



Sepulveda Basin: Flood Risk Management



New Year's Day at Balboa Lake in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve provided bird watchers a diverse bird population for viewing. Recent work by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District is restricted to 48 acres south of Burbank Boulevard and is part of a 5-year vegetative maintenance plan that will provide sustainable native habitat to the area. (USACE photo by Dave Palmer)

By Dave Palmer

ENCINO, Calif. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District halted work late December 2012, on the five-year vegetation management project for the Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Basin to host further discussion with the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Steering Committee and other stakeholders. The project is restricted to the 48 acres south of Burbank Boulevard and will reintroduce diverse, sustainable native species while maintaining the basin's primary function.

"Environmental stewardship is critical to the way the Corps does business," said Tomas Beauchamp-Hernandez, Operations Branch chief. "The safety of basin users is paramount and the vegetation management project allows for inspection, monitoring and maintenance of flood risk management infrastructure for Sepulveda Dam, while providing sustainable habitat."

A 2011 update to the Sepulveda Dam Basin Master Plan ultimately led to the Environmental Assessment for the vegetative management area. The Corps held Community workshops Dec. 5, 2009, Feb. 20, 2010, and April 24, 2010. The draft master plan and Environmental Assessment was published in March 2011 and finalized in September 2011.

In August 2012, the Los Angeles District released a draft EA for proposed action to mow and mulch all non-native, invasive vegetation, vegetative debris, and areas that have been burned by accidental fires in the Sepulveda Dam Basin. The preliminary environmental assessment was published as a Public Notice on the Los Angeles District website from Aug. 24 to Sept. 7, 2012, for public review and comment. Comments received were un-related to the proposed work resulting in no impact on the proposed action with no revisions to the EA and a Finding of No Significant Impact

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was issued.

On Dec. 10, 2012, Corps maintenance teams began work in the vegetation management area, overseen by a Corps ecologist and a landscape architect with plant life expertise who deliberately directed which non-native trees could be removed. Only three trees, all non-native, were removed; a eucalyptus, a palm and a pine. The removal of bushes and brush cannot be done more selectively because of the degree to which the non-native vegetation has overtaken the native vegetation. The Corps did not bulldoze [clear cut] vegetation and root balls for native vegetation remain. Phase one of the project is barely 25 percent complete with mulching still required, as well as selective treatment of non-native vegetation. Non-native trees and invasive species will be further identified and removed to complete phase one.

“Some of the clearing was conducted to prevent lewd conduct, drug dealing, trespassing and violent crime at the request of public officials and agencies to include: LA Department of General Services, Office of Public Safety and the Los Angeles City Council,” said Beauchamp-Hernandez. “Some of the transient population and illicit activities impeded the Corps’ ability to conduct flood mitigation and, therefore, impacted public safety from that perspective.”

In all, the Corps removed approximately 80 tons of trash and knocked down underbrush in preparation for mulching.

The roughly 180 acres of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area, located at 6350 Woodley Ave., is untouched by the recent work. The District currently has a 50-year lease with City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks for the area and has cost-shared more than \$30 million in recreational amenities over the past 40 years, placing great emphasis on restoration of wildlife habitat.

Because the Los Angeles District does not operate any recreation programs in its 226,000 square mile area of responsibility, the District does not have Park Rangers. Corps



During work on the Sepulveda Basin vegetation management project that began Dec. 10, 2012, access roads (top) were opened to facilitate debris removal. Debris from a eucalyptus tree (bottom) is shown in the foreground in the Sepulveda Basin Jan. 3. In all, the Corps removed roughly 80 tons of trash and knocked down underbrush in preparation for mulching. Phase one of the five-year project is barely 25 percent complete with mulching still required, as well as selective treatment of non-native vegetation. Non-native trees and invasive species will be further identified and removed to complete phase one. (USACE photos by Dave Palmer)

outdoor recreation planners serve as liaisons with city and county recreation managers. The vegetative management

area is the sole responsibility of the Corps.

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Dear District Teammates,

I hope my note finds all of you well-rested after some well-deserved quality time with Family and Friends. We say goodbye to 2012 and look towards the New Year with optimism and a fresh outlook of what we will accomplish in 2013.

To start the year off right, Los Angeles District is very fortunate in that we will be hosting our most senior leaders from USACE and the Army staff. In mid-January, Ms. Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, will make a repeat visit to our northern coast area of responsibility. Soon thereafter, SPL will host our new Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Bostick as he sees more of Southern California and attends the annual Beaver's Dinner in downtown Los Angeles. Accompanying our senior leaders from HQ/USACE will be our own Division Commander, Brig. Gen. Wehr.

VIP visits will continue in February as the Chief of Engineers will make a return visit to the SPL AOR; this time, Phoenix. As part of the Environmental Advisory Board, Lt.

Gen. Bostick will tour local projects, primarily in our Flood Risk Management and Ecosystem Restoration business lines. We are anxious to show the Chief of Engineers the state of Arizona and the diversity of our district; it's more than just coastline and beaches!

After 2 ½ years as your commander, I continue to be amazed by the incredible work that the PEOPLE of the Los Angeles District execute and accomplish on a daily basis. As I head into my final six months in command, I will continue to give my all for the PEOPLE of this District. Our strategic direction and vision is constant. Our focus on PEOPLE, TRAINING, and FACILITIES as a means to executing our #1 mission – project and program execution – endures. I look forward to the challenges ahead and call upon each of you to continue to do your part in **"BUILDING STRONG® and Taking Care of People!"**



Warm Regards,

Col. Toy



District Commander: Col. R. Mark Toy

Public Affairs Officer: Jay Field

Editor: Dave Palmer

Staff: Daniel J. Calderón, Greg Fuderer, Brooks O. Hubbard IV and Mario Zepeda

Administrative Assistant: Beverly Patterson

Tel: (213) 452-3922 or Fax: (213) 452-4209.

