



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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## Donations of clothing, gifts fill holiday spirit



Photo by Peter Versteegen

St. Paul District employees donated to a number of worthy causes during the holidays. Above (from left), Travis Hagen, Sean Burton and Matthew Darling from the Information Management Office helped to load

some of the nearly 650 pounds of clothing donated to Mary's Shelter, a residence for victims of domestic abuse. Employees also contributed to needy families through Neighbors, Inc., and Santa Anonymous.

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## Starting the new year with restructuring, winter safety

by COL JM Wonsik  
St. Paul District Commander

A quick note on district restructuring and winter safety as we start off the new year.

First, you may have seen some basic information on the district restructuring on cc:Mail. We received the task force's report on the draft policies and guidelines late last month. When finalized, these policies and guidelines will guide any future district restructuring.

It is important to understand where we are in this process. Last fall, the District Restructuring Steering Group distributed a set of draft policies, principles and guidelines. We made them available

to you and asked for your comments.

The task force reviewed more than 1,400 pages of comments from within the Corps and from our external customers. Based on these comments, the task force has recommended modifications to the draft. The changes ranged from single word or sentence changes to combining two principles and adding two new principles.

This report only addresses the comments made on the draft proposed policies, principles and guidelines. It does not contain any district-specific restructuring information. Remember, it is subject to change by the District Restructuring Steering Group before they submit it to the Secretary of the

Army. We will provide more detailed information and opportunities to have your questions answered when more definite information is available.

Finally, a reminder about winter safety. Our "roller coaster" temperatures this winter have created potentially unsafe conditions for outside activities. Minnesota has experienced a dramatic and tragic increase in snowmobile deaths this winter. The dangerous conditions which contribute to these accidents also apply to any on-ice activity — ice fishing, vehicle operations, and cross-country skiing, hiking or snow-shoeing.

Please use caution, plan ahead, and be safe. Have a happy and safe new year!

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## New PATs examine day-to-day processes

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

A new batch of process action teams (PATs) is examining processes in the district's day-to-day business. Their common goal is to create incremental improvements in the way the district does its business.

Using lessons learned from the first PATs, the district's Quality Council has targeted six new processes for improvement: day-use fee collections; the suggestion program; network software updates; time sheets; and resolving grievances. Even the PAT process itself will be under scrutiny with the goal of moving the process into the

express lane—called a rapid PAT.

"Our goal is to have all PAT members on board and ready to go by early January," said Tom Heyerman, quality coordinator. "Training will be held February 13-16. The Army Management Engineer College will be instructing."

Meanwhile, the first PATs are finishing up their examination of the first six processes. PATs on Federal Information Processing (FIP), DA Form 3953 (Purchase Request and Commitment), and travel orders are preparing final presentations for late in January. The Biddability, Constructability, and Operability (BCO) PAT has a presentation scheduled for early in February. The

Plant Replacement and Improvement (PRIP) PAT is developing implementation instructions.

The Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) finished its task in October 1995. "The work by the BPA PAT resulted in numerous intangible benefits, plus \$128,000 first-year savings. Successive year savings would be \$142,000 annually," said Heyerman. The result of the BPA PAT was to replace 60 percent of the district's blanket purchase agreements with VISA card purchases and to provide a streamlined process to reproduce engineering drawings.

# New award given at Holiday Awards Ceremony



Photo by William Hutchinson

COL Wonsik (left) presented a new award to David Haumersen, chief of Construction-Operations (CO). The award, Suggestion Champion of the Year, was developed by an Army Ideas for Excellence Program (AIEP) review committee. It honors a supervisor who has demonstrated a distinctive ability to stimulate AIEP participation, to support suggesters and evaluators and to add value to a suggestion. Brent Johnson, Programs Branch, was honored as Suggester of the Year. Johnson submitted 19 suggestions. Eight of Johnson's suggestions were approved for implementation, four were sent to Headquarters USACE and one was approved by the House and Senate Appropriations committees. Mark Edlund, CO, was honored as the Suggestion Evaluator of



Photo by Peter Versteegen

Mike Osterby of Design Branch (left) and 1995 retiree Al Rosenberg acted as masters of ceremony for the Holiday Awards Ceremony. Osterby is holding two "gingerbread houses" that were handed out as door prizes. More than 240 attended the December 21 event, including at least 16 retirees. The ceremony was held in West St. Paul.



Photo by Jon Lyman. Special thanks to George Fortune for help with names.

Retirees who gathered for their photo are (standing, left to right): Phil Schweitzer, Art Ettl, Bill Goetz, Jim Kursu, Al Rosenberg, LaVane Dempsey, Marlin

Munter, Wayne Knott, Jim Adams, and Dave Taylor. Seated, from left are: Fred Beauvais, Harry Novak, Delores Sudeith, Mary Rivett and Betty Krueger.

