

RIP RAP

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Albuquerque District

USACE SPA, 4101 Jefferson Plaza, N.E. , Albuquerque, NM 87109

Photo by Richard Banker



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In this issue...

USACE Happenings

Pages 1-7

Focus on People

Pages 8-10

Features

Page 11

District Engineer,
Lt. Col. Jason Williams

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District Leadership Convenes to Refresh the O-Plan

To help ensure long-term success, a group of nearly 70 people gathered together Oct. 27-29 to refine and update the District's Operations Plan, or O-Plan, as well as align the plan with the Division's Implementation Plan and USACE's Campaign Plan.

The three-day session began with Lt. Col. Williams' explaining his intent and setting expectations for the conference, and then the participants thoroughly reviewed employee input from the Command Climate Survey. Additionally, the group analyzed and integrated customer survey results.

"We examined multiple opportunities relating to the District's future success and conducted a detailed 'strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis,'" Lt. Col. Williams said. "The review helped us more clearly define tasks we can accomplish to be even better at what we already do well."

A smaller team broke from the larger group to specifically focus on process improvement, or PDT protocol.

Overall, the critical look at the actions in the District's O-Plan yielded group consensus that there needs to be a high degree of employee involvement and input to achieve future success.





"Things we do well strengthen our District and our ability to execute our mission, and we can do better if we listen to employee feedback and respond," the Commander said. "We also need to play close attention to our customers' feedback and comments. Finally, we'll ensure our success by aligning our O-Plan with regional actions and national goals."






Chief of Construction Louis Askew was among the conference participants, and he provided his thoughts on how the District can provide better customer service.

Why We Plan: To Create Value!



For Our People:

-  Rewarding work
-  Attractive career path
-  Continuous learning
-  Favorable environment


For Our Customers:

-  High Quality
-  On-time and On-Budget
-  Always safe

For Our District:

-  More work
-  Recognition as a leader

For The Corps:

-  Local, Regional, and National Value

Silvery Minnows, Southwestern Willow Fly-catchers and ... Hedgehogs?

By Elizabeth Lockyear, SPA Public Affairs

This past summer hedgehogs became the Corps' new "in" animal. It started when the commanding general of the Corps, Lt. Gen. Robert "Van" Van Antwerp started a Corps-wide discussion when he directed Division Commanders to address technical competency and methods of delivery through regionalized or nationalized means. The result has been a journey to uncover the Corps' hedgehogs.

Animal or Concept?

The Hedgehog concept originated in Isaiah Berlin's essay, "The Hedgehog and the Fox." Jim Collins, in his book, *Good to Great*, quotes Berlin saying that while foxes are "scattered or diffused, moving on many levels, never integrating their thinking into one overall concept or unifying vision," hedgehogs "simplify a complex world into a single organizing idea, a basic principle or concept that unifies and guides everything." Basically the hedgehog succeeds because he focuses only on the essentials and ignores all the non-essentials. Foxes get bogged down by pursuing many different things and thus don't achieve greatness in any of them.

Collins defines the Hedgehog concept as, "a simple, crystalline concept that flows from deep understanding about the intersection of three questions. What can you be the best in the world at? What drives your economic engine? What are you deeply passionate about?"

Question one doesn't offer guarantees you'll be the best, but helps weed out non-essentials. Question two helps businesses clarify the denominator that has the greatest economic impact on their bottom line. Question three is important because passion moti-

vates and drives greatness. Anything answering all three questions can be an organization's hedgehogs.

Albuquerque's Hedgehogs

As a result of Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp's direction, the District has been assessing our hedgehogs, and the primary task of hedgehog identification was assigned to the Strategic Innovations Group, or SIG, composed of representatives from Operations, Planning and Training. The SIG was established by former District Commander Lt. Col. Colloton and was one of the first developed in the entire Corps.

Among the hedgehogs identified by the SIG were "specific geographic support" and "superior customer service."

Specific geographic support refers to the understanding the District has on issues specific to the "Desert Southwest"/southern Rocky Mountains area, such as water conservation.

According to the Fall 2010 South Pacific Division Hedgehog Analysis of Technical Competencies, Albuquerque District "is one of two Districts headquartered between the west coast and the Great Plains, and the only District headquartered in the Rocky Mountains." The analysis concludes, "We are best in our region because we are an employer of choice, which enables us to recruit and cultivate a highly skilled workforce with local roots. A significant portion of our workforce consists of employees who have lived in this area much or all of their lives, and have had much personal engagement in the issues, lands and resources they deal with."