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Address mail to the Los Angeles District Public Affairs Office, ATTN: NewsCastle Editor
P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, CA 90017-2325

E-mail the Public Affairs staff at: publicaffairs.SPL@usace.army.mil

MLK holiday a day of service, not a day off

By Dave Palmer

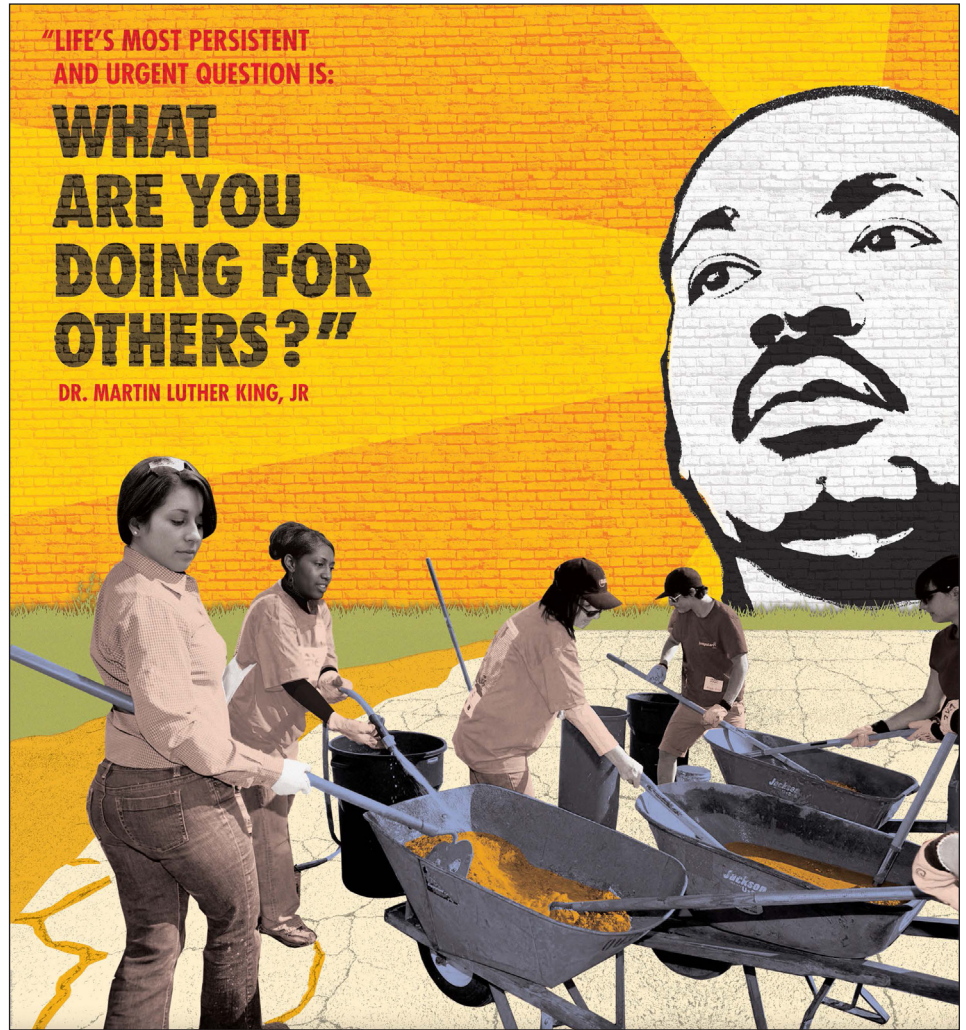
LOS ANGELES — On Jan. 21, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District Black Employment Program will honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with a day of service, not a day off.

“On this holiday, we commemorate the universal, unconditional love, forgiveness and nonviolence that empowered his revolutionary spirit,” said Arnecia Williams, District Black Employment Programs manager. “The MLK holiday celebrates the life and legacy of a man who brought hope and healing to America.”

The BEP is collecting toiletries and children’s gifts through Jan. 17 to donate to shelters in the local community. A collection box is located in the EEO office at the District headquarters. Items will be distributed on Jan. 21.

This year, MLK Day coincides with the Presidential Inauguration, President Obama has asked Americans to join him in a National Day of Service on Saturday, Jan. 19.

To learn about volunteer opportunities in local communities, visit <http://www.serve.gov> or <http://mlkday.gov/serve> to continue the legacy.




**SERVE ON KING DAY, AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.
MAKE IT A DAY ON, NOT A DAY OFF.**

MLKDay.gov  

Corporation for
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Are you ready to shelter-in-place?

For more information, visit www.ready.army.mil



LA District commander meets with Tucson engineers, lauds District members

By Daniel J. Calderón

TUCSON, Ariz. — Col. Mark Toy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District commander, attended the Society of American Military Engineers, Tucson Post's, monthly meeting Dec. 19, 2012, to present information on the District and to let the assembled business leaders know how they can participate in Corps projects across the District's area of responsibility.

Toy began his discussion with his experience and insight into the Corps' relief efforts and his time as part of the Hurricane Sandy Relief on the East Coast. He then segued into an informational talk about the District's capabilities and main business lines. He stressed the interconnected nature of the Corps among its commanders and its members.

"The Corps is all one family," Toy said. "If you ever want to meet up with any of our District Engineers, let me know and I can help."

Toy continued talking with the assembled SAME members about developments across the Corps. The watershed-based budgeting program, for which the LA District is conducting the pilot program, was one of the newest ideas under review. The program changes the way budgets are allocated. Instead of being project-based, budgets instead move to an entire watershed. This allows for greater flexibility in how money is spent across a wider area and can encompass an array of projects within a watershed.

"This is one of the most exciting things to come out in the Corps this year," Toy said.

He also discussed his commitment to his motto of "Building Strong and Taking Care of People!" Within the District, Toy said he is committed to ensuring his team members have what they need to accomplish their tasks. He reiterated his "triangle" of People, Training and Facilities to highlight that point. Toy said people need to remain the focus of each of the businesses represented by the SAME members.

"People are the foundation of everything we do," he said. "If your folks feel like you are there for them, you won't have to tell them to do their job because they will do everything they can to make sure they don't disappoint you."

Toy also let the members know about the upcoming Business Opportunities Open House which will be held in Phoenix Jan. 29. The open house is for any business interested in doing work with the Corps of Engineers. Any business representatives who would like more information can contact either Jennie Ayala, the District's outreach coordinator, at 213-452-4018 or Mary Spencer, the District's small business representative, at 213-452-3938.

Toy then traveled to the Tucson Resident Office at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base to meet with District members



Col. Mark Toy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District commander, speaks to the Tucson Post of the Society of American Military Engineers during a Dec. 19, 2012, meeting. Toy discussed the District and how the businesses represented by the SAME members could support the work the Corps is doing throughout its area of responsibility. (USACE photo by Daniel J. Calderon)

there. He presented a Commander's Award for Civilian Service to Brian Childers for work done on an array of projects.

"Brian, just from looking at the write up, we – as an organization – have to thank you for the value you have brought in and managed," Toy said. "I can see real growth in what you have been doing."

