



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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March 2002

## Flood preparations start early at the district

By Shannon Bauer

Old man winter might be taking it easy this year, but St. Paul District emergency managers and flood-control specialists aren't taking any chances.

Preparing for spring flooding takes place annually at the district.

"Although it appears the chance of flooding is minimal at this time, the flooding outlook can very quickly change, based on snow and rainfall," said Chief of Readiness Dave Christensen. "Last winter's snowfall wasn't record breaking, but

it didn't melt until early April, when it started to rain. The melting of the snow in combination with the heavy rains contributed greatly to the flooding."

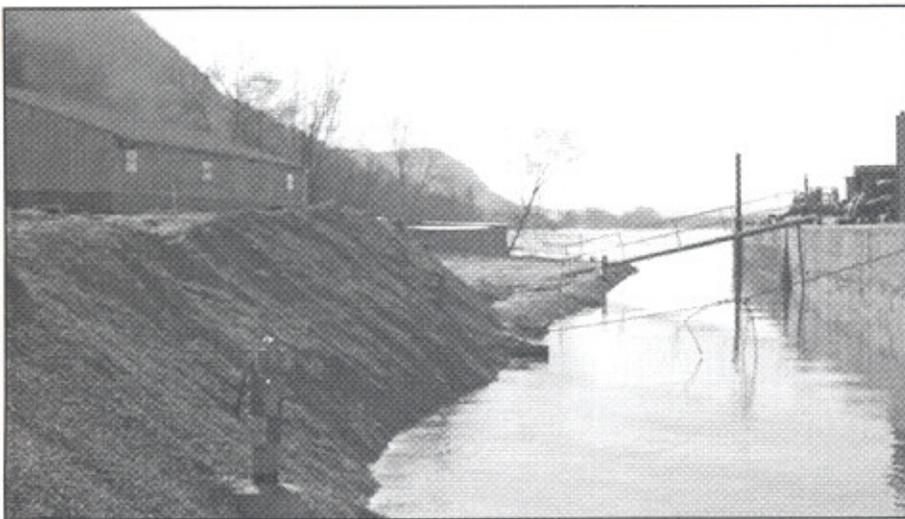
District members started the preparations last fall. They've been meeting with other government emergency workers and training for various flood scenarios. They practiced working in the emergency operations center and refreshed themselves on ENGLINK, an emergency operations software application. An inventory of the sandbags and pumps was

completed, as well as a review of the flood response plan.

This time last spring, the district faced major flood levels in the Red River of the North and Minnesota River basins. At the same time, the Mississippi River levels neared the flooding record at several locations, and stages were the second highest on record for most of the river's stem. According to Christensen, experiences during the previous year's flooding were analyzed to see what improvements could be made.

"We saw we needed to have more backup people trained and ready for long-term flood solutions," said Christensen. "We had emergency operations going for more than a month, and we put a strain on our people."

In fact, more than 125 district and temporary personnel participated in the flood fight. More than 3.3 million sandbags were provided and 84 emergency pumps were lent out to communities in three states. More than 20 miles of emergency levees were designed for 10 communities in three river basins. The flood fight cost around \$5 million in advance and emergency measures and prevented around \$27 million in damages.



St. Paul District file photo

**Fountain City Service Base flood preparations were put in place for 2001 spring flooding.**

# Understanding APIC

By Mark Davidson

APIC or Army Performance Improvement Criteria. Another government acronym? How long have we been doing this and why? Where are we in the APIC journey?

To start with, APIC is a framework for continuous quality improvement. It's based on the Malcolm Baldrige criteria for performance excellence, a national quality award for private industry.

APIC provides a common framework for all Army organizations to measure how well they are meeting their stated goals and customer needs. Thousands of businesses and government entities at all levels use the Baldrige criteria to evaluate themselves and

improve their performance for their customers, similar to how Army installations are using APIC.

The Army developed and implemented APIC in 1995. The St. Paul District has been using APIC since 1999. It's critical to



understand that continuous quality improvement is just that – a continuous process. We will be using APIC, or some other similar framework, for our quality improvement efforts into the future.

APIC is customer driven and is designed to get results based upon a customer focus. You have to know

who your customers are and what they want from you. Surveys are the best tool to know what your customers want.

