



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Tulsa District

# TULSA

## DISTRICT RECORD

### Special Edition

July 18, 2001  
Vol. 24, No. 4

## Family Fun at Corps Day 2001

More photos on Pages 6-7



# Commander's Column



**Col. Leonardo Flor  
District Engineer**

Let me reach back to the first Commander's Column I wrote in July 1998 to begin this last one I write.

*"...As I received facts about the district, as I read e-mails on district activities, as folks from USACE HQs and SWD gave me their assessment of this organization, it became clear that I would inherit an outstanding district. ... Our toughest critics, our customers, had great things to say about the district and the quality products and services they have received. ... Let me assure everyone that my assignment to the district did not come with a directive to downsize the organization. ... The short answer is simply that there will be a Tulsa District as we usher in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; it may be larger, smaller or the same size; but it will remain a leading Corps organization that it is today."*

If I knew then what I know now, I would not change a single word in that first column. What I hoped then to be true, I know now as fact. In the three years since I became your commander, I have had the pleasure of seeing you in action. I can honestly say that the original assessment stands. You belong to the best district in the Corps!

Over the past three years, I've heard a lot from the people we serve about the great things you do. I've shared many notes of thanks with you in this column. Here are recent examples of endorsements of your performance. During the Southwestern Division Command Inspection in April, the division's senior leaders heard customers from Tinker Air Force Base and Oklahoma City Department of Public Works express their delight with the district's performance. At a luncheon in May, Brig.

Gen. Melcher listened with pride as the governor of Oklahoma and the secretary of environment praised the great service you provide the people of Oklahoma. The *Tulsa World*, during an editorial board with Lt. Gen. Flowers, expressed their appreciation for the district's work in flood damage reduction and environmental protection in the greater Tulsa area. Finally, when the chief visited us on June 4-5, I asked him if he had any feedback on your performance. He replied, "Everything I've heard about Tulsa is good!"

Last fall, the district received the USACE Project Delivery Team of the Year award. In this issue, you will see pictures of the Tulsa Team receiving awards during the 2001 Corps Day. As I reminded you the morning of this awards ceremony, for every individual who receives



*The Spotlight*

recognition, there are at least ten others who deserve part of the recognition. Ironically, a key ingredient to the district's success is precisely your ability to work as hard as you can without caring who gets the credit. Lasting memories of my stay in Tulsa District will include these moments we took time to celebrate success, and you gave me many reasons to do so.



During a military change of command, there is usually a "pass-in-review" whereby the outgoing commander can check his unit one last time and ensure that he is passing on to the incoming commander a force capable of winning. In lieu of a pass-in-review, I will ask members of the district present at the ceremony to stand up. When I do, stand up and proudly receive the gratitude that I'm sure the others in the audience will accord you. You earned it.

You will also see in these pages the biography of Col. Robert Suthard. Welcome him and his family with the famous Tulsa District hospitality. He earned this opportunity to command the district through 22 years of distinguished service to the nation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Give him the same support you gave me.

Finally, it would take many pages to list all of your accomplishments the past three years. Suffice it to say it has been my privilege and honor to serve as your commander. God bless.

*Leo Flor*

## **Tulsa District Record**

Editor, Public Affairs Office  
1645 S 101st East Ave  
Tulsa, OK 74128-4609

918-669-7366 - Phone  
918-669-7368 - Fax

<http://www.swt.usace.army.mil>

The *Tulsa District Record* is an unofficial publication authorized by AR 360-1. Contents are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or Tulsa District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is published using offset lithography. Contributions of articles, graphics and photographs are encouraged. All manuscripts are subject to editing. Printed circulation: 1,700.

**District Engineer**  
*Col. Leonardo Flor*

**Public Affairs Officer**  
*W. Ross Adkins*

**Editor**  
*Mary Beth Hudson*

**Technical Assistance**  
*Susan Satterfield  
Jennifer Brashers*

# Looking back at and ahead to our quality journey

**Richard Bilinski**  
Total Army Quality Manager  
**Margaret Johanning**  
Self-Assessment Team Leader

Over the last few years, Tulsa District has made tremendous progress with its transformation from an industrial-age hierarchical organization to an information-age matrix organization. We have instituted an annual planning and execution process that focuses our limited resources in the right direction, in alignment with the Corps Vision and the USACE Strategic Campaign Plan.