Childers received recognition for the work he has done to improve relationships among local sponsors and among businesses who work for the Corps. Toy also praised Jessica Work for passing her Professional Engineer's test. He then presented Larry Flatau, the Interagency and International Support chief, with a Superior Civilian Service Award in recognition for Flatau's more than 25 years of service with the LA District.

"We're here to recognize someone who has given a majority of his adult life to the Corps of Engineers," Toy said during the award presentation. "When you look at the time Larry has given and the things he has accomplished, it's nothing short of amazing."

LA District hosts meetings with tribal representatives, Corps tribal liaisons



Cynthia Kitchens, tribal liaison for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tulsa District, speaks to a group of tribal liaisons at the 17th Annual Consulting with Tribal Nations training which was hosted Dec. 3-5, 2012, by the Los Angeles District at the Federal Courthouse in downtown Phoenix. The training helps prepare Corps tribal liaisons for their work with Tribes and this years session included a Tribal Panel of tribal representatives who shared their ideas on how the Corps of Engineers can improve the way it participates with tribes. (USACE photo by Daniel J. Calderon)

By Daniel Calderón

PHOENIX — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District hosted a series of meetings and training sessions the week of Dec. 3 to Dec. 7, 2012.

The 17th Annual Consulting with Tribal Nations training lasted from Dec. 3-5, 2012 and was held at the Federal Courthouse downtown. Errol Blackwater, director for the Department of Land Use, Planning and Zoning and the Flood Task Force, Gila River Indian Community in Arizona delivered the opening blessing on the first day of the training.

The District held the 9th Annual Tribal Nations Community of Practice meeting ran from Dec. 5-7, 2012 at the Arizona-Nevada Area Office. Kathy Bergmann, the LA District's tribal

liaison officer, handled the preparation for the entire week's meetings.

"The training meeting helps prepare Tribal Liaisons for their work with tribes," she said. "Training included helping them understand the Indian perspective and covers the Corps' Tribal Policy Principles."

The Tribal Policy Principles are:

- Recognition of tribal sovereignty
- Federal relationships with tribes are government to government
- We honor our trust responsibility to work for the benefit of tribes
- Consultation prior to decision making
- Protection of cultural and natural resources
- Promotion of growth and economic capacity.

"It's important for all of us in the

Corps, not just the tribal liaisons, to recognize that these are Corps policies and not just guidelines," said Quana Higgins, a lead planner in the LA District. "We need to be sure that we're dealing with tribes in a proper and respectful manner. It's just the right thing to do and I'm glad we had the opportunity to meet as a group of tribal liaisons for this important training."

Training included discussion from other seasoned liaisons. Cynthia Kitchens, the Tulsa District's tribal liaison discussed her District's Tribal Support Program. She went over the construction support process and discussed other ways the program offers assistance to tribes through the International and Interagency Services program.

"The work the Corps does out there is very important for the community," Kitchens said. "The program does significantly improve the quality of life for the members of the tribes and the communities around them."

Kitchens also discussed ways tribal liaisons could improve their relationships with tribal members. Among the suggestions, Kitchens recommended Corps members treat the tribal princesses members of the tribe might bring to meetings with great respect and talk with them. The princesses are young girls brought as part of the official party. She also recommended Corps members take the time to talk with tribal elders who attend functions or meetings with the Corps.

"They are special to the tribe and the tribe brought them for a reason," she said. "Take the time to talk with them. It shows you recognize their significance and it's a sign of respect."

Corps liaisons from across the nation also had the opportunity to hear from local and area tribal representatives from tribes in Arizona, California and

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New Mexico about the Corps can best meet the needs of the tribes and how the tribes interact with the Corps and other federal agencies.

“One of the big difficulties I have when I meet with some agencies is that I almost have to prove that I can interact with them intellectually,” said Dr. Selso Villegas, Water Resources director for the Tohono O’odham Nation, which has land in Arizona and in Mexico. “Mutual respect is key in any relationship. You’d be amazed at what you can get accomplished if you just treat people with respect.”

This year’s meeting marked the first time the Corps brought together a Tribal Panel of tribal representatives who shared their ideas on how the Corps of Engineers can improve the way it participates with tribes. The panel included representatives from the Santa Clara Pueblo of New Mexico, Campos and Pechanga Bands of California, Hopi Tribe, Tohono O’odham and Navajo Nations, and Gila River Indian Community of Arizona.

After the meetings with the tribal members and Corps team together were completed, Bergmann had the Corps CoP gather at the Area Office for another series of meetings. The CoP meeting opened with a challenge from Jim Balocki, Director of the International and Interagency Services program at Corps headquarters in Washington, DC. Balocki challenged the liaisons to use the I&IS program as a vehicle to facilitate projects among tribal nations.

During the CoP meeting, participants spoke on several topics including impediments to working with tribes, a discussion with HQ Office of Counsel, Aaron Hosityk, on legal issues, regulatory issues and a presentation on Gregory Canyon. Members of the team also discussed linear projects and the challenges they present for regulatory, and a listened to a presentation on Job Classification and Certification.

“The CoP meeting brings together Liaisons from across the US and is meant to help them understand the breadth of the work they are intended to do,” Bergmann said. “Participants



Bill Miller, a senior project manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District’s Regulatory Department in the Arizona-Nevada Area Office, speaks with a group of USACE tribal liaisons during the 9th Annual Tribal Nations Community of Practice meeting which ran from Dec. 5-7, 2012, at the Area Office. Meeting participants spoke on several topics including impediments to working with tribes, a discussion with USACE headquarters Office of Counsel on legal issues, regulatory issues and a presentation on Gregory Canyon. (USACE photo by Daniel J. Calderon)

work together on dealing with impediments, and share ideas on how to do a better job.”

Bergmann said the meetings throughout the week were successful because several of the new tribal liaisons told her how much they had learned. She said a disappointment of the week was that several of the speakers were unable to attend due to illness. In addition, the new conference regulations made it impossible to partner with a tribal sponsor and required using a federal venue. The venue did not have internet access which would have allowed others who were unable to travel to participate via

a web meeting or similar tool. Even so, Bergmann said the series of meetings were a huge success.

“They help us support the District Commander’s motto of “Building Strong and Taking Care of People!” by allowing us to learn how we can do a better job of supporting our tribal partners and meeting our Trust responsibility to them,” Bergmann said. “Information presented in the meetings from our team members and from our invited speakers informs those of us in the District of the many ways we can serve tribes and how to interact with them appropriately.”