Customer Service Exemplified

Superior customer service was the second hedgehog identified. The SPD Hedgehog Analysis reports the District provides "high quality, cost efficient multi-disciplinary vertical design for a diverse constituency."



Corps Builds New School for Air Force's Combat Rescue Mission

Nearly every commander on Kirtland Air Force base joined a large group of distinguished guests and Corps personnel Oct. 13 to celebrate the opening of the Guardian Angel Training Center.

The new school house for the Air Force's Pararescue and Combat Rescue Officers will offer some of the hardest training in the Air Force, according to Col. William Mott, 37th Training Wing Commander at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

The Corps of Engineers became aware of the project in 2008 and awarded a contract in Dec. of that year to K.L. House Construction Company Inc. for more than \$14 million.

The project manager was Connie Runyan, the resident engineer was Carlos Salazar and the project engineer was Joan Coffing.



Top: Major Gen. Mary Hertog, Commander, 2nd Air Force, joined other Air Force Senior Leaders to conduct a ribbon cutting in the Pararescue style. **At Right:** Chief of Const. Lou Askew, Contracting Specialist Leslie Molina, and Lt. Col. Williams receive praise from a school official.



“This new building replaces a structure that was built in the 1940s,” said Construction Manager Robert Begaye. “It was gratifying to interact with the P.J.s while this school was being built, knowing they will now be able to learn and train in a top-notch facility.”

Col. Mott said the training provided at the school will

prepare students for situations in combat and in support of natural disasters that will physically and mentally stress their bodies to the max. He also said that pararescuemen are some of the most decorated people in the Air Force and have sacrificed their lives in every major conflict.

The pararescuemen's creed is “That Others May Live.”

Rip Rap — November 2010 — Page 3

This activity supports our Operations Plan: Action 7 (Execute the regional Military Program and capitalize on Interagency and International Services opportunities).

Corps' Equal Employment Opportunity Program 101

By Elizabeth Lockyear, SPA Public Affairs

While discrimination may be the first thing a person thinks of when learning of the Equal Employment Office, Karen Doran, the District's equal employment opportunity officer, says discrimination is just one of three main focuses of her job.

One focus is to head the Special Emphasis Program. The District is required by law to have six Special Emphasis programs, and each program has a manager who has completed required training to be a program manager.

Another focus for Doran is compiling an annual report to USACE headquarters on what the district looks like demographically. This is important, because the federal government wants its civilian workforce to resemble America.

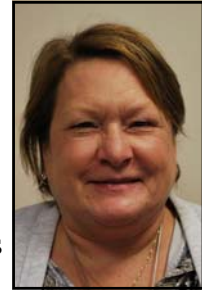
One federal government goal is increasing the percentage of disabled employees to 2 percent of the civilian workforce. Currently the District is at 0.9 percent. This can be difficult, because stating a disability is voluntary and not everyone who has a disability will state it.

One reason why many people may not state a disability is fear of discrimination. This is the third focus for Doran.

A major reason the Equal Employment Opportunity office in the Corps exists is to address discrimination issues relating to the workplace. It traces its origins to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which was the first federal law designed to protect most U.S. employees from specific types of employment discrimination. Since it was signed into law, it

has expanded to cover discrimination based on age, sex, race, national origin, religion and disability.

When someone feels discriminated against, the first step in the complaint process is to talk to Doran. Complaints can be initiated by both current and former



EEO Manager,
Karen Doran

Programs and Managers:

**American Indian/
Alaskan Native Program:**

Manager - Beverly Dodson

**Asian American/Pacific
Islander Program:**

Manager - Mark Rosacker

**Black Employment
Program:**

Manager - Sonia Murdock

Disability Program:

Manager - Anita Serna

**Federal Women's
Program:**

Manager - Angela Sims

**Hispanic Employment
Program:**

Manager - Loretta Gonzales

employees, and the complaints can be about anything that affects employment, including awards, training, promotions and working conditions.

In the initial meeting, Doran goes over the rights and responsibilities the person has regarding his or her complaint and a counselor is assigned. In the Corps, Doran said that the counselors have to be either an EEO specialist or manager, and they have to be certified by attending an Army EEO counselor course.