The framework for APIC is built on seven categories. They are: leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management and business results.

If you go to the District's intranet site at: [http://mvpjiiis/mangmnt\\_info/qual\\_improv/offsite2002/](http://mvpjiiis/mangmnt_info/qual_improv/offsite2002/), you'll find out more about what the district's senior leaders and APIC team are doing these days.

APIC is a framework for improvement, not a program that demands a presence. It's in the background, providing a means to see our organization systemically. Whether you know it or not APIC is here. Learn more by visiting the website or talking to those who have knowledge of APIC.

*(Contributions from Marsha Mose, Chuck Spitzack, Jim Mosner and Russell Williams for this article.)*



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**Crosscurrents**

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The district has begun putting into place a system that will help us create business process documentation and distribute it to the workforce in a web-based environment. The system is called "Oracle Tutor" and will be commonly referred to as "tutor."

At this point, the district leadership would like your ideas as to what business processes you think would be worthwhile to document and put online for use by yourself or others. Once your input is received, the data will be placed into a spreadsheet, organized and prioritized. Then,

the leadership will make a plan as to how to create the documentation.

Keep in mind that this will be an ongoing, long-term process. The leadership will not only need to create the documentation but also keep it current and relevant.

Send your process ideas, why you think it's important that these processes be documented and who would be the most knowledgeable person to be responsible for creating these processes, to Jim Mosner, either via email or by fax (651-290-5686).

## Lock and Dam No. 8 employees now heroes

By Shannon Bauer

The quick actions of the Lock and Dam No. 8 employees contributed to saving the lives of two Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources workers late-February.

Corps members Doug Blexrud, Russ Bolton and James Greene, as well as four contractors working on the dam from Schwab Company,

pulled one of the DNR workers out of a dangerous situation about a half-mile north of Lock and Dam No. 8 after heavy winds caused their airboat to capsize. The DNR employees were taking water quality samples for the Upper Mississippi Environmental Management Program.

Corps employees noticed a cooler floating upstream of the lock and dam and shut the controls off. Greene said he stayed behind to assist by radio and call 911, while the rest of the individuals working at the dam went to find any survivors from the sunken airboat.

They found the other DNR worker on a bridge over the dam, trying to get attention for help in rescuing his partner from the riprap. Blexrud

spotted the partner trying to make his way up over riprap about 1,500 feet up from the dam and helped him out of the river.

Although DNR workers wore hypothermia suits, they had taken in lots of frigid water. Corps employees brought them inside and treated them for hypothermia, while they waited for the ambulance to arrive.

"It all happened in about a half-hour," said Greene. "Blexrud did an outstanding job."

Both DNR workers were treated at Gunderson Lutheran Hospital in La Crosse, Wis., and released that day. "That guy [the one pulled out of the river] was one lucky individual," said Greene. "He made it home that night."



Photo courtesy of Lock and Dam No. 8

Left to right are: Jamie Rettler, Brian McNichols, Dave Dejno, Kraig Hoff, Jim Fischer, Jim Greene, Dan Glasspool, Doug Blexrud and Russ Bolton.

## District employee puts love of history to good use

By Shannon Bauer

Cross Lake park manager Ray Nelson spent much of his free time during the last two-and-a-half years submerging himself in history for the benefit of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Corps officials handpicked him and five others from different districts to develop a discovery box in celebration of the bicentennial commemoration of Lewis and Clark's expedition to the west coast. USACE intends to mass produce the discovery box and deliver it to Corps recreation sites across the nation that can utilize its interpretive potential.

Since USACE manages more of the Lewis and Clark trail miles than any other government or private entity, Corps leadership decided an Educational discovery box would be a wonderful way to spread the message of how important to North America the Army's role was within the Lewis and Clark expedition and to make sure the many Corps park rangers were all spreading an accurate message. Jean Nauss, USACE Lewis and Clark national coordinator, asked for volunteers to make up a taskforce and develop such a box.

"I applied because I've been interested in this area of history for around 27 years or so," said Nelson. "I did some graduate study work in human relations, focusing somewhat



Photo courtesy of Ray Nelson

**Dressed in a trapper's garb, park manager Ray Nelson displays a beaver pelt to visitors at the Cross Lake recreation center.**

on the Indian/white contact fur trade time period. I've studied and accumulated a useful library of primary sources relating to that time period in history."