Diabetes reaching epidemic levels



According to the American Diabetes Association, you can reduce your risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Exercise! And exercise doesn't mean running a marathon or bench-pressing 300 pounds. The goal is to get active and stay active by doing things you enjoy, from gardening to playing tennis to walking with friends. (Army photo)

By Cecy Ordonez

LOS ANGELES — The trillions of cells throughout our bodies depend on fuel for energy. The food we eat is broken down into different nutrients including a sugar molecule called glucose and released into the blood stream. Although glucose is not of much use to the body in the bloodstream, or in the fluid that surrounds the body's cells, it is still something we need. In fact, glucose is our main source of energy, but glucose must get inside cells to create the energy that the cells need to function.

In a normal metabolism, glucose is carried to all the cells in the body so that it can nourish them. To get into the cells, glucose needs help from a hormone called insulin. Insulin attaches to a place on the cell much the same way a key would fit into a lock. This opens the door for glucose to enter the cell. This is similar to how our workplace functions. Our workplace (the body) needs employees (glucose) for productivity (energy). To get into the office (the cell) to do the work, we need our key (insulin) to unlock the door.

In type 1 diabetes, if employees were

not given a key (insulin) to get into the office (the cell), all the employees (glucose) would be standing outside the building or hallway (blood stream). The same is true in the body. Type 1 diabetics do not produce any insulin, or at least not enough, which causes the glucose to remain in high concentration in the blood stream. This is why type 1 diabetics are "insulin-dependent". They rely on an insulin injection to transfer the glucose.

Conversely, type 2 diabetes have insulin present but the insulin receptors (the lock) are no longer working properly, almost as if someone placed a piece of chewing gum in the lock. This is called insulin-resistance and happens much like drinking your first cup of coffee. At first, the caffeine may make you jittery and alert. However, after years of drinking coffee, one cup of coffee will not have the same effect as the first cup. The caffeine receptors become desensitized and more caffeine is needed to get the initial effect. The same happens in your body where after years of a poor nutritional diet that has demanded a high amount of insulin causes the insulin receptors to become

desensitized. This begins the slippery slope. Since the cells aren't allowing glucose to enter, the amount of glucose in the blood gets higher and higher. The pancreas, the organ that produces insulin, continues to get the signal to produce more insulin in attempt to decrease the glucose in the blood stream. As long as there is too much glucose in the blood, and too little glucose in the cell, the pancreas will continue to produce insulin until the glucose level goes down. However, since the cells in the body have become insulin-resistant, the amount of glucose in blood will never go down. The pancreas will continue to try to lower glucose levels by producing more and more insulin, but eventually it will wear out.

Exercise plays an important role in preventing the onset of diabetes as well as lessening the complications of the disease. Exercise increases the cells sensitivity to insulin. In fact, it increases glucose uptake up to 20 times the resting muscle rate. In other words, exercise helps unlock the door and leave it unlocked for a prolonged period of time, allowing the glucose to enter the cell more readily and thereby decreasing the blood glucose levels. The American Diabetes Association and the American College of Sports Medicine developed the following exercise guideline: at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-to-vigorous aerobic exercise spread out at least three days during the week, with no more than two consecutive days between bouts of aerobic activity.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 25.8 million Americans have diabetes. Further, they predict that if the current trend continues one of three American adults will have Diabetes. Since cells are located in every part of our body, this disease is one that affects every part. It can cause a heart attack, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, nerve damage, etc. Although disability, decreased quality of life and premature death can result from diabetes, it doesn't have to. Lifestyle intervention (diet and exercise) is the only key you need to live a healthier version of you.

Corps completes Thorpe Road Bridge

By Daniel J. Calderón

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District put the finishing touches on the bridge across Thorpe Road and reopened the thoroughfare to complete the project in December 2012.

John Mallin, the District's construction representative for the Thorpe Road Bridge Construction Project, said this was one of many projects in Flagstaff designed to improve flood risk management for the city.

"This project was designed to remove existing culverts and put in a new bridge to widen the flow area for the Rio de Flag," Mallin said. "The new bridge more than triples the flow capacity of the river in that area."

The Corps began the \$2.5 million project in June. RCDS was the prime contractor on the project and Hunter Construction was the main subcontractor. Baker Engineering served as the project architect. Mallin said the team coalesced well on the project.

"They all did a great job," he said. "The contractor got a little bit of a late start because the city wasn't able to get all the utility work finished. But, we did have really good cooperation and communication with the City of Flagstaff throughout the project."

Tiffin Miller, project manager for the City of Flagstaff, said the city is pleased with the work the Corps did on the bridge project.

"It came out looking very nice," Miller said. "The entire road from Aztec to Bonito has been reconstructed, so it's a whole new street along with the new bridge"

The final project is one Mallin said had a "classy" touch to it. He said the arched bridges are a classic design and the malapai rock veneer along the wing walls and retaining walls



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District completed construction on a new bridge across Thorpe Road which more than triples the flow capacity in the area. The "classic-looking" bridge project also contains retaining walls and the wing walls with a malapai rock veneer to provide aesthetic enhancement to the flood risk management project. (USACE photo by John Mallin)

really "spruce up" the area. Mallin said the project is another way of demonstrating how the LA District continues to make good on its commitment to "Building Strong and Taking Care of People!"

"This project is one of a series of flood risk management projects we're doing to help take care of the community," he said. "I think it's a really good and a really classic Corps of Engineers project and I'm very proud to have been a part of it."



Members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District complete their inspection of the Thorpe Road culverts in May 2012, in preparation for work to be done by the District. The Corps completed construction on a new bridge which more than triples the flow capacity in the area. (USACE photo by John Mallin)

So much for that myth!

By Steve McCombs

LOS ANGELES — Welcome to 2013! If you're reading this, the world, in fact, did not end on Dec. 21, 2012, and another silly myth has been dispelled. I am writing this on Dec. 19, 2012, since it's the holidays and I won't be around to do it in time for the January column. But it did give me the idea that I could write a column about "Safety Myths" you have probably heard, seen or (hopefully not) used. Ergo, for your reading pleasure, I submit a few myths that should be in the same category as the apocalypse that wasn't!

"I don't wear my seatbelt because, if I crash and my car is on fire, I will burn to death."