It's the counselor's job to gather facts such as written documents and information through interviews. The counselor can also work to mediate

the complaint before the formal paperwork is filed. It's important to note that if someone suspects discrimination, there are deadlines to initiate action. If the deadlines are not met, the complaint may be dismissed.

There are two main methods of informally resolving a complaint. Alternate Dispute Resolution, which is what mediation is called in the Army, allows 90 calendar days for the person to accept mediation. If the complaint is not resolved, then he or she has 15 calendar days to file a formal complaint.

If a person chooses traditional counseling,

USACE Retiree Carlos Salazar Reflects on the Past

By Mark Slimp, SPA Public Affairs

Mr. Carlos F. (Felipe) Salazar III, a former Chief of the District's Military Branch, was interviewed for *Rip Rap* as part of a series of features profiling Corps retirees.

Salazar, who retired in 1996 from the Albuquerque District Headquarters, after two different stints totaling almost 30 years of service, is enjoying his retirement immensely but looks back fondly on his time in the Corps.

"One of the things that probably hasn't changed all that much at the Corps," noted Salazar with his usual wry sense of humor, "is when you were a project manager or supervisor back then you had to be careful or you'd be the one to get chewed-on by the higher ups if things slipped, and that's probably still the same today!" But he quickly added he truly enjoyed his time at the Corps, and felt that he had a great career and made many positive contributions.

As he reminisced about his career, former colleagues and significant projects he was involved in, it was evident he

found the work fulfilling and missed the camaraderie of his co-workers.

Salazar first joined the Corps in 1963 as a GS-3 draftsman, after dropping out of UNM after two years. He quickly worked his way up to a GS-5 in the drafting department, but in 1970 he was "riffed" when the military portion of the Albuquerque District work was moved to Ft. Worth, Texas.

Making the most of this unplanned life-change, Salazar returned to UNM to resume his studies. He graduated in 1973 as a Civil Engineer. A Corps employment recruiter visiting the UNM campus urged him to return, and shortly thereafter he rejoined the District, where he stayed until his retirement in 1996. He started back as a GS-7 Civil Engineer, doing civilian projects.

As time went on, the District resumed responsibility for military projects, and he

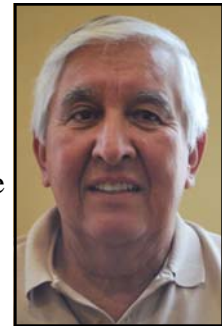
switched to that line of work and rose in the ranks.

In 1988, he was promoted to Chief of Military Branch where he led his team of 14 until he retired.

His time at the Corps spanned a period where the draftsman worked "free hand" to the introduction of computers. He fondly recalled that the computers were crude by today's standards, but even with their limitations they would still save hours and hours of tedious problem solving.

Some of the other notable changes during his tenure, was the flux of personnel levels going from nearly 600 Corps employees in the late 1960s, down to 375 or so, and back to today's ...

—Continued on page 12



Carlos Salazar

Corps Retirees Invited for Lunch

Lt. Col. Williams hosted a retiree luncheon Oct. 25 at an Albuquerque restaurant to help Corps retirees stay informed about recent activities and initiatives. The Commander said keeping retirees involved and connected is one of his priorities.



Photos by Ronnie Schelby

This activity supports our Operations Plan: Action 10 (Promote the Common Regional Picture and execute the strategic communication plan).

Rip Rap — November 2010 — Page 5

This activity supports our Operations Plan: Actions 4 and 5 (Execute the regional Civil Works Program and expand planning processes towards integrated and sustainable water resource projects; Develop collaborative approaches to address multi-stakeholder, and multi-benefit water resource challenges).

USACE Happenings

South Valley to be Protected from Future Flooding



By Ronnie Schelby, SPA Public Affairs

Photo by Ronnie Schelby

A groundbreaking ceremony for the Southwest Valley Flood Damage Reduction Control Project was held Nov. 9 at the Durand Open Space; it was the culmination to more than 10 years of collaboration.

The project's two sponsors, AMAFCA and the Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, have worked closely with the Corps and other stakeholders, to include The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to arrive at a point where construction is imminent.

