia, Staff Sgt. Ronald Stidham and Staff Sgt. Tony Bean.

The teams travel in convoys using three types of MRAPs -- the all-terrain M-ATV known for its mobility, the Cougar and the MaxxPro. The vehicles are equipped with the latest communications equipment and weaponry.

Team members use their individual weapons plus crew-served weapons. Crew-served weapons require more than one person to operate them due to their complexity or size. They include machine guns and grenade launchers.

"If we have to, we're prepared to engage," Curiel said. "Most of us have fought the enemy in other assignments."

Curiel is on his fourth deployment to Afghanistan. His previous assignments include serving as a mentor for the Afghan National Army and Police; a tour with Task Force Paladin, a unit formed by ISAF in 2006 to combat the IED threat; and a tour with a PSD for Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan. He also served as a machine gunner in Iraq. Before joining the Army Reserves, he fought in Somalia as a U.S. Marine.

Moss is on his third deployment to Afghanistan. His assignments included route reconnaissance from Bagram Air Base, detainee operations at Bagram and Kandahar, and combat patrols and village assessments with the 10th Mountain Division at Ghosni. He also served in Iraq as part of the police transition team.

Practically all the MRAP Soldiers have seen prior combat experience, primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"You have to be prepared for the worst," said Spec. Mar-

cus Gross. "A Soldier must be ready to deploy, engage and destroy. When you serve overseas, in an environment like this, you never look at a U.S. flag the same way."

In his nine months as the J3 director, Bernier has been impressed with the quality of volunteers for the MRAP teams. "Even though they come from varied backgrounds, these individuals are Soldiers first, and they come here serious about what they want to do. They want this professional experience. Some of them want to build their careers in this field. Some want to be back with an active-duty unit. They want to contribute to the organization."

MRAP team members find fulfillment doing their part for the U.S. mission in Afghanistan.

"I like what I do here to provide security for the USACE employees who are going to jobsites," said Staff Sgt. Michael Conner. "I know this work is making a difference, and I'm proud to be part of this team."

"I like my job," Moss said. "I like to help the new guys. I can pass along lessons learned to make them better able to perform their jobs."

Staff Sgt. Tony Bean said that this job gets him back to a military environment. "I was in the Marine Corps for more than 13 years, spent four years as a civilian, and then joined the North Carolina National Guard. This job helps me work toward a military retirement while working on my master's degree. Most of all, it gives me the opportunity to serve, to make sure that with every mission everyone comes back safe."

"I admire the courage and level of respect that these Soldiers have for their jobs and for each other," Bernier said. "They demonstrate this cohesiveness all the time."

*HR Corner*

# Human Capital Plan develops employees

Ensuring that civilian employees have the required technical and leadership competencies to meet our mission is a readiness and talent issue. In this time of constrained fiscal resources, the need to assure that we provide supervisors with the necessary tools to supervise and lead their employees is critical. Developing employees is an area of focus in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Human Capital Plan.

The 2010 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Section 1113, outlines specific requirements for mandatory supervisor training. First-time supervisors (military and Army civilian supervisors with less than one year of supervising Army civilians) are required to complete supervisor training no later than 12 months after the date when they were appointed to their current supervisory position.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management requires that supervisor training be completed as a condition of the new supervisor's one-year probationary period. During the probationary period, the new supervisor is evaluated for qualities and characteristics essential for effective performance and, if unsuccessful, is removed from the position.

In addition, all supervisors of Army civilians are required to complete refresher/sustainment training at least once every three years.

The Army recognizes the Training and Doctrine Command's on-line Supervisor Development Course (SDC) as the single method of instruction for providing the mandatory NDAA-required supervisor training. The SDC provides techniques for managing work and leading people, as well as management and leadership processes that include planning, organizing, coordinating, directing and controlling. It also includes lessons on delegating authority, problem solving, communicating effectively and ethics.

The SDC training enables a supervisor to use personnel management tools, techniques, and procedures to ensure mission accomplishment and subordinates' professional growth. It includes lessons on position classification, staffing, human resources development, performance management, awards, discipline and labor relations.

As of Oct. 1, 2011, the revised SDC is available online for new enrollments. The SDC can be accessed via the Civilian Human Resources Training Application System (CHRTAS) at <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/chrtas>. New supervisors must take the SDC no later than 12 months after the date on which they were appointed to their current supervisory position.

Current supervisors who did not complete supervisor training (SDC or Human Resources for Supervisors Course) before Sept. 30, 2011, and supervisors who have not completed supervisor training in the past three years, must take the SDC by June 30, 2012.