- The numbers and facts about seatbelt use are just not disputable. They save lives every day. Since the implementation of mandatory seatbelt laws, the number and rates of traffic fatalities has steadily declined. In fact, based on the 2011 data, the number of traffic fatalities has not been this low since 1949! Now, as to the "I'll burn to death" argument; in the event you are in a crash and your car catches on fire and you are NOT wearing your seatbelt, you probably will end up a piece of charcoal. This is because you will be tossed violently around the inside of your vehicle. Grievous injuries that would make it impossible for you to get yourself out would be the result. If you're lucky, you will have a traumatic brain injury and not notice that you've become the main course in a "carbeque." So, buckle up!!

"I don't wear my seatbelt because, if I crash and my car goes in the water I will drown."

- Yet another piece of nonsense - and for the same reasons I describe above. If you are truly frightened of such an occurrence, put a box cutter in your center console. Then in the very unlikely event you find yourself in your car, under water, buckled in and the

seatbelt won't release, you can simply cut the strap. Or, don't wear your seatbelt; so when you do go off that bridge, you'll be fish food. Circle of life and all that.

"A dust mask will protect me."

- Well, yes.....from, um.....dust. You know - the stuff that constantly accumulates on your furniture? And they are good for some other dusty environments, but not for protection against chemicals, asbestos, etc. And if you have some sort of respiratory problem, such as asthma, a dust mask will merely make it harder for you to breathe.

"Safety is just common sense."

- If you think this is true, go to YouTube, type in "Epic Fail," and you will find thousands upon thousands of examples that will categorically dispute the aforementioned statement. Effective safety takes knowledge, training, experience, willingness and a commitment to prevent the accident before it takes place. Whether you are at home or your place of work, give it some thought!!! Then do it the safe way.

"I use a hand sanitizer so I don't need to wash."

- If a hand sanitizer is all you have, then it is better than nothing. But what makes your hands clean and less likely to harbor nasty bacteria and viruses, is frequent washing with soap and water. The best is to use water as warm as you can stand, soap up all around up to your wrists and between your fingers for a good twenty seconds, then rinse and dry with a clean towel. This removes all the crud hanging out in all your cracks and crevasses! Washing your hands is the single most important way to avoid the spread of many diseases like the flu! But get that flu shot anyway!

As always, drive safe, drive sober and buckle up!

Safety Steve

SEATBELT USE BY THE NUMBERS

- More than 40 percent of passengers killed are unbelted
- More than 1,600 lives could be saved annually with seatbelts
- More than 50 percent of crash injuries prevented by wearing a seatbelt

THE FIVE-OH FLIP

TRY A SEATBELT FAKE-OUT. LAND A REAL TICKET.

Right now cops are cracking down on seatbelt violations tougher than ever. There's no trick to it. Click It or Ticket.

NETSRA.gov/CIOT

March ARB breaks ground on new airfield traffic control tower and base operations facility

By Dave Palmer

MARCH ARB, Calif — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District joined community leaders Dec. 8, 2012, to break ground for the new March Air Reserve Base's nearly 16,000 sq. foot airfield traffic control tower and base operations facility.

"Over the last 20 years or so, we've invested several hundred million into the March Air Reserve Base, to make this the premiere Air Reserve base in the United States," said Rep. Ken Calvert. "We're going to continue to make sure that they have the resources [they need] to operate."

The new \$16.5 million project is designed to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver standard and replaces the current tower and airfield operations facility built in 1958. LEED is how the U.S. Green Building Council rates a project for its design and achievement in categories like sustainability, water efficiency, energy conservation and design innovation.

"I think one of the most important aspects for me, for the design, is that it is highly sustainable," said David Van Dorpe, the District deputy engineer for programs and project management.



Rep. Ken Calvert, center right, takes part in ground breaking ceremonies Dec. 8, 2012, for March Air Reserve Base's new 16,000 sq. foot airfield traffic control tower and base operations facility. Joining him are, from the left, Col. Tim McCoy, contract partner David Parkes, Col. Bo Mahaney, Moreno Valley Mayor Richard Stewart and David Van Dorpe, District deputy engineer for programs and project management. (USACE photo by Dave Palmer)

"What this design is doing is providing something that is sustainable and ensures the future success of the base."

Van Dorpe also spoke about the 50-year relationship that the District has enjoyed with the base and looks forward to a bright future together.

"This tower marks yet another step in the evolution of this base," Calvert said. "This is an excellent example, as I look at the various uniforms here, of joint operations. Everyone that walks on this base [this tower will serve everyone] in the future."



The new \$16.5 million project is designed to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver standard and replaces the current tower and airfield operations facility built in 1958. LEED is how the U.S. Green Building Council rates a project for its design and achievement in categories like sustainability, water efficiency, energy conservation and design innovation. (USACE illustration)

Electronic Personnel Records: My eOPF

Office of Personnel Management
ENTERPRISE HR
Working for America
eOPF Release E.1
Enter your eOPF ID and Password to log in. E-GOV
(WEB SERVER - 010)
eOPF ID:
PASSWORD:
SUBMIT CLEAR
Request a New Password
Request Your eOPF ID
This is an official United States Government computer system, which may be accessed and used only for official Government business by authorized personnel. Unauthorized access or use of this computer system may subject violators to criminal, civil, and/or administrative action.
All information on this computer system may be intercepted, recorded, read, copied, and disclosed by and to authorized personnel for official purposes, including criminal investigation. Access or use of this computer system by any person whether authorized or unauthorized, constitutes consent to these terms.
Signing into eOPF indicates you have read and accepted the [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Rules Of Behavior](#) and you consent to security testing and monitoring.

Say goodbye to the hard copies of such standard forms as the SF-50 Notification of Personnel Action. Instead, you will receive an email alerting you that a document has been added to your eOPF. You can then log into your eOPF account and view what has happened since your last visit.

By Liza A. Rosa
Human Resources Specialist

LOS ANGELES — Great News!

Accessing your personnel files through electronic Official Personnel Folder will now be simple, convenient and no longer require an appointment with your human resources servicing office beginning Jan. 28.

The eOPF is a file containing records that cover a civilian federal employee's entire employment history. The Office of Personnel Management and your human resources office use these documents to make decisions about employee rights, benefits and entitlements throughout your career.

I strongly recommended you review your eOPF once you're notified that

you can gain access to the system.

In the future, you will automatically receive an email notification each time a newly created document is added to your eOPF. You will be able to print your documents or save them as they are added to your file and maintain them in a secure location for your reference.

Similar to Internet-based payroll of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, the eOPF system gives workers more immediate access to their employment information.

In addition to providing centralized system hosting and operational best practices, eOPF also offers customer support and implementation resources to guide agencies during conversion and beyond.

What is eOPF?