The project is of particular importance to people who live in the South Valley, because the area is subject to flooding from a variety of sources. Steep slopes surrounding the project area contribute to flooding from water and sediment, and flows are intercepted by existing irrigation facilities, many of which have embankments that are only one to three feet high. These embankments and roadways divide the project area into many small sub-areas, causing

floodwaters to pond on-site and to inundate residential, commercial or agricultural land.

According to Thaddeus Lucero, Bernalillo County Manager, when he was a child and it rained in the South Valley, his family would stay away because of the flooding.

"The people of the South Valley deserve to be able to cross the street without it being flooded," Lucero said.

"Not only will this project help the flooding in the South Valley, but it will also contribute to the preservation and enhancement of natural resources and provide beneficial values to fish, wildlife and wetlands," said Corps District Commander, Lt. Col. Williams.

The Corps phase 1 construction contract for the Southwest Valley Project was awarded on Sept. 20 to CTSI/Meridian Joint Venture. A notice to proceed was issued on Nov. 3. The awarded contract price was \$5.6 million with a 450 calendar day duration. However, work that needs to be accomplished in the Bosque will be completed by April 1. This is when the migratory season begins.

News Briefs—News Briefs—News Briefs—News Briefs

Kirtland Contract Awarded to Shaw

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, issued a \$23 million task order contract to a Knoxville, Tenn., company, Sept. 30, for environmental remediation services to be performed at Kirtland Air Force Base.

The contract was awarded to Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure Inc.

The initial task order award was \$22,974,682.41, but the total cost, including lifecycle costs could end up being more than \$50 million.

The contractor will provide remediation services at the Kirtland Air Force Base Bulk Fuels Facility Spill Solid Waste Management Units St-106 and SS-111. The period of performance is Sept. 30, 2010 through Feb. 25, 2015.

Huntsville Center cooperates with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers districts, public officials and interested citizens and supports remediation operations when an imminent and substantial endangerment to public health or the environment exists.

Information About Daylight Saving Time

The phrase “Spring forward, Fall back” helps people remember how Daylight Saving Time affects their clocks. At 2 a.m. on the second Sun-

day in March, we set our clocks forward one hour ahead of Standard Time, and we set them back at 2 a.m. on the first Sunday in November. In theory, Daylight Saving Time (and not Daylight Savings Time with an “s”), ostensibly allows us to use less energy in lighting our homes by taking advantage of the longer and later daylight hours.

During the eight-month period of Daylight Saving Time, the names of time in each of the time zones in the U.S. change as well. Eastern Standard Time (EST) becomes Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), Central Standard Time (CST) becomes Central Daylight Time (CDT), Mountain Standard Time (MST) becomes Mountain Daylight Time (MDT), Pacific Standard Time becomes Pacific Daylight Time (PDT), and so forth.

Daylight Saving Time is four weeks longer since 2007, due to the passage of the Energy Policy Act in 2005. The Act extended Daylight Saving Time by four weeks from the second Sunday of March to the first Sunday of November, with the hope that it would save 10,000 barrels of oil each day through reduced use of power by businesses during daylight hours. Unfortunately, it is exceedingly difficult to determine energy savings from Daylight Saving Time and little or no energy may be saved.

Abiquiu Staff Seek Place in MapGuide

The Corps personnel at Abiquiu Lake are submitting a nomination to be part of the National Geographic GEOTourism map that will be published for the Four Corners area as part of a regional geotourism project.

Organizations in New Mexico, Utah, Colorado and Arizona have joined with National Geographic Maps to highlight the world-class natural and cultural attractions of the greater Four Corners region.

The project seeks to contribute to the economic health of communities by promoting geotourism: tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place — its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the wellbeing of its residents.

The printed MapGuide will be available in fall 2011. A parallel interactive website is also being developed. The goal is to get nominations from across the region that identify the things people love best, those ‘must see’ places that reflect the cultural continuum from prehistoric sites to modern-day communities, natural features, small towns and enduring landscapes.

District Employees Give Gift of Life

By Elizabeth Lockyear, SPA Public Affairs

The District's tri-annual blood drive was held Oct. 25 at the District office in Albuquerque. According to Richard Buttz in the District's Safety Office, 15 units of blood were donated by Corps employees.