All supervisors must be up to date in this training by June 30, 2012. For fiscal year 2012 and the coming years, the SDC is required for first-time supervisors, and refresher/sustainment training must be taken by all supervisors at least once every three years.

Supervisors must ensure their student profile is updated, including their current supervisor's name and email information. If supervisors do not have a profile, or if it has been more than 120 days since they last logged into

CHRTAS, they will be required to create/update their profile before they may apply for training.

To enroll in the SDC, click on the "Apply for Training" menu option on the left side of the screen and take the following steps:

- At step 1 select the current fiscal year.
- At step 2 select supervisor training.
- At step 3 verify the SDC is selected.
- At step 4 click the search button to see the SDC registration.

Supervisors will also be required to verify their Army Knowledge Online username and password.

After supervisors complete the registration process, their supervisor will receive a system-generated e-mail notification with instructions to approve the registration. Once he or she approves the registration, the supervisor will receive an e-mail with instructions on how to access the course. Supervisors should keep this e-mail for future reference.

Those experiencing technical problems with the SDC can contact the Army Training Help Desk (ATHD). To access the ATHD, log on to AKO and type in <https://athd.army.mil>.

Course completion will be automatically recorded in

the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS) (for military and civilian students) and will be uploaded in the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (for civilians only).

For previous supervisor training completions, civilian supervisors are advised to review their training records via My Biz, which is accessed through the Civilian Personnel Online ([www.cpol.army.mil/](http://www.cpol.army.mil/)).

Military supervisors are advised to review their ATRRS training records via <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/>.

In addition to completing the supervisor training (SDC or Human Resources for Supervisors Course) to meet the 2010 NDAA leader development requirement, proposed regulations will also require supervisors to complete the requisite Civilian Education System (CES) leader development courses for their grade level.

The CES is a progressive, sequential leader development program that provides enhanced educational opportunities for Army civilians throughout their careers. The goals of the CES are to prepare agile and innovative Army civilians who can lead during times of change and uncertainty; are prepared for the rigors of service as multi-skilled leaders; and are armed with the values, skills, and mindset to

**Continued on page 8**

*Military HR Corner*

## Reserves play vital role

The Reserve component is a key and vital resource to our nation, the Army, the Engineer Regiment and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with demonstrated capabilities of effectively operating in the JIIM (joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational) environment for the past 10 years.

Maj. Gen. Michael Eyre, the USACE deputy commanding general for reserve affairs, and his team advise, educate and support military units and civilian agencies at all levels in meeting organizational and operational requirements.

The Reserve Affairs Office (RAO) has primary responsibility to:

- Recruit and mobilize highly qualified, fully trained and readily deployable engineer Soldiers for Afghanistan Engineer District.
- Maintain and mobilize a stand-by force of military personnel prepared to respond immediately to any disaster or emergency.
- Be an active agent in all USACE Reserve-related actions.
- Serve as the principal liaison for Headquarters with the Office Chief of Army Reserve and the Office Director Army National Guard.

So what does all of that really mean?

The Reserves have an active role in supporting Transatlantic Division and the two engineer districts in Afghanistan with officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs). These Soldiers help supplement the Army's efforts with the reconstruction mission in Afghanistan. The positions range from operation officers to quality assurance NCOs.

At the same time, the Reserves assist all USACE divisions by providing additional military linkage to military projects. The RAO coordinates and performs extensive

recruiting and selecting of Soldiers who possess the necessary experience and expertise for a particular duty assignment.

Today, Army Reserve and National Guard engineer Soldiers work alongside their active duty counterparts, which reinforces the one Army concept. They provide strong civilian-acquired skills, mutually supporting working relationships, and in return produce quality work, products and results.

Disaster or emergency operations are extremely taxing for all involved, and finding sufficient qualified people to respond can be just as challenging. The Reserves provide personnel and equipment quickly to a location, filling gaps in units and organizations. Under the Reserves in Support of Disaster Response Operations (RESDRO) program, Soldiers who meet the skill requirements and are willing to serve under a voluntary activation will fill identified positions in the USACE disaster response teams. Since 1991, more than 500 Soldiers have been engaged from the Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) as part of the RESDRO program.

Communication, coordination, cooperation and compassion serve as the four building blocks that actively engage and facilitate the Reserves with the Engineer Regiment and USACE operations. This is accomplished through senior leader conferences, pre-command courses, direct coordination with commanders and civilian leadership, active recruitment of Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, and publications (including this new column), to name just a few.