He said the group was charged with developing a focus for the box, as well as to decide what to put in it. "We started researching other agency groups who'd designed similar boxes, and we found no one had previously focused on the military aspects of the journey," he said. "We had a lot of research to do."

Their group read several of the journals written by Lewis and Clark and the members who traveled with them and decided the Army values kept appearing as a great topic in many of the entries. The values, which include duty and discipline, loyalty, personal courage, selfless service and respect, honor and integrity, were things everybody could relate to and interpret, said Nelson. The group decided to focus this box on these values and

assigned each task force member a different value to research.

Nelson took on respect, honor and integrity. He centered his research on Lewis and Clark's interaction with the Indian tribes they met during their journey and how the exploring party related to each other by showing mutual respect, displaying integrity and honoring each other with gifts. Some of the items he selected as artifacts for his portion of the box included military medals, beads, a beaver pelt and a 15-star American flag.

"We wanted to make sure the items in the box were durable and could be handled by lots of kids," said Nelson. As an example, he said he'd previously thought of how to incorporate an air rifle, the kind Lewis and Clark used on their journey to impress the Indians, but it couldn't, obviously, be brought into schools. Instead, he designed for the box a poster to show and inform

*(Continued on Page 11)*

# O'Leary takes over at the Headwaters

New Headwaters project operations manager John O'Leary began his new career with the Corps of Engineers last month with a



**O'Leary**

whirlwind tour of the St. Paul District Office and Headwaters field sites. "The word 'family' best describes the atmosphere here," said O'Leary, describing his new job. "Corps employees are extraordinarily dedicated to their jobs and to the Corps mission.

"In addition, I am fortunate to have inherited a very capable and seasoned staff that cares for one another, both personally and professionally. Although I have only

been with the Corps for a few weeks, they have made me feel right at home," he said.

O'Leary replaced Roland Hamburg, who served as acting operations manager for more than a year. His duties include supervising six dam and recreation sites in the Headwaters area. His office will be located at Lake Pokegema in Grand Rapids, Minn.

O'Leary brings long personal and professional ties to this area. He grew up in East Grand Forks, Minn., graduated from St. John's Prep School, Collegetown, Minn., and earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

Prior to joining the Corps, O'Leary served as the executive director of the Urban Development

Office in Grand Forks and was the director of the Lewis and Clark Regional Council in Bismarck/Mandan, N.D.

Some of the highlights of O'Leary's career include developing the Town Square in downtown Grand Forks, N.D.; the Riverbank Park along the banks of the Red River of the North; and numerous urban "pocket parks."

"The Corps of Engineers is one of the most respected governmental agencies because of the remarkable professionalism and competency found at all levels," said O'Leary. "People have come to view the Corps as a center of excellence, and so I am genuinely honored by this opportunity to join the team.

O'Leary is married and has two adult daughters.

## Corps ecologist builds his own wetlands

By Shannon Bauer

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wetland ecologist Jerry Smith, who works out of the Green Bay regulatory field office, brought some work home with him.

Ten years ago, he purchased a farm in Lena, Wis., and then worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to turn several acres of it into wetlands. Once consisting of corn stubble, these lands today attract many species of birds, waterfowl and other wildlife.



**Smith**

"Wetlands are being lost at an alarming rate," said Smith. "This was just a small contribution towards the no net-loss of wetlands policy. "Basically, as a wildlife biologist and wetland ecologist, I deal with this most days at work, and I wanted to do it as an extension of my job," he explained. "But also, when I'm not doing wetlands, I have an interest in birds and this was a means to diversify my property and attract a wider variety of species."

Smith's first spring in his new home, he watched pools of water from his window and then watched to see where the water left his property. He then shot a number of elevations and figured out where suitable locations for restoration or creation of wetlands might occur.

Because of his work connections with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, he knew they offered programs where citizens could obtain grants to build wetlands on private property. He called them, and the agency offered to build him some wetlands, providing he agreed to not remove the work for 10 years.

On the south 40 acres of his property, the agency constructed three shallow scrapes, or depressions, as well as two ditch plugs, to retain water. On the north 40 acres, they constructed a long dike to impound water. Additionally, on the east, they built a dike to keep the water off of the neighbor's property.