There are two types of blood donation – whole blood and Double Red Cell pheresis. In a whole blood donation, a single unit of approximately 500 ml, (just shy of 16 ounces), is collected.

In a Double Red Cell pheresis donation, whole blood is “collected from one arm and goes into a machine called a ‘cell separator.’” The machine separates out the red blood cells and collects them in a special bag. The rest of the blood is “combined with a saline solution and returned to the donor,” according to the United Blood Services website. This process allows the donor to donate twice as many red blood cells as would be donated in a whole blood donation, yet the actual amount taken out of the body is virtually the same. One beneficial side effect is that the saline solution leaves the donor better hydrated than before giving blood.

Both types of donations are drawn from a vein, normally in the inner elbow area of the arm using a 16 gauge needle.

Carlos Aragon, a civil engineer in the Geotechnical Engineering Section, says it feels “like getting pinched.”

Requirements

“We want people fat and happy,” said Tom Rich, the phlebotomist in charge of the blood drive. In order to donate



National USACE Patent Counselor

Photo by Lisa Lockyear

Earl Baugher reclines while he donates whole blood for the District's blood drive.

blood, a person needs to weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be healthy.

In addition, for those between ages 17 and 23 there are certain height and weight ratios.

Things that disqualify a potential donor include travel to certain countries, current illness and an open wound. All of this is covered in a pre-donation interview.

According to Buttz, if a person is interested in donating, it's good to drink a lot of water the week before trying to give blood.

A person can donate whole blood every 56 days, or about every two months. Double Red Cell donations can be given every 112 days, or about every four months, with a maximum of three donations a year.

United Blood Services takes all blood types, but O negative and O positive are always in demand.

For information on the next District blood drive, contact Richard Buttz (photo at right) at 505-342-3186.





This activity supports our Operations Plan: Action 12 (Develop and implement the Regional Human Capital Plan (HCP). PEOPLE FIRST, MISSION ALWAYS!

This activity supports our Operations Plan: Action 12 (Develop and implement the Regional Human Capital Plan (HCP). PEOPLE FIRST, MISSION ALWAYS!

Focus On People



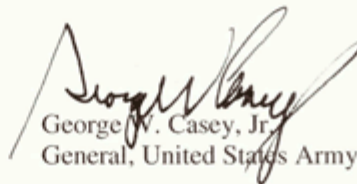
**UNITED STATES ARMY
THE CHIEF OF STAFF
SEP 10 2010**

To the United States Army Corps of Engineers

Our Army was formed on June 14, 1775. Two days later, General George Washington appointed our first Engineer. Ever since then, our Army Engineers have proudly answered the call to duty -- in peace and war. The Corps has played an instrumental role in shaping our history by providing the expertise needed to support the developing Nation.

Five years ago, you were presented with two more monumental tasks: complete our massive Base Realignment and Closure mission, and build the greater New Orleans hurricane and storm damage risk reduction system. Not only were these assignments challenging, but you were asked to do both while simultaneously supporting our ongoing campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Having recently seen your projects first-hand, I will tell you that your work is nothing short of magnificent.

To all of you on the Corps of Engineers team – 34,000 strong – let me assure you that our Army and our Nation are fortunate to have your service. You are an elite and dedicated team. Thank you for all you do every day. I could not be more proud to be a Soldier, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our magnificent Engineers, Families, civilians, veterans and retirees. Thank you for another year of unsurpassed excellence, for your distinguished service, and for your continued support of our Army and our Nation. Essayons!



George W. Casey, Jr.
General, United States Army

Blue-footed Booby Could Be Decorating Your Tree

Visualize a husband and wife on a typical weeknight evening, watching TV, as the wife flips through a holiday gift catalog she received in the mail that day.

The wife gasps, “Ack!” and hubby responds in alarm, as if abruptly awoken from sleep, “What?!”

On page 62 of the catalog is the most adorable Christmas tree ornament that she has ever laid eyes on. And she’s laid eyes on a few in her day, as they’re her favorite thing in the whole wide world (next to Saguaro cactus).

The description of the Blue-footed Booby ornament reads “small and playful, these funny birds are made from wrapped and painted abaca fiber, a species of banana.”

The wife thinks, “this bird is near and dear to the hearts of many a New Mexican, after its sighting at Conchas Lake this past year.”