The Reserve Affairs Office strives to maintain open communication channels with all concerned to ensure that appropriate personnel and resources are available to support all current and future operations, programs and projects.

# AROUND THE CORPS

## Presidential Rank Awards

Lloyd Pike, deputy chief counsel in Headquarters, and Dr. David Pittman, director of the Geotechnical and Structures Laboratory, received the 2010 Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executives. They were among the members of the Senior Executive Service who received the awards in a ceremony at the Pentagon.

In his capacity as deputy chief counsel, Pike teamed with the chief counsel and more than 500 legal professionals in USACE to produce one of the most effective legal service organizations in the federal government.

Under Pike's leadership, the Corps' legal services respond to thousands of requests for legal opinions and thousands more requests for legal action. They consistently exceed every success metric for bid protests before the Government Accountability Office and in litigation.

In his capacity as director of the Geotechnical and Structures Laboratory, Pittman consistently led numerous ERDC research efforts for the warfighter and to the nation. These efforts contributed to ERDC winning the Army Laboratory of the Year Award three years in a row, and five of the past eight years.

## Value engineering awards

USACE recently earned several Value Engineering Achievement Awards from the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Lt. Gen. (ret.) Robert Van Antwerp, the former chief of engineers, and USACE were honored for 46 years of value engineering (VE) excellence. The USACE VE program resulted in building more than \$6.2 billion in facilities without additional fund requests. In 2010, USACE invested \$11.5 million in the program and earned \$202 million in cost avoidance.

Carrie Ozgar, value engineering officer in Baltimore District, received an individual category award. In fiscal 2010 the district saved \$40 million in their military program.

Michael Huff, value engineering officer in Fort Worth District, received a special category award. In fiscal 2010 the district had cost savings of \$18 million, or about 5.74 percent of the district's total obligation authority.

GeoVal, Inc., a contractor with New Orleans District, received an award in the contractor category. In the past six years, GeoVal, Inc. performed more than 20 VE studies for USACE, resulting in more than \$80 million in cost avoidance, with future potential savings of more than \$500 million.

## First sustainability awards

ERDC has received the first-ever USACE 2011 Sustainability Award in the Green Innovation category.

The Environmental Laboratory partnered with ETS Inc. to commercialize the process that produces biological polymers to stabilize soil. Product applications include increasing drought resistance of plants, erosion control, slope stability and dust abatement.

The preliminary results of field and laboratory testing include a 95 percent reduction in water runoff erosion in

soil treated with the new biopolymer.

The 2011 Sustainability Awards have six categories designed to recognize excellence within USACE in making the nation environmentally sustainable. In addition to the Green Innovation category, award categories and winners are:

**Sustainability Hero Award:** Patricia Donohue of North Atlantic Division for establishing and leading the NAD Regional Sustainable Engineering Center.

**Green Dream Team Award:** Federal Non Tactical Vessel Fleet Biodiesel Interagency Working Group that helped USACE adopt the successful testing of B100 biodiesel in four different types of vessels.

**Good Neighbor Award:** Central City Project Delivery Team of Southwestern Division, a partnership between USACE and the community.

**Lean, Clean and Green Award:** Base Realignment and Closure Act 133 Program Management Team for New York District for using a design-build contract for challenging facility built to LEED Gold standard.

**Building the Future Award:** Emerson Commons Fit-Up of Baltimore District, for achieving LEED Gold certification for commercial interiors.

## Auditor of the Year

The Army's 2010 Auditor of the Year is Eric Lampkin, internal review officer in Japan District. Two other USACE people also received awards. Amy Rainer, a management analyst at ERDC received the Resource Management Award, and Lindera Dozier-Owens, a budget analyst at Norfolk District, received the Budgeting Award.

They received their awards at the American Society of Military Comptrollers Professional Development Institute in Minneapolis. The awards were presented by Dr. Mary Matiella, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management & Comptroller).

Lampkin was recognized for re-establishing a district internal review program after a 14-year dormancy. Soon after, Lampkin audited the district's policies and procedures, focusing on time and attendance. His review identified an overstatement of leave liability of about \$16,000.

"Internal review officers work for the commander, and my philosophy is if I can find it, we can fix it," Lampkin said. "More often than not, what we find is not intentional fraud. More likely it's mistakes of ignorance or inadvertent actions. In those cases we apply corrective measures. We educate and train people and ensure compliance and follow-up."

## National Recreation Trails

The Department of the Interior announced that four USACE trails are among 41 designated as national recreation trails. They will join the national network of more than 1,100 recreation trails that cover more than 13,000 miles.