- Replaces the paper OPF with an image and data-centric employee record
- Enables "virtual folders" to house training, payroll, performance and other data
- Provides visibility to all transactions and personnel who have access to official files in a complete audit trail
- Provides email notification to the employee when a document is added to the eOPF
- Assures continuity of operations and disaster recovery

Paper records are subject to damage or destruction by fire or water. The eOPF electronic records are regularly backed up, and the eOPF provides disaster recovery to assure continuity of operations in any situation.

The eOPF includes the ability for simultaneous viewing of documents from different locations allowing an employee and HR specialist to access the records at the same time.

At any given time, there are multiple agencies performing tasks within each phase of eOPF thus providing agencies with the opportunity to collaborate with, and learn from similar experiences of their agency peers.

Keep **YOUR** information
and **OUR** systems safe!
Don't Forget Your CAC!



SUCCESS: District unveils display that recognizes personal and professional development

By Dave Palmer

LOS ANGELES — In the Los Angeles District “Building Strong and Taking Care of People!” is the order of the day. A mandate in full support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Campaign Plan Goal 4 which is to recruit and retain strong teams. On Dec. 13, 2012, District Commander Col. Mark Toy unveiled a centerpiece for that initiative.

“We are celebrating those people that have made the leap to professional certifications, because they’re proud of what they do,” said Toy.

Two display boards were unveiled in the 12th floor conference room at the District headquarters. One for professional registrations and certifications and one for individual and organizational awards and recognition.

The Campaign Plan is a living document and Toy mentioned Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick, USACE Commanding General, in speaking to his Division and District commanders, said more refinements to the plan were coming; especially in the realm of developing career paths for the civilian workforce as Goal 4 states, “build and cultivate a competent, disciplined, and resilient team equipped to deliver high quality solutions.”



District Commander Col. Mark Toy unveiled two display boards Dec. 13, 2012, in the 12th floor conference room here. One for professional registrations (below) and certifications and one for individual and organizational awards and recognition. (USACE photos by Dave Palmer)



Future leaders kick off 2013 program

By Greg Fuderer

LOS ANGELES — “The most important qualities for a leader are to have a vision and to show people you care,” Col. Mark Toy said to 20 Tier I and Tier II members of Los Angeles District Leadership Development Program during the kick-off meeting held Jan. 8 at the District’s headquarters in downtown Los Angeles.

“Now is the time to start your journey for the leadership position you ultimately see yourself in,” he told the new participants. “Leaders take a thirty-thousand-foot view of a situation and ask, ‘How can I make it better?’”

Tomas Beauchamp-Hernandez, a Tier I facilitator, briefed the new participants on the mentor-selecting process.

“Think of it as dating,” he said, telling them not to be discouraged if their initial choice didn’t seem to be a good fit. “Find the mentor who’s right for you.”


Toy commended the prospective leaders for deciding to be part of the program and said their participation could help them become branch, section or division chiefs within the District or beyond.

Toy emphasized his command philosophy.

“People are the foundation for everything we do,” he said. “If we provide the proper training and facilities for them to be successful, then people will accomplish our #1 goal: project and program execution. In Los Angeles, we are **‘Building Strong and Taking Care of People!’**”




“Good vision and directing are the essence of leadership,” Col. Mark Toy tells Tier I and Tier II participants at the 2013 Leadership Development Program kickoff held Jan. 8 at the Los Angeles District headquarters. (USACE photo by Richard Rivera)



What is your Job Title?
Environmental Protection Specialist

What do you love about your job?
I like working with our partner agencies to come up with solutions to minimize impacts to the aquatic resources. I love when we can work collaboratively to find innovative ways to sustain the environment while enabling needed infrastructure.

Any special memories about your job you'd like to share?
It's fun to trek to sites that you would never think to visit like small streams hidden in a canyon just off the highway or vast dry desert washes. I have learned so much about Southern California in my time at the Corps even though I was born and raised here. I appreciate So Cal as my home even more.



Veronica Chan

Around the District



Col. Mark Toy (right), the Los Angeles District commander, and David Van Dorpe, the LA District's Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, presented Larry Flatau, the Interagency and International Support chief, with his retirement certificate Dec. 17, 2012. Flatau spent more than 25 years with the LA District. (USACE photo by Richard Rivera)

on retirement

Lt. Col. Alex Deraney, Los Angeles District deputy commander, reads comments Dec. 13, 2012, from the certificate of appreciation presented to Elba Manzo on the occasion of her retirement. In the award, District Commander Col. Mark Toy stated, "I share your pride in the contributions you have made to the Los Angeles District as an Administrative Specialist supporting the Asset Management Division." (USACE photo by Richard Rivera)



farewell too



Col. Mark Toy, the Los Angeles District commander, presents the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service to Jay Edwards Dec. 5, 2012. In the citation, Toy said, "Mr. Edwards rose from an intern position to the top civilian position in the Resource Management Field at the Los Angeles District. He is considered a subject matter expert in, not only the budget field, but also the Finance and Accounting Field." Edwards left the District to be a lead budget analyst with the South Pacific Division.(USACE photo by Richard Rivera)



Col. Mark Toy, the Los Angeles District commander, looks on as Master Sgt. Aurelia Go cuts her farewell cake Dec. 13, 2012. Toy also presented the Army Commendation Medal to Go, saying in the citation, "Her initiative, focus, technical competence, and professionalism were instrumental to the successful management of countless military and DA civilian personnel actions across four Districts and the Division headquarters." Go completed her three-year assignment as a Personnel Force Innovation Soldier. (USACE photo by Richard Rivera)

professional pride



Col. Mark Toy, the Los Angeles District commander, and David Van Dorpe, the District's deputy engineer for programs and project management, present Brian Childers a Commander's Award for Civilian Service during a Dec. 19, 2012, meeting at the Tucson Resident Office. Toy thanked Childers for his many years of service and with the work he has done on projects across the District. (USACE photo by Daniel J. Calderon)

Col. Mark Toy, the Los Angeles District commander, presents the Commander's Award for Civilian Service to Matt Shun Dec. 13, 2012. In the citation, Toy said, "Mr. Shun's steadfast diligence, assiduous work ethic, and contribution of personal time, knowledge and expertise has greatly increased the capability and results of his Project Delivery Teams. Mr. Shun, in fiscal year 2011, was personally responsible for awarding 45 percent of the entire VA Program, worth in excess of \$33 million. During this same time frame, he earned the coveted American Society of Healthcare Engineering Construction Certificate, increasing his knowledge and value to this challenging program." (USACE photo by Richard Rivera)



BUILDING STRONG® and Taking Care of People!