"It was completely amazing," said Smith. "In the fall,

*(Continued on Page 11)*

## Quest for Earhart takes up much of engineer's spare time

By Shannon Bauer

Explorer, detective, historian, archeologist, author – just some of the titles St. Paul District hydrologic engineer Kenton Spading holds when he's not at work.

For at least 10 years now, Spading's devoted some of his off-duty time to volunteering with a nonprofit group, the International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery or TIGHAR, to include participating in several expeditions to unearth what really happened to aviator-hero Amelia Earhart, as well as other aviation-related mysteries.

His book, "Amelia Earhart's Shoes," which he co-authored, debuted in October 2001.

"I've always been interested in mysteries like the disappearance of Earhart and who shot John F. Kennedy," said Spading to explain his passion. "In particular, I've always been interested in applying rigorous scientific methods to historical research. That means recognizing the difference between a hypothesis and a proven fact, and applying rules to the interpretation of evidence.

"Engineers tend to be methodical and detail-orientated," he continued. "We don't like unanswered questions like ... what happened to Amelia Earhart? We like everything in a neat row."

Spading learned about TIGHAR in



Photo courtesy of Kenton Spading

**St. Paul District hydrologic engineer Kenton Spading searches for evidence of Amelia Earhart on Nikumaroro Island in the South Pacific.**

1991, when he read a newspaper article about their research into Earhart's disappearance. He said one of the researchers lived in St. Cloud, Minn., so he called him to ask for more information and ended up being talked into joining the organization.

One of the notices in TIGHAR's newsletter announced the organization was looking for volunteers to go on an expedition to the island of Nikumaroro, located in the South Pacific, to find, photograph and, if possible, recover

evidence relating to the disappearance of Earhart.

The first woman to fly across the Atlantic and the first female to set any altitude or speed records, Earhart paved the way for women in aviation, as well as the business world. She disappeared with Fred Noonan while trying to fly around the world on July 2, 1937. Despite numerous attempts to find her, no trace of her or her aircraft were ever found.

Earhart was extremely famous back in the 1930s. Spading

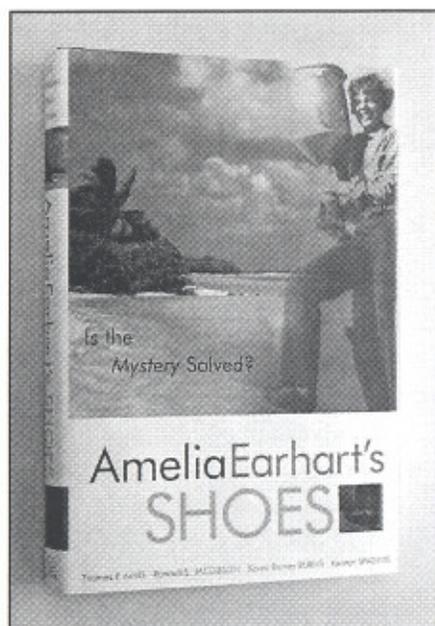


Photo by Anna Wetterling

**Spading co-authored the book, "Amelia Earhart's Shoes," published by AltaMira Press © 2001.**

explained, "There weren't as many celebrities back then, as there are now. There was also an excitement about the relatively new field of aviation at the time, and Earhart, being a female aviator, at a time when professional women were very rare, drew a lot of attention. Her disappearance was a shock to the world and made her a legend. Soon, there were many theories about her disappearance."

Around 14 years ago, TIGHAR started its research, believing Earhart and Noonan to have landed alive on Nikumaroro and then dying sometime shortly thereafter. They needed evidence to prove their theory and an expedition team to find it.

Spading applied and had to complete a two-day course in aviation archeology, as well as work seven days at a field site, or a mini-boot camp to see if he could survive harsh conditions and work well with

a team, before being selected to go.

TIGHAR chose him, and he ended up on an expedition to Nikumaroro Island in 1997 and Kanton Island in 1998. He also conducted archival research for the Earhart project in England, Kiribati, Tuvalu, New Zealand and the United States.

In addition, he became interested in TIGHAR's Midnight Ghost Project, which involves trying to find the French aviators who attempted to be the first to cross the Atlantic shortly before Charles Lindberg but disappeared somewhere en route. He went on four expeditions into the New Foundland wilderness in Canada in an attempt to find the wreckage from this failed flight.

