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District welcomes new commander

by Joan Mier

Albuquerque District welcomed its 27th commander, Lt. Col. Dana Hurst, in a Change of Command ceremony held July 2. As South Pacific Division Commander Brig. Gen. Robert L. Davis said, the ceremony is a “bittersweet experience.”

“Being a division commander is kind of like being a parent. I have four great offspring,” Davis said. He credited former district commander Lt. Col. Raymond Midkiff with doing tremendous things for the organization and said, “You will see him command again.” He also welcomed Hurst, saying, “He has a great background and with this team, he can’t fail.”

The District was also honored by the attendance of U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici. It was the first time a U.S. senator had ever attended a change of command ceremony at the District. Domenici spoke of the difficult mission the Corps must execute, with huge construction projects, plenty of pressure, along with fluctuations in funding. He spoke of Albuquerque District projects that were very close to him and those he represents, such as bosque restoration.

“It will be much more than a greenbelt. It will be used and preserved,” he said. He also spoke of the Upper Rio Grande Water Operations Model (URGWOM) as a tribute to Midkiff and the work force. “For us in Albuquerque, we have been very pleased with you Colonel Midkiff.” He also welcomed Hurst, advising, “How we as citizens of this great state handle our water problems is a great challenge. In the long run, we are going to be all right. But, we need to focus our priorities on need rather than ownership.”

In his remarks, Midkiff said, “When we arrived



Photo by Van Truan

Lt. Col. Dana Hurst takes the Engineer flag from South Pacific Division Commander Brig. Gen. Robert L. Davis, signifying his assumption of command of the Albuquerque District.

here two years ago, it became quickly apparent what a special place this is. We will miss you and we leave with a load of very good memories.” He thanked Davis for being a great mentor, former Deputy District Engineer Maj. Gregory Gunter for being the best military deputy he could have had, Administrative Services Specialist Dee Tricoglou for having the unenviable task of keeping him straight, and the two ladies in his life, wife Tammy, and daughter, Rae who were about to go off to another adventure with him. He welcomed Hurst and his wife, Ingrid and told Hurst he was getting the best job in the Army. Midkiff left the District to serve as Chief of Plans and Operations, Joint Engineer U.S. Forces in Korea.

When Hurst took the podium, he said it was an honor to assume command of the Albuquerque District. “A district is about people who are proud and values-based,” he said. “Our successes are the successes of the Nation. I will dedicate myself to our employees and customers and look forward to working with all of you.”