In 1999, Tulsa District initiated an annual self assessment as part of its quality improvement journey. The Self-Assessment Team, one of the Plans and Policies Committees, conducts the assessment. The team looks at the overall management structure of the district within the framework of the seven Army Performance Improvement Criteria: leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management, and business results. Assessment results are presented as strengths and opportunities for improvement (gaps) to the senior leaders during their conference. These gaps became part of the data used to develop the annual update to the district's strategic plan.

In June 2000, we published a strategic plan, "Tulsa District Implementation Plan 00-04," and have been busy deploying it throughout the organization. This I-plan outlines the commander's intent for the district for the next five years. It establishes a branch-level endeavor requiring employee participation in mapping out key processes and defining their measures of success. The resulting execution plans define how we need to conduct our day-to-day operations. In essence, the I-plan is the roadmap that links our strategic goals and objectives to what we do on a daily basis.

To measure progress, the Quarterly Total Quality Briefing was initiated as

## Col. Suthard takes Tulsa command

Col. Robert L. Suthard Jr., a native of Nassawadox, Va., graduated from The Virginia Military Institute in 1979 and received a commission as a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers.

In addition to a bachelor's degree, Col. Suthard has earned a master's degree in engineering administration from George Washington University and a second master's in national resource strategy from the National Defense University.

His military education includes the Basic and Advanced Engineer Officer Courses, Air Assault School, the Combined Arms Services Staff School, the Armed Forces Staff College, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Col. Suthard came to the Tulsa District from service as chief, Inaugural Support, at the Pentagon. Previously he was assigned as the chief, Engineer Enlisted Personnel, U.S. Army Personnel Command, and before that as the commander of the 92nd Engineer Heavy Combat Battalion, Fort Stewart, Ga. Other military assignments include deputy commander and chief of staff of the Omaha Engineer District, deputy director of Public Works and Battalion S-3 of the 326th Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) while at Fort Campbell, Ken., as well as command and staff assignments at Fort Belvoir, Va.; Fort Riley, Kan.; and several assignments in Korea.

Col. Suthard's military awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with Silver Oak Leaf Cluster, the Joint Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Army Achievement Medal. He also holds the Air Assault Badge.

He and his wife, Nancy, have two children: Bobby, 20, a junior at James Madison University, and Christin, 16, a senior at Jenks High School in Tulsa.



**Col. Robert L. Suthard Jr.**  
Incoming District Engineer

part of the quarterly Senior Leaders' Conference.

In April 2001, we received the fully realigned HQUSACE Campaign Plan with the refreshed Corps Vision. The Corporate Board, assisted by the emerging leaders and the SAT members, localized the focus areas prescribed in the vision and the SWD Campaign Plan. The resulting analysis led directly to the development of updated goals and objectives for the I-plan for 2001-2005.

In 2002, the SAT will focus on preparing a President's Quality Award

application, the first since 1996. The team will build on the work of previous SATs to meet the requirements of the PQA and APIC 2002. Applying is valuable for the learning that takes place by the team as they gain a greater understanding of the district as a whole and the impacts of the seven criteria. Of course, there is also the potential of being a finalist or even a winner.

The following year, the 2003 committee will focus again on conducting an employee survey to use in the annual improvement planning.

# Chief of Engineers Meets Tulsa

Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers conducted a Town Hall Meeting for district employees on June 5. Employees can view the chief's message on the Intranet.



*“If we are successful as a Corps of Engineers, I’d like to hear people say these things about us. That we:*

- Provide excellence with integrity and credibility
- Serve the Army and its transformation
- Serve the nation through effective stewardship of water resources (we are the water resource agency of the federal government!)
- Accomplish our environmental responsibilities
- Seek consensus - We always try to do what is right

*The subtle thing about this is that it’s not that we think we are doing these things, but that others say them about us. If they do, then we’re successful.”*

– Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers

by  
Edward Engelke  
Public Affairs Office

**Darwin was right.** Evolution occurs. Darwin’s generalized theory of evolution states that nature is constantly evolving. Species can evolve stronger or can evolve weaker. For proof let me offer myself as an example. I’m not today what I was yesterday. That may be good or bad, but let’s not get sidetracked. Another example of evolution is seen in the Corps of Engineers. The Corps celebrated its 226th birthday this year. We are not the same as we were when we were founded. Not even the same as five years ago. For better or worse – we’re evolving.

As I evolved from a new employee to a seasoned one, I wasn’t aware of the change. I only know that one morning I woke up in an old body which needed lots of work. This has also happened to the Corps of Engineers. One day we woke to find that the days had slipped past and had brought issues to the Corps of Engineers which needed to be handled – carefully, diplomatically, and with an overriding concern for the employees. On June 5th, Lieutenant General Robert Flowers visited the Tulsa District and brought the news that he was here to help – employee morale was his priority.