The designation recognizes trails that link communities to recreation opportunities on public lands and in local parks. The 41 trails will add almost 650 miles of trails to the National Trails System.

The four USACE trails are:

**Old Post Mountain Bike Trail, Lake Dardanelle, Ark.** The Old Post Road Park near Russellville, Ark., has a series of 12 interconnecting loops offering mountain bikers more than eight miles of trail.

**Springhill Park Mountain Bike Trail, John Paul Hammerschmidt Lake, Ark.** USACE partnered with the Mercy Cycling Club to build a mountain bike trail in Springhill Park. The 10-mile route has three loops, and twists and winds like a spider web. Known as a "fast" trail by experienced mountain bikers, monthly races are held for area riders, and two annual competitions are sanctioned by the International Mountain Biking Association.

**Quinebaug River Water Trail – Thompson Section, West Thompson Lake, Conn.** This five-mile water trail is a three-hour outing for paddlers who are comfortable with moving water and enjoy seeing varied landscapes with extensive wildlife habitat. This segment of the river has flat water and no portages.

**Blue Marsh Lake Multi-Use Trail, Blue Marsh Lake, Pa.** This 29-mile trail circles the Blue Marsh Lake project. It is open to all non-powered uses, such as hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. The trail travels through habitats ranging from open fields in grass and other crops, to shrubby or brushy areas, to mature forest. The surface varies from mowed grass to compacted soil and gravel to abandoned roads. The trail varies from open spaces to winding single-track through the forest.

## Conchas baseball team

Construction of Conchas Dam Project in Albuquerque District began in 1935 with a small city for more than 2,500 workers and families. Recreation for workers and families included swimming, golf, tennis, volleyball, basketball, dances and a baseball team called the Conchas Indians.

Inspired by the 1930s team, the summer hires at the Conchas project organized a 2011 Conchas Indians team to compete in the City of Tucumcari Co-ed Softball League. The team was made up of summer hires and permanent staff and family members with the goal of team-building. Because the project is in a remote area, it also gave them a recreational opportunity.

The league had six teams this year, including the Conchas Indians, and played a 10-game season. The Indians had a tough season, said Steve Peterson, Conchas Lake park manager. Because many of the team members were summer hires, they organized the team at the beginning of the season without much time to practice. The league had two divisions, Gold and Silver. The Indians were in the Silver division, which was less competitive, but they ended the season with a 1-9 win-loss record.

Despite that, everyone was enthusiastic about playing, and looks forward to next season, according to Peterson. "The summer hires can't wait to come back and play next year," he said. "They're working on the team for next year, and I know they'll improve. I saw improvement in the team as the season progressed. Everyone played hard and gave 100 percent."

"I thought the softball team was great. It really enhanced the project's esprit de corps," said Carl Latham, a maintenance worker who played outfield.

# Simulator aids harbor design

By Megan Holland  
Engineering Research & Development Center

Samuel Clemens would have loved this.

Clemens, better known by his pen name Mark Twain, was a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River in the late 1850s. In his book *Life on the Mississippi*, he described a river pilot's arduous two-year training, which including memorizing every feature of the 2,000 mile river until he could pilot a steamboat on any stretch under any conditions, even at night.

Clemens' training would have been easier with the recently upgraded Kongsberg Polaris Simulator at the Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory (CHL) in Vicksburg, Miss. The simulator gives CHL's engineers, licensed river pilots and others who study navigation the opportunity to design and evaluate proposed modifications for improvements to commercial navigation.

"This is a technology that was originally developed for training mariners," said Dennis Webb, lead engineer of the simulator. "You will find similar simulators in most of the world's maritime training institutes. However, we don't use our simulators for training. We provide a virtual world of the harbor of the future. If USACE or the local port authority wants to deepen or widen channels to accommodate large ships, or allow two-way traffic, we build those changes into the system.

"We test for safety first, then economical design," Webb said. "If you have an accident on the ship simulator, no oil gets spilled, nothing bad happens – you simply restart. It provides us a means to check before we build."

CHL has been home to the only USACE marine ship/tow simulator since 1982. The simulator is "real time". If it takes 30 minutes to reach your destination in real



Photo by David Roberts, ERDC

**Garland Hardy, president of LANTEC Marine Inc., is a subject matter expert and training and curriculum coordinator working with Kongsberg Maritime Simulation. He is demonstrating the new ship/tow simulator.**

life, it will take 30 minutes on the simulator, and ERDC researchers use actual river pilots who handle vessels in the project waterways to validate realism and test the proposed changes.