Editors Note: The phrase, “He never met a stranger,” in slightly different versions, has been attributed to both cowboy comedian Will Rogers and author Samuel Clemens. Either way, it certainly seems appropriate in describing this gentleman. His “never at a loss for words” approach to life has served him well in an illustrious career and his interests outside of work. His active involvement in the Toastmasters organization and his regionally famous culinary exploits with all things chili has endeared him to many. For those who know him, his request to write a farewell article for the NewsCastle will come as no surprise. If you’ve never met, let me introduce you to Mr. Ed Louie.

A short history of a song

By Ed Louie

LOS ANGELES — How fitting that as I retire after 40 years of Federal Service, I would like to go out with a bang, by writing an article about the song, “Louie, Louie.” This could easily be considered as my theme song.

The original “Louie, Louie” was written in 1955 by Richard Berry. It was recorded with the Pharaohs and released as a single in 1957. Richard created a catchy, somewhat calypso diddy.

As the story goes, in Tacoma, Wash., Rockin’ Robin Roberts, a singer with the Wailers, picked up on the Richard Berry’s catchy little single and decided to re-do the song. Playing around with the song, the Wailers added their own variations with Rockin’ Robin Roberts belting out the words like an inspired gospel melody.

The Kingsmen discovered the strength of this song and decided to record it themselves. Well, the song became a run-away hit. However, the Kingsmen faced an extensive investigation of the song by the FBI, citing potentially obscene lyrics.

To make a long story short, I would like to share with you all, the song’s true lyrics. Enjoy.

“Louie, Louie,
me gotta go,
Louie, Louie,
Me gotta go.
A fine little girl, she wait for me;
Me catch a ship across the sea.
I sailed the ship all alone;
I never think I’ll make it home.
Three nights and days we sailed the sea;
Me think of girl constantly.
On the ship, I dream she there;
I smell the rose in her hair.
Me see Jamaica moon above;
It won’t be long me see me love.
Me take her in my arms and then
I tell her I never leave again.”

May I simply say that it’s been great serving both the Corps for 36 years, with a previous 4 years service with the Navy, for a total of 40 years of Federal Service.

Taking a quote from an old Navy saying, I would like to say to all my friends and co-workers, “Fair Winds and Following Seas.”



Ed Louie being interviewed on site during work on Bull Creek July 14, 2009 in the Sepulveda Dam Basin. Louie served as a project manager in the Programs and Project Management Division. (USACE photo)



Ed Louie speaking at the Los Angeles District headquarters, championing the contributions of Asian-Pacific Americans during a one-hour program May 10, 2012. (USACE photo by Dave Palmer)

Seal Beach Christmas Parade:

An opportunity to feature Corps capabilities and opportunities



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District making its first appearance in the annual Seal Beach Christmas Parade. Getting in the holiday spirit are from left to right: David Tran, Mindy Grupe, Col. Mark Toy, Noemi Rodriguez and Tito Carrillo. The parade made its way down historic Main Street in Old Town past kids of all ages Dec. 7, 2012. (USACE photo by Dave Palmer)

By Dave Palmer

SEAL BEACH, Calif. — Two dozen U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District employees and family members joined more than 3,600 participants in 110 marching groups for this year's Seal Beach Christmas Parade Dec. 7, 2012.

The District's Emergency Command and Control Vehicle returned from deployment to Hurricane Sandy response just in time to participate in the event. Vehicle operator Alex Watt and Emergency Operations Center intern Tito Carrillo spent a few hours getting the ECCV decked out for the evening's festivities. They were joined by the Safety Office vehicle which features a custom wrap for Bobber, the Water Safety Dog, and additional holiday flair added by safety specialists Fany Anderson and Anthony Henson.

"I think these events are awesome,"

said Carrillo. "They're great to socialize and relax outside of work."

According to Jennie Ayala, the District outreach coordinator, events like this are great opportunities to build rapport with the community and by featuring the emergency response vehicle and Corps programs like water safety, it highlights District capabilities. Ayala said the District commander also felt the event was an excellent opportunity to feature District interns, many who begin serving with the Corps while still in college.

"I know there are a lot of people out there that don't know what we [the Corps] do exactly," said intern Noemi Rodriguez. "More importantly, that we have the emergency operations vehicle out here. I think it's great."

On July 10, an executive order replaced two current intern programs with the Pathways Internship Program. The Recent Graduates Program and

Presidential Management Fellows Program continue as a talent pool for the Corps.

"I'm really happy that I've been able to go section to section and see what other people do," said intern Mindy Grupe. "Not only do the work of other sections, but make those contacts that I wouldn't normally get."

All four of the District interns, who attended the parade are in the Recent Graduates Program. To qualify for the program, participants need to be within two years of graduation. The exception being veterans; their service obligations may allow them up to six years to apply for the program.

"It's good for us to be out there, to be seen," said intern David Tran. "The Corps impacts heavily in flood control, everywhere there's some risk of flood. Once you get out there, they'll ask questions and that's how we inform the public what our mission is."

The world didn't end – Now what?

By Daniel J. Calderón

Okay. So, here we are in January and the world (as far as I can tell) is still spinning in its same orbit. The sun is still rising in the east and setting in the west and I still have my sets of chins. So, all is currently right with our corner of the universe and the big hype about the world ending Dec. 21, 2012, was a wash. What do we do now?

For anyone who did go out to spend every last dime and check off as many boxes in the old bucket list before Dec. 21 in the “It’s going to end anyway so who cares” frenzy, may I suggest working on getting to work on some letters of apology for those houses you may have toilet papered (since you never got the chance to when you were in high school) and some serious “my bad” cards for those folks who you always wanted to tell off, but just weren’t brave enough to do so until you thought the world was on its last legs. Also, you may want to seriously consider getting in touch with anyone who was with you to see if those pictures have been posted or if they are still on a camera’s storage card somewhere – still in the “delete without anyone seeing them” category.

For the rest of us “survivors,” life goes on pretty much as it has without any noticeable difference other than that we’ve entered a new year. Since I didn’t plan too much for the end of the world (how can anyone really plan for something like that?), I’m thinking I’ll just get back to getting my regular stuff done.

I’m now enrolled in Bikram Yoga classes near my house. I’m not sure how long I’ll stay with it; but, I’m willing to give it a few months (at least three) to see if it really gets into the habit phase. Some folks are really comfortable in a gym. Me? Not so much. I don’t have any problem working out. My problem is that I’ve always preferred to have a friend or a group of people to work out with and I haven’t had that for a very long time.