For a day and a half he was with us – being briefed by us, jogging with us, and finally enjoying a Town Hall Meeting with us.

While here, he proved himself to be a one-of-a-kind leader. He exceeded my expectations for what a chief of engineers would be. He seemed real and approachable although he has some quirky personal habits. He admits that he has all Corps employees in his rolodex. I think that’s odd. He also admits that he calls employees at random to see how things are going. I think that’s odd too. He has warned us that if he calls we are NOT to hang up. These traits show that he’s not from an Army-issue “cookie cutter

## Gen. Flowers’ 30-Second Commercial

*“My name is Bob Flowers; I work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We’re an organization of some 35,000 soldiers and civilians working around the world in service to the Army and the nation. We’ve been around for 226 years, and we’ve never let the country down. And there isn’t any mission you can give us that we can’t accomplish.”*

*“All employees should have a commercial, so that if somebody asks you who you’re with and what you do you’ll be prepared to respond positively and proactively about what you do and reflect the pride in this organization and what we do.”*

for generals.” He came to us – and listened. He offered the opportunity to hear about the Corps of Engineers seen from his perspective. He proved that he knows his primary job is to find solutions to the issues which affect employees – issues which drag down morale, which pile workloads so deep there’s no catching up, and which reduce the workforce to unacceptable levels.

Flowers asks that we join him as we work these issues together. “Essayons! Let us try.” NO. Let us succeed.



*During the Town Hall, employees were invited to ask questions of the chief. Those braving the threat of push-ups for the bosses included (left, top to bottom) Margaret Johanning, Kent Dunlap, Loren Mason, and Gloria Lowe.*



*Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers was presented a specially designed shirt which included “Just Do It” – the general’s favorite saying as it relates to his permission slip given to each employee. “Just Do It” means that if an employee knows something is good for his customer, that it’s legal and ethical and something they are willing to be accountable for – we have the chief of engineer’s permission to “Just Do It.”*

# Tulsa District marks 62 years

Except where noted, photos by Susan Satterfield and Ed Engelke, Public Affairs Office



Sue Haslett, Planning Branch, was named the Lt. Col. Mark Fritz Leadership Award winner.



Steve Graham  
Operations Division  
Trades and Crafts  
Employee of the Year



Employee of the Year  
Nancy Crenshaw  
E&C Division



Technical and Administrative  
Employee of the Year  
GS-09 and Above  
Deb Oswalt  
H&H Branch

2001 Engineers  
of the Year



Johnny Bell,  
above,  
and  
Randall Lewis,  
left



Children are always  
photographers' favorites.



Lisa Jennings of Kaw Lake  
Office was the Suggestor of  
the Year.

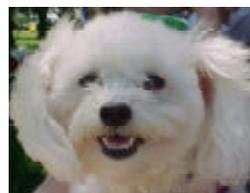


Ed Parisotto  
Eufaula Area Office  
Natural Resources  
Employee of the Year

Courtesy of Eufaula Area Office



David Hudson  
Fort Sill Resident Office  
Hard Hat Employee of the  
Year



What? No Pooch of  
the Year? Apparently  
not, although Pogo  
did her best to  
campaign for the  
honor.





**Margie Hamilton of the Sardis/Wister Lake Offices was named Technical and Administrative Employee of the Year at the GS-08 and below level. Grady Dobbs, Pat Mayse Lake Office, was one of the Customer Care Employees of the Year. He shared honors with Jeff Paskin, also a ranger at Pat Mayse.**



**Jeff Paskin, park ranger at Pat Mayse Lake, was one of the two Customer Care Employees of the Year.**



**Huffy the Clown helped entertain the youngsters.**



**James Patterson, seated, Willie Grimes, and Jocelyn Ashcraft at the picnic.**



**Reluctant photographic subject, Debra White, and her more willing son, Christopher.**



**Face painting adds to the fun. Readers are encouraged to visit the home page and view these pictures, particularly this one, in color.**

## Honorees Named

In addition to the award winners pictured, several other employees were honored during this year's Corps Day Award Ceremony. The honors and the individuals or teams receiving them were:

Special Recognition –  
*Self-Assessment Team*

Individual Medals and Second Place in Division –  
*Corporate Challenge Team*

Length of Service Awards –  
*Employees marking anniversary years 5 through 35*

Safety Accomplishment Awards –  
*Tulsa Resident Office, Texoma Powerhouse, and Eufaula Area Office*

Construction Manager of the Year – *Gerald Grosz*

Outstanding Community Service Award – *Johnny Parrish*

Southwestern Division Planning Excellence Award – *Marc Masnor*

Team Excellence Award –  
*Vance Maintenance Hangar Project Design Team*

Virtual Teaming Award –  
*Arkansas River Navigation Feasibility Study Team*

Project Delivery Team Award –  
*Tinker Repair Primary Runway Team*

# Why Look at Processes?

Col. Leonardo Flor

The results of the Quarterly Total Quality Briefing and the Senior Leaders' Conference in April show we are making tremendous progress in our execution planning. As we gain knowledge and experience with process mapping, we are starting to see its value.