The Booby is not from these parts, so for a brief moment in time people were mesmerized by the idea that this bird chose New Mexico for a road trip, and Albuquerque District Corps of Engineers employees were downright boastful of the fact this exotic bird chose a Corps reservoir for its retreat. Colored photos of the bird were found in cubicles throughout the three-story office building. Employees were emailing the story to friends and family around the globe and put it on Facebook. Heck, the winners of the annual Halloween costume contest were two Boobies.

The wife checked, and the holiday catalog is distributed by SERRV International, “a non-



The wife in this story just might be Outdoor Recreation Planner, Cynthia Piirto.

profit organization which promotes the social and economic progress of people in developing regions of the world by purchasing and marketing their crafts in a just and direct manner.” She made a mental note that for a mere \$6 plus shipping and handling she could buy the whimsical ornament at www.serrv.org by doing a product search for “Blue-footed Booby ornament.” She thought she might order in bulk to make the \$6.95 S&H charge more economical. In one fell swoop, her Christmas list is nearly complete!

— Continued from page 5 —

staffing of more than 400.

During his earlier years, the District had its own motor pool, surveying teams, and even a reproduction department.

He said as those duties were contracted out, he felt the work sent to outside vendors was actually more efficient for the Corps, because the contractors were able to work faster than they could in-house.

In his retirement, Salazar and his wife, Julie, of 43 years have traveled extensively. They've been to northern Europe and the Mediterranean region twice and have visited quite a few countries: Russia, Norway, Holland and Poland to name just a few.

In addition they've gone to New Zealand, Australia and Brazil. They try to take one trip a year.

People might not know that Salazar is an accomplished woodworker. He has a well equipped shop, and one of his specialties is making clocks, something he started when he retired. But as he noted, "pretty soon everyone in the family had a clock, so I'm pretty much out of that business now."

Today, Salazar's family name and work ethic lives on in the Corps; his son Carlos F. Salazar IV is a Construction Manager in the Kirtland AFB resident office.

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he or she has 30 calendar days to complete the process and if it's not resolved, a formal complaint needs to be filed within 15 calendar days.

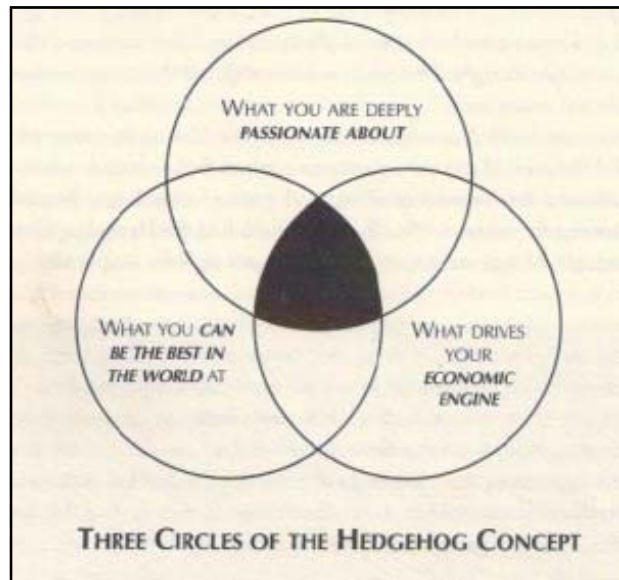
The important thing to remember about EEO is that all employees have the right to a discrimination-free workplace. The District is working diligently to ensure this.

If you have questions about what constitutes discrimination or simply want someone to talk with, stop by the EEO office or call Doran at 505-342-3170.

— Continued from page 2

The report also concludes, in providing our personal service to our clientele we take pride in accomplishing a full in-house design for any challenging project as opposed to outsourcing the work to third parties, which is more hands-on and gratifying for engineering professionals.

"Identifying the District's hedgehogs helps eliminate distraction," said Lt. Col. Williams. "It also directs our focus on the essentials which will guide our success as a District, as we accomplish our mission of strengthening our Nation by providing responsive, innovative, and sustainable infrastructure and environmental solutions for our Military, IIS and Civil Works partners and stakeholders, and responding to national emergencies as an engineering leader built to last on valued relationships and standards of excellence."



This graphic is from Jim Collins' book, *Good to Great*, page 96. It depicts how the overlap between the three critical questions should be the focus after an organization conducts a hedgehog analysis.