



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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January-February 2009

**January at Pokegama Recreation Area
on the Mississippi River Headwaters**

Photo by Tammy Wick



Photo by Tammy Wick

The Pokegama Recreation Area, managed by the St. Paul District, is situated on the Mississippi River at the western edge of Grand Rapids, Minn. The photo shows an early January morning at the recreation area.

Command Corner
by Col. Jon Christensen
St. Paul District Commander



MVP Teammates,

In 2008, suicidal behavior among Soldiers was at an all time high. A total of 142 Soldiers (including 13 still pending final determination) took their own lives in 2008. Suicides are occurring across every segment of the force – active, guard and reserve; officers and enlisted; deployed, non-deployed and those who have not yet been deployed.

Our talented work force is not immune to the pressures and circumstances that contributed to this suicidal behavior in our Army. Indeed, the pressures and job stresses continue to rise across the St. Paul District. In addition to our regular workload, we have recently added an unprecedented amount of work to include our part in the Hurricane Storm Risk Reduction System in New Orleans and our potential workload increase as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The flooding along the Red River of the North, likely record rises in Devils Lake, and planning for a district headquarters move, only add to the many daily stressors. Pile on with overseas deployments and a weakened national economy, and you soon understand why the leadership in the St. Paul District takes this issue seriously.

This is certainly not business as usual. In an effort to communicate the seriousness of the subject