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His contributions to TIGHAR's research projects included applying his engineering and computer skills to serve as the group's technology and remote sensing coordinator. "One of the technologies we use senses the conductivity of the earth," said Spading. "So if there were, for example, human remains or aircraft parts buried in the earth, we'd be able to find them. ... Law enforcement uses this kind of technology all the time to find gravesites.

"What is fascinating to me is a lot of times clues to a mystery are buried in a dusty archive somewhere," he said about his role. "There are things out there; you just got to dig to find them."

Although the research group has found no conclusive evidence to Earhart's disappearance on Nikumaroro to date, despite six expeditions, they've found several artifacts to suggest she might have landed there, including pieces of an aircraft and a shoe similar to Earhart's. In addition, a British colonial officer found a skeleton, with what appeared to be pieces of a women's shoe, on the island in 1940, all of which has since been lost.

ABC documented one of the expeditions, as well as the group's research. Two one-hour specials were made for the network's Discovery Channel and Turning Point series.

Spading's book, which he wrote with three others, details the evidence found and the means with which it was found. It took them more than a year-and-a-half to write, he said, and involved lots of emails, meetings and rewritings. "We had one point, where we almost broke up. Everyone was arguing," he said. "We were able to get back to it after a cooling-off period."

The publicity done by his publisher is now starting to pay off, he said. He's receiving a little notoriety and a few calls to do interviews and book signings.

"My family and friends are really excited about this," he said. "They keep asking me for inside information."

# District member completes Corps leadership development program

by Shannon Bauer

Lock and dam operations engineer Leon Mucha's graduation from the Engineers and Scientists, or CP-18, Leadership Development Program last October, made him the first member of St. Paul District to complete this program.

Maj. Thomas O'Hara, Jr., deputy district engineer, presented Mucha with his program completion certificate at a district-wide presentation Feb. 22.

The leadership development program consists of formal classroom training, mentoring and a six-month developmental assignment in an effort to provide leadership training and opportunities for mid-level managers. Its purpose is to develop a high performing and diverse cadre of engineers and scientists. It replaced the CP-18 Executive Development Program in 1998.

"It was a great learning opportunity," said Mucha. "It was encouraging to find out there are a lot of good middle managers out there [throughout the government] who care about their jobs and are trying to do well."

Of the 290 people who started the program, he said, only 38 graduated so far. Of the 38 completions, 12 are from the Mississippi Valley Division. Scott Baker, La Crosse resident engineer, is nearing completion of the program.

To graduate, Mucha completed coursework in leadership, management, supervision and public



Photo by Anna Wetterling

**Maj. Thomas O'Hara presents an award to Leon Mucha for completion of the CP-18 Leadership Development Program.**

policy issues. The training included the three-month Sustaining Business Leadership and Management course at the Army Management Staff College at Fort Belvoir, Washington, D.C.

While at the college, Mucha won third place in the Class 00-2 writing contest. His article, titled, "Team Building is Needed for Small Teams, Too," is one of the articles available for viewing at: [http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/articles\\_archives.htm#003](http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/articles_archives.htm#003).

Mucha also completed a five-month internship at Rock Island District, where he assisted in managing the construction of rehabilitating Lock and Dam 14 and the design for rehabilitation of Lock and Dam 12, which is now under construction.

"I enjoyed the Rock Island detail," said Mucha. "It was a wonderful opportunity to meet the

hard working and conscientious people in our neighboring district. I learned much from their open and creative work environment."

While out of district for the extended absences required throughout the program, Mucha continued to perform as many of his position duties as possible but wishes to thank Denise Julson, Jeff Gulan and Dean Peterson for their assistance in performance of the items he could not accomplish.

Mucha also expressed gratitude to Dave Haumersen for

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"It was a great learning opportunity. It was encouraging to find out there are a lot of good middle managers out there [throughout the government] who care about their jobs and are trying to do well."

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encouraging him to apply for the leadership program, when Haumersen was his career guidance counselor; Dean Peterson for supporting the program as his supervisor; Al Geisen for serving as his program mentor; and John Bailen for his support as the St. Paul District program director.