The technology, which can simulate any maritime environment, has been through numerous updates since its inception, the most recent in 2001. The latest update is the culmination of a two-year process.

"When referring to computers, 10 years is a long time," Webb said. "When comparing the previous fourth generation equipment to the new fifth generation simulator, the improvements are obvious."

The most obvious improvement lies in the realistic graphics. If Samuel Clemens could operate the simulator, he would be amazed to see every detail of the waterway and surrounding bank in a near-picture-perfect image.

The visuals are projected on 65-inch flat-screen plasma monitors that are mounted vertically to simulate the windows in a ship's bridge. Clemens would see a 240-degree field of view, and smaller screens simulate his boat's control panels, and the view from the stern of the vessel.

The simulator was delivered with more than 20 graphic area databases containing the visual, coastline, landmass, radar, depths and current files for numerous ports, including New Orleans, New York, San Francisco and Charleston, S.C.

The database also has more than 40 ship and tow models including inland waterways barges and towboats, cruise ships and tankers. Other features include improved ship-to-ship interaction, vessel response to currents, waves and winds, the ability to simulate vessel-to-vessel towing and the ability to interactively maneuver and control a towboat.

In addition to quality, the improvements also increased quantity. The simulator features three bridge mockups, as well as a large operator station and a smaller desktop simulator to be used for research and database check up. This is an improvement on the two mockups in the fourth generation system.

Kongsberg, the company that created and installed the new technology, provided training courses and technical manuals for CHL's ship/tow researchers.

"The simulators have been upgraded with the latest maritime simulation hardware and software technology," said Herb Taylor, vice president of operations for Kongsberg. "With the ability to function as a ship, tow or small craft, the new Kongsberg Polaris Simulator can be used for deep-draft, shallow-draft and small boat harbor projects.

"The ultimate objective is to remain current and relevant going forward," Taylor said. "This is being realized."

## Human Capital Plan

Continued from page 6

serve as competent, resilient supervisors and managers.

The CES curriculum consists of blended learning, distributed learning and resident training. Supervisors in grades GS-5 through GS-9 must complete the CES Basic Course, supervisors in grades GS-10 through GS-12 must complete the CES Intermediate Course, and supervisors in grades GS-13 through GS-15 must complete the CES Advanced Course.

No final suspense dates for completion of these courses

## Agreement

Continued from page 2

living in the Middle Rio Grande Basin. It is the continuation of a great working relationship."

Santa Clara Pueblo lands have been impacted by significant forest fires in the past, including the Oso Fire of 1998 and Cerro Grande Fire of 2000. But the recent Las Conchas Fire was particularly devastating and burned more than half of the watershed. Before this fire, the pueblo formed an alliance with Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, San Ildefonso Pueblo and USACE to complete a feasibility study focusing on ecosystem restoration along the Rio Grande River.

However, since the Las Conchas Fire, Santa Clara lead-

ers have necessarily shifted their attention to fire mitigation measures.

Revisions to the CES are expected to be codified in coming Department of the Army regulations and requirements (Army Regulation 350-1). However, until revisions to the CES have been officially published, team leaders,

supervisors and managers are required to adhere to the current regulation and must complete the CES through their grade level.

For more information about the Army's new mandatory supervisor training requirements and the CES, please visit the Army Management Staff College's website at [www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/academic/ces/](http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/academic/ces/); the Army Civilian Training Education and Development System Training Catalog at <http://cpol.army.mil/library/train/catalog/toc.html>; or contact (202) 761-7496.

ers have necessarily shifted their attention to fire mitigation measures. "The hydrology for Santa Clara Pueblo lands completely changed once burned by the Las Conchas Fire," said Ron Kneebone, Albuquerque District tribal liaison. "Damage that would be expected during a 500-year flood will now happen during a 10-year event, and Santa Clara's village is at significant risk." Kneebone said watershed assessments typically take about three years and, with the signing of the agreement, work started right away when the district awarded contracts for aerial photography of the burned area. He said the imagery is an important first step because the pueblo's

charred canyon has been inaccessible for several weeks due to post-fire flooding from rainfall events.

According to Kneebone, Santa Clara's government thinks the agreement is critical. He said the governor of Santa Clara, Walter Dasheno Sr., went to Washington, D.C., personally to meet with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Jo-Ellen Darcy, to discuss the Tribal Partnership Program.

"The pueblo is concerned that any protection that was available for their village before the fire and floods has now been destroyed. At this point, they are at nature's mercy," Kneebone said. "But this agreement will help provide a solid plan for future protection measures."