It’s not so much a resolution as it is a recognition that I need to do something more positive in a selfish way. After all, who else is going to benefit from me taking yoga classes? It’s going to limit (and maybe even eliminate) the time I can spend at the theatre for a while. I’m thinking of not auditioning for a major part in the next production on Luke Air Force Base because I want to have the time to devote to getting healthier. So, maybe getting healthy is more of a selfish endeavor because it benefits me more than anyone else.

What else is out there that might be selfish, yet beneficial? Maybe taking up a new hobby like motocross or fencing. I

don’t think either of these endeavors can really help out those nearest and dearest to you (well, unless you happen to get yourself into a situation where you have to drive cross country on a dirt bike and engage in a sword fight to help rescue someone close to you; but that’s kind of unlikely); but they can be a lot of fun. They’re fun on an almost purely selfish level. They’re a release from the day-to-day grind of work, going home and just doing regular things.

Don’t misunderstand me, though. Going home to family is never a bad thing (well, almost never; but, we’ll let that one slide); but, everyone needs to have something that is just theirs. There needs to be some kind of release valve in regular life – a break in routine that almost becomes a routine in and of itself. So many people seem to be focused on work and going straight home that they forget to take care of themselves. They forget that there needs to be some kind of reckless abandon to keep things fresh.

For me, it’s going to be the yoga thing. For a long time, it’s been the theatre and performing; but, I wanted to try something different. For you, it might be dance lessons, mechanical bull riding, art lessons or something totally different. Only you can tell you what feels right. I think people are too afraid of looking foolish in someone else’s eyes so they don’t go out and do what

feels like fun for them.

It’s a new year. The doom-sayers were wrong again. Get out and find something to do just for the sheer enjoyment. If the first thing doesn’t work out, try something else. If that doesn’t work, try something else. Keep looking around until you find what makes you happy and takes your mind, even for a little bit, off your regular day. Ignore anyone else who tells you that you shouldn’t be doing this, that or the other. As long as what you enjoy doesn’t hurt anyone, then I think you should feel free to get out and live it up.

The world didn’t end for everyone on Dec. 21. But, it does end for some people every day. Every day there are people who die around the world. We never know when our time will come. It is up to us to fill our lives with as much living and up to us to give our nearest and dearest as much loving as possible. Once we are gone from this world, all we will leave behind are memories and stories of what we did while we were here. I plan to leave some very interesting stories for my posterity to pass on to theirs. What will your legacy read? Will it be one of “I wish I had’s” or will it be “You’ll never believe what I did?” The choice is yours. Just a thought...



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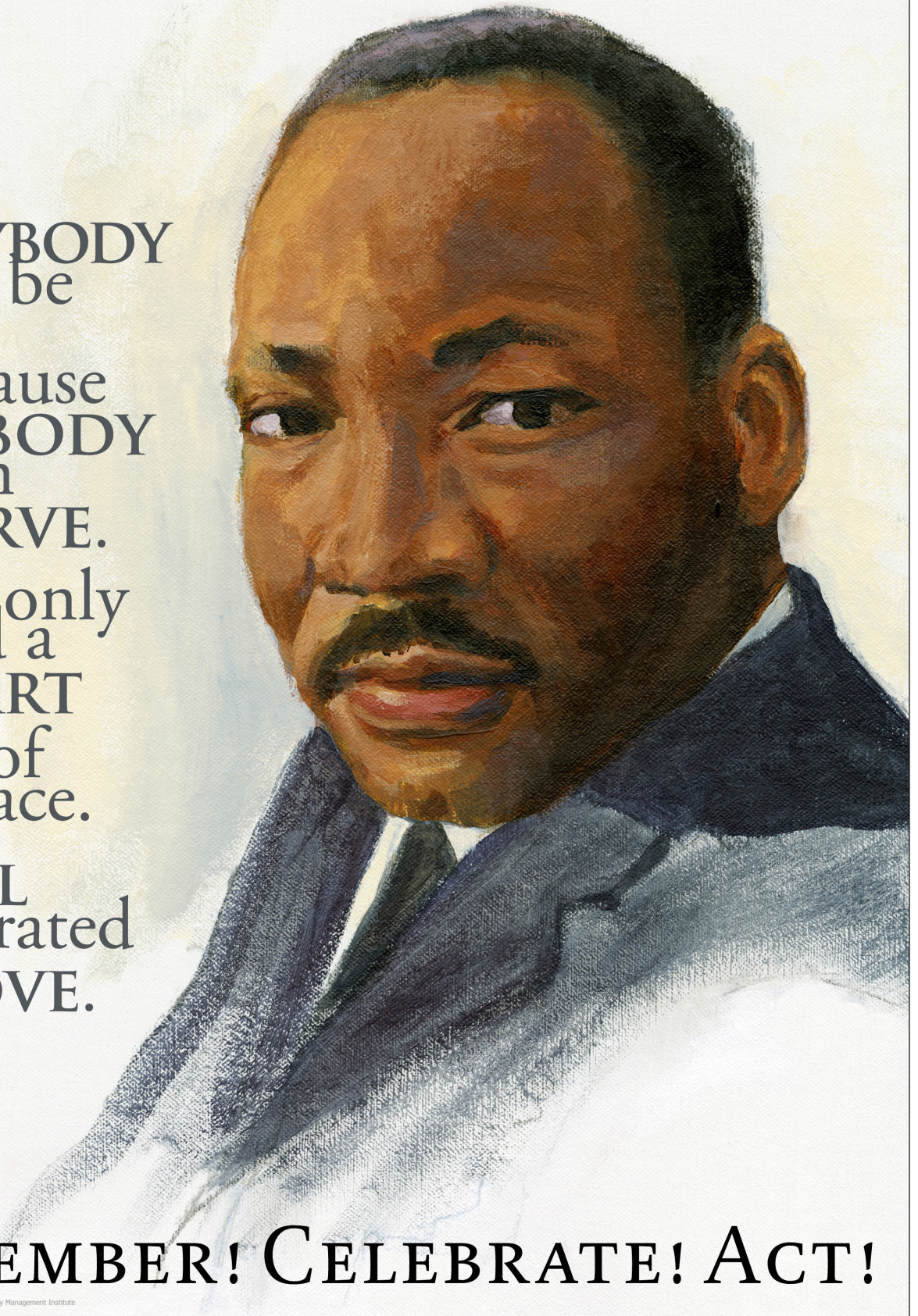
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