Of his mentor, Geisen, Mucha reports, "He was fabulous. Plus, he's got a lot of good goose hunting stories."

## First camper of the season visits Blackhawk Park

Wisconsin's Blackhawk Park spotted its first camper of the season Feb. 22.

The Corps of Engineers-owned park is located three miles north of De Soto, Wis., and 30 miles south of La Crosse, Wis. It is the largest public-use facility in Pool 9 of the mighty Mississippi River.

"We don't even charge this time of the year, as it's too cold to even

turn on the electricity and water," said Tom Novak, USACE park manager. "But then again, it's been an abnormally warm winter."

The camping season at Blackhawk Park begins normally during the second or third week of April. There are 150 campsites, both single and double, located along the shoreline, providing campers with a view of the river, as well as fishing docks and boat ramps. Other amenities include showers, playgrounds, picnic shelters, a volleyball court and a beach.

To make reservations, see

[www.reserveusa.com](http://www.reserveusa.com) or call 1-877-444-6777 toll free. To contact the park directly, call 608-648-3314.

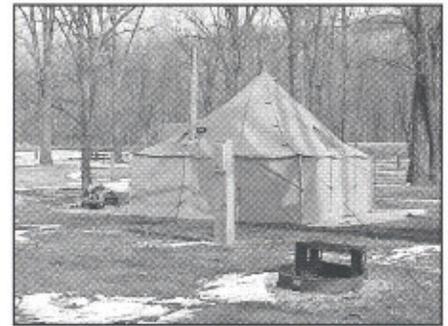


Photo provided by Tom Novak

**Camper set up their tent at Blackhawk Park.**

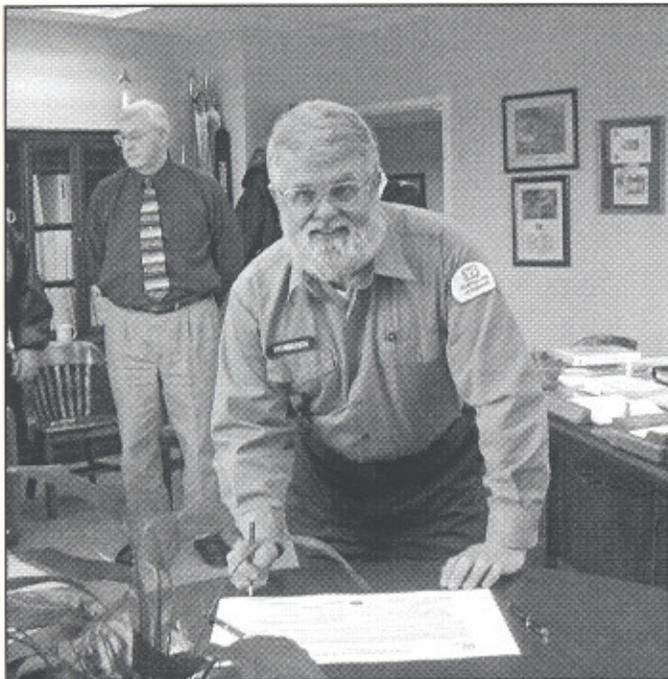


Photo by Shannon Bauer

Lockmaster and American Federation of Government Employees Chapter 1441 secretary and treasurer Carl Brommerich signed a Partnership Council Charter and Partnership Council Agreement last month. The charter lays out the principles on how management and workers cooperate to ensure an effective and efficient working environment, while the agreement spells out the procedures to ensure the same thing. Other signers included AFGE 1441 president Bill Neeley; vice president Bob Stone; district engineer Col. Robert Ball, construction operations division assistant chief Ben Wopat and civilian personnel chief Linda Krueger.

## First tug arrives in St. Paul

The first tow of the year arrived in St. Paul on Saturday morning, March 16, marking the beginning of this year's navigation season.

The REGGIE G, a tug operated by Alter Barge Line of Bettendorf, Iowa, and loaded with eight full barges, left Lock and Dam No. 2 in Hastings, Minn., at 4:55 a.m. and arrived in St. Paul before noon. On Friday, this tug had been stuck in the ice on Lake Pepin. Disconnecting its barges, the towboat crew went farther up into the lake to break ice.