But we still have a lot of skeptics out there, including some supervisors. The comments generally fall along the following lines:

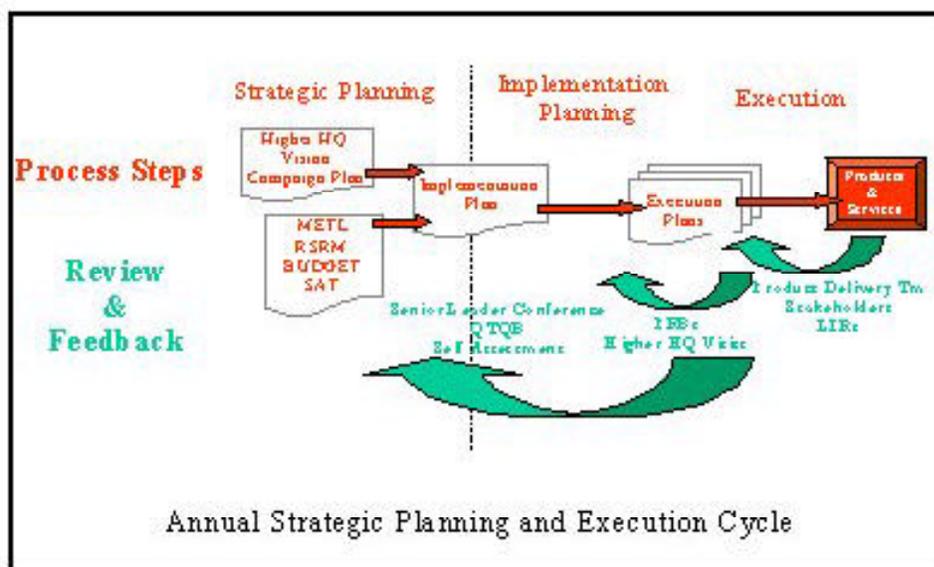
- *My people are not interested because they do not see what is in it for them.*
- *I don't have enough time as it is to do my day-to-day work, much less take time to produce process maps.*
- *This is another 'paper work' that takes away from 'real work.'*
- *We are choosing process over substance.*

There used to be a lot more people in the district who fit the first bullet. They were not interested – that is until they participate in their first process mapping. Then they see the benefit of helping put one together. They realize how individual efforts combine to produce a finished product. They also find how important their contribution is to the whole. Most importantly, with the understanding of the process comes ideas to make the whole process better.

The second bullet is a self-licking ice cream cone. If the current way of doing things leaves too little time to get work done, then something needs to change. In order to change something, you need to understand what change to make and how the change will affect the results. It seems logical then that you must invest some time and energy in order to make the adjustments necessary to get more things done in the same amount

of time. But unless you are willing to take the time to understand the process so you can make changes, your backlog of work will continue increasing. Eventually, that ice cream cone turns into a worthless puddle of warm cream.

Finally, we can indeed get carried away focusing too much on process at the expense of substance. Let's not lose sight of the objective – we are mapping processes to lend structure to content. In other words, content plus structure equals substance. You have to have both



Process mapping can be just another paperwork drill, if you let it. If the mapped process ends in a three-ring binder that sits on the bookshelf until the colonel asks to see it, then the drill is indeed a waste of time and energy. But if the mapped process becomes a living document that guides training, execution, and change; if the measure of success becomes a diagnostic tool to anticipate required adjustments; if the execution plan becomes a method where the experienced employee transfers knowledge to the newer ones; then every ounce of time and energy devoted to the effort will more than pay off.

content and structure to have substance. All the data in the world is useless unless you have a process to put it into good use.

By now, all of you should be beyond just being familiar with terms like campaign plan, implementation plan, and execution plan. I urge you to take this familiarity a step further. Understand the Tulsa District's Total Quality Management Process and participate in making your great organization even better. Participate in mapping the key processes your branch and offices have. Jump in, the water is fine!