## 1995 in review

Whew! From restructuring to furloughs, 1995 has been a full year. Here's a brief review of some significant events.

### JANUARY

Work continued on dewatering Lock & Dam No. 7 at La Crescent, Minn.

A quality "climate" survey identified the district's strengths and weaknesses.

The St. Paul-led Floodplain Management Assessment (FPMA) team completed key benchmarks after one year. The FPMA objectives were to fulfill a Congressional mandate to assess the current uses of floodplains and to identify and to assess floodplain management options for the Upper Mississippi and Lower Missouri rivers. The mandate arose from the 1993 flood. Contributing districts, in addition to St. Paul, included Rock Island, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Omaha.

### FEBRUARY

The district held public meetings at Crandon, Wis., and Madison, Wis., to assess the environmental impact of the proposed Crandon Mine.

Process action teams (PATs) in the district began to examine inefficient and costly processes as part of a Total Army Quality initiative.

District employees participated in Engineers Week ceremonies by presenting panel discussions on the engineering mission of the Corps, mentoring and floodplain management.

### MARCH

City councils of Duluth and Superior requested reconsideration of the Corps and the Minnesota PCA

decision to halt the search for barrels on the bottom of Lake Superior. The Corps and the PCA held an open house in Duluth to explain to city council members their joint decision to halt the search.

The Corps began providing emergency assistance to state and local governments to combat flooding at Devils Lake, North Dakota.

Mark W. Nelson, formerly of the Omaha District, became the new chief of Real Estate Division.

### APRIL

Officials from the Corps and the PCA appeared before the Duluth City Council regarding the decision to halt the search and recovery of barrels on the bottom of Lake Superior.

Lupe Santos, HR; Leon Mucha, CO; and Lisa Hedin, PE, earned Civil Servant of the Year honors.

Construction-Operations earned the Commander's trophy for outstanding achievement in EEO. Five employees received the Commander's Award for outstanding achievement in EEO: Judy DesHarnais, PE; Al Geisen, PE; Marianne Price, EEO; Doris Sullivan, PE; and Linda Wiley, HR.

The St. Paul District and National Federation of Federal Employees Local 1441 established a labor-management partnership.

The district completed its base-line customer quality survey.

The Corps released its draft FPMA report, which shed light on the impacts of flooding along the Upper Mississippi and Lower Missouri rivers during the summer of 1993.

Regulatory Branch hosted a workshop for 12 tribes and five tribal associations from Minnesota and Wisconsin.

### MAY

Lisa Hedin, PE, accepted the Corps' 1993 Planning Excellence Award for her late husband Damian Yerbich, an economist in the old Planning Division.

### JUNE

The FPMA was completed on time and on budget.

Jim Lumaye, a park ranger at the Winnibigoshish Recreation Area, successfully applied rescue breathing and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to save the life of a young camper.

LTC Bill Breyfogle assumed his post as the district's new deputy commander.

More than 400 attended the Corps Day Summer Awards Ceremony and Picnic held on June 22 at Lake Elmo Park Reserve.

The district held Students' Recognition Week.

The Army Communities of Excellence (ACOE) coordinators reviewed suggestions from throughout the district on how to spend the \$25,000 ACOE award on behalf of district employees.

### JULY

COL J.M. (Mike) Wonsik assumed command of the St. Paul District in a change of command ceremony on July 12. Wonsik became the district's 56th district engineer.

High water reached 942 feet at Lac qui Parle reservoir near Watson, Minn., and flooded out the summer visitors at a nearby Minnesota state park, eroded roads and inundated farm land.

### AUGUST

Acting assistant secretary of the Army (civil works), Dr. John H. Zirschky, proposed restructuring



St. Paul District file photo

Above, Project Engineer Lisa Lund of the La Crosse Resident Office is pictured at the Lake Onalaska Project. Major construction on the \$3.3 million project was completed in November 1995.

Corps districts, without closing a district headquarters in the U.S.

Dean Peterson, the former area engineer in the Eastern Area Office in Winona, Minn., became the first project manager for the district's new Mississippi River Project Office in Fountain City, Wis.

Lock and Dam No. 1 held its annual open house as part of Highland Fest.

## SEPTEMBER

Retirees and district employees gathered at the 20th annual "Old Timers Reunion" in St. Paul.

Major projects in Rochester and St. Paul were dedicated and major rehabilitation at Lock & Dam No. 2 was completed.

Process action teams (PATs) reported favorable results in their efforts to improve processes and cut costs. The PATs looked at:

- blanket purchase agreements (BPA);
- biddability, constructibility, and operability (BCO);
- federal information processing (FIP);

- plant replacement and improvement (PRIP);
- DA form 3953 (Purchase Request and Commitment); and
- travel orders.

The President signed the Corps' appropriations bill, thus averting furloughs in the district.

For Fiscal Year 1995, the St. Paul District led the nation in savings as determined by value engineering studies. The district received credit for \$10.3 million in savings for the fiscal year.

## OCTOBER

The BPA PAT completed its objective to streamline the purchase process.

The district conducted its annual Combined Federal Campaign drive. Employees exceeded their goal of \$27,000 and pledged more than \$32,000.

David DePoint, CO, was awarded the Legion of Merit by Major General George J. Steiner, commander of the 88th Regional Support Command, U.S. Army Reserve. The award was the highest

honor bestowed upon a soldier during peacetime.

More than 300 attended Diversity Appreciation Week.

Three public meetings for the updated channel maintenance plan were held in communities along the river.

## NOVEMBER

Major construction on the \$3.3 million Lake Onalaska spillway rehabilitation was completed, with water flowing through the structure at 500 cubic feet per second.

Meeting a 45-day deadline, a draft Contingency Plan to combat flooding at Devils Lake, N.D. was released.

Ken Tschida, former lockmaster at Lock & Dam No. 2, was selected as the new Upper Area Lockmaster, replacing Arden Duval, who announced his retirement.

## DECEMBER

Joe Dvorak, former lockmaster at Lock & Dam No. 1 in Minneapolis, became the new lockmaster at Lock & Dam No. 2 in Hastings.

The Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway Navigation Study team held two of five open houses in the district and gave the public a progress report and sought feedback on the study.

More than 240 people, including employees and retirees, gathered for annual Holiday Awards Ceremony at the Southview Country Club.

Installation of lock operating machinery began at Lock & Dam No. 1 in Minneapolis and Lock & Dam No. 9 in Prairie du Chien.

The Rivers and Harbors Unit de-watered Lower St. Anthony Falls as part of a program of scheduled maintenance. The maintenance is estimated to cost about \$500,000. De-watering is scheduled for completion in March 1996.

## Bits and Pieces

### District Restructuring Task Force reviews comments

The District Restructuring Task Force met the first two weeks of November and completed its review of feedback on the proposed restructuring guidance. The task force compared the feedback to the initial guidance and recommended several revisions to the guidance. The recommendations were presented to a steering committee in December 1995.

The feedback reviewed by the task force included more than 1,400 pages of comments from Corps customers, employees, commanders and others. The draft report and videotape arrived in the district in late December. The current schedule calls for final guidance to be announced sometime next spring or early summer. The Secretary of the Army must approve the steering committee's recommendations. (See COL Wonsik's column, page 2.)

### Reader's Digest book about Mississippi includes Corps of Engineers

Reader's Digest books Travels and Adventures series just published a book highlighting features along the Mississippi River from Lake Itasca, Minn., to the Gulf of Mexico.

Titled *Down the Mississippi*, the hard-bound book features three historic photos of the river by famed Corps of Engineers photographer Henry P. Bosse and a present-day photo by Marc Krumholtz of Construction-Operations. The book includes an archival photo of roller gate machinery (misabeled as flood control machinery) and an unidentified Corps employee at Lock & Dam No. 7, La Crescent, Minn.

Reader's Digest also gave a special thanks to John Anfinson, district historian, for his help with the book.

### Fit or Fat

Employees are invited to a series of videos presented by the U.S. Public Health Service's Federal Occupational Health Unit entitled "Fit or Fat." This video series will be shown every Wednesday from January 3 to April 3 (except January 17). They will be shown in room 136 of the Federal Courthouse Building in St. Paul from 12:15 p.m. to 12:45 p.m. There is no charge. Attendance is optional.

Previously shown on public television, "Fit or Fat" by Covert Bailey cuts through the conflicting advice on how to eat properly and stay slim through the common sense approach from Bailey, a lecturer and biochemist. Based on his decades of physiological study and research, Bailey dispels many common practices associated with dieting, weight loss and exercise. Bailey's inimitable speaking ability makes this a "don't miss" series. His knowledge of fitness, coupled with his magnetic personality and humor are fantastically motivating, according to Mary Street, Human Resources (HR). No sign up is necessary. Just bring a friend and brown bag it. For more information, contact Street in HR at extension 5492.



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## Crosscurrents

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Art Schollmeier died on Dec. 21, 1995, at age 72 in Mission, Texas. He retired from the district in Dec. 1979 after 37 years of service. He worked at the Fountain City Service Base and in the old Procurement Branch.