The average opening date of the navigation season in St. Paul for the last 30 years is March 20. The earliest date for the last 30 years was March 2 in 1998. Last year, because of flooding on the Mississippi River, navigation season did not begin in St. Paul until May 11, which was the latest opening in 30 years.

More tows have passed through Lock and Dam No. 2 since Saturday, and the navigation season has begun. The lock at Upper St. Anthony Falls will reopen to navigation March 20.

# Federal employees' political dos and don'ts

By Ed Bankston

As this year's political race speeds up, it's important for federal employees to know how the federal law applies in regards to participating in political activities.

All federal employees are subject to the provisions of the Hatch Act, 5 U.S.C., chapter 73, subchapter III. Although the Hatch Act imposes some restrictions on the political activities of federal employees, federal employees are free to engage in a wide range of political activities.

Before engaging in any political activity, a federal employee should make sure the contemplated activity is permitted under the Hatch Act. Violations of Hatch Act provisions are punishable at a minimum by a 30-day suspension without pay and may result in removal.

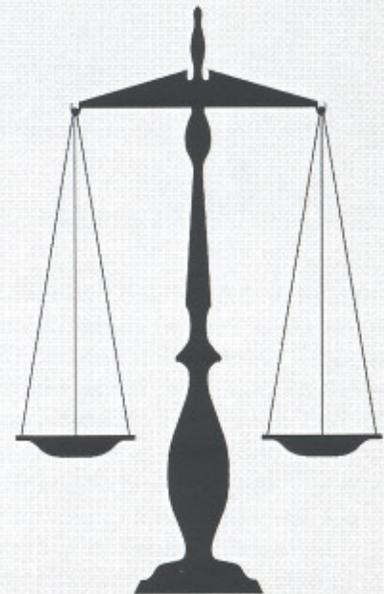
Should you have any questions whether a specific activity is permitted, please contact the St. Paul District Corps of Engineers Office of Counsel for advice (Ed Bankston at 651-290-5500 or Steve Adamski at 651-290-5498). Other sources for information include the Office of Special Counsel website at <http://www.osc.gov/hatch>.

## Specifically, federal employees may:

- ❖ Register and vote as they choose
- ❖ Sign nominating petitions
- ❖ Campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, and municipal ordinances
- ❖ Assist in voter registration drives
- ❖ Express opinions about candidates and issues
- ❖ Distribute campaign literature in partisan and nonpartisan elections
- ❖ Make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan and nonpartisan elections
- ❖ Campaign for and against candidates in partisan and nonpartisan elections
- ❖ Contribute money to political organizations
- ❖ Attend and be an active member of a political party or club
- ❖ Join and be an active member of a political party or club
- ❖ Hold office in political parties or clubs
- ❖ Attend political fundraising functions
- ❖ Be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections (ones that do not involve political parties)

## However, federal employees may not:

- ❖ Be candidates for public office in partisan elections
- ❖ Use official authority or influence to interfere with an election
- ❖ Solicit or discourage political activity of anyone with business before their agency
- ❖ Solicit or receive political contributions (may be done in certain limited situations by federal labor or other employee organizations)
- ❖ Engage in political activity while on duty, in a government office, wearing an official uniform or using a government vehicle
- ❖ Wear partisan political buttons on duty



## Nelson

(Continued from Page 6)

people on how innovative the air rifle was, it being the closest thing to an automatic firearm at the time – “a great curiosity.”

The discovery box will also include background materials and project ideas for each of the values in a guidebook. Nelson explained, “Its purpose is to give the park rangers somewhere to start in setting up their displays and developing their programs.”

The project has bloomed since its first conception, however. According to Nelson, USACE now has a list of several non-Corps organizations that want a box, as well. “Several people have contacted me,” he said, “and I tell them to please be patient. It’s not done yet.”

In the meantime, Nelson’s been asked by several groups, such as the National Association of Historical Interpreters and local schools, to speak on Lewis and Clark. “They then find out I work for the Corps, and I usually also end up arranging a tour and speaking about the dam, recreation and operations,” he said.

Nelson started working for the Corps 25 years ago, serving as a park ranger for 13 years and a park manager the last 12. He said he’s done a lot of interpretive programming throughout the years, but he learned a lot of beneficial knowledge working on this discovery box and gained some personal satisfaction.

“I learned how much I didn’t know,” he said.



Photos by Jerry Smith

**Top photo shows construction of one of the wetlands areas Jerry Smith, district wetlands ecologist, built on his own land. Bottom photo displays the finished project.**

## Smith

(Continued from Page 6)

it was bone dry; and by spring, it was full of water ... It now is about 2.5 acres in size, mostly shallow in depth.”

Since the wetlands have been there, he said, a variety of waterfowl have nested there, as well as other wildlife.

In the spring and fall, during migration time, he continued, hundreds of birds stop to visit. Since 1991, he’s seen 187 different species within a half-mile of his home, including sandhill cranes, blue-wing teal, hooded mergansers, sora and Virginia rails. Canadian geese, mallards and wood ducks have nested.

Smith keeps track of the different varieties, as he is a birder by hobby. He and his wife often travel to other areas of the country, viewing the scenery and observing birds.

He is one of four Wisconsin residents that bands breeding songbirds in a program that monitors songbird populations. Since 1993, he has also been banding Northern Saw-

whet Owls on his north property from late September to early November, in order to monitor seasonal movements and reproduction status.

He attracted the birds during fall migration with a courtship tape recording, then nets them and processes the birds at his house. This involves checking the nets three times a night throughout the banding season. He said he bands just over several hundred each year.

Living in the woods and next to wetlands just feeds his hobby. “In the state of Wisconsin, there are 410 different kinds of birds that occur, some only occasionally,” he said. “Last year, we saw more than 300 in the state, for the first time.”

And now that his 10 years are up for keeping his Fish and Wildlife-produced wetlands, Smith said he doesn’t intend to mess with them. In 1996, in fact, he purchased 40 more acres of mostly wetlands.

## Bits and Pieces

### Linder named January'02 Employee of the Month



Photo by Jon Lyman

Kris Fairbanks nominated Dawn Linder, contracting, stating, "I am honored to work with someone as knowledgeable, conscientious and genuine as Dawn. ... Her ability to organize and maintain an incredible volume of work under heavy time constraints is nothing short of incredible. As if all this weren't enough, she is very patient and understanding when deadlines and tempers are short or when teaching new concepts. More importantly, Dawn is a trusted friend and confidant to many of her coworkers. She is the first to send a card to a coworker or decorate a cube at a birthday. In this way, she promotes morale and generosity among her team."

### New faces, new places

**Russ Arneson** was selected as the new chief of Internal Review.

Previously, he worked for the 88th Regional Support Command, Fort Snelling, Minn., from 1997 to 2002, serving as the deputy comptroller in 1997 and in the internal review office from 1998-



**Arneson**

2002. From 1970-1996, he worked as an accountant and cash manager at Minnesota Power. He has served as an Army Reserve officer for 32 years, serving 20 years with an engineering branch and 12 with a finance branch. Currently, he is an active member of the American Society of Military Comptrollers. He is married and has one adult son.

**Laird Draves** of the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center in San Diego is temporarily working at the district for three months to gain additional contracting experience. At SPAWAR, which is a Department of the Navy communications laboratory specializing in command, control, communications, computers,



**Draves**

surveillance and intelligence, Draves serves as a contract negotiator and evaluates and awards engineering and research and development contracts. Here, he will work on disaster relief and construction-type contracts. Draves is originally from the Brainard area in Minnesota and enjoys being back, despite the change in climate.

**Amy Rothstein** was recently selected as the new district budget officer. She previously served as a budget analyst in the St. Paul District resource management office. Rothstein started with the district in 1990 as an accounting intern. Since then,



**Rothstein**

she has worked in a variety of resource management positions, including manpower, revolving funds, systems and budget analysis.

As the budget officer, her new duties consist of performing a wide range of administrative and analytical duties in the formulation, presentation and execution of the district's budget; budget formulation; and receiving, distributing and administering all funds issued to the district; and identifying problems and recommending solutions.

#### Wanted: Your news!

PAO is seeking information about special events in your life (e.g., births, deaths, marriages, engagements). If you would like to share these items, please contact Shannon Bauer at 651-290-5108, or send an e-mail to [shannon.l.bauer@mvp02.usace.army.mil](mailto:shannon.l.bauer@mvp02.usace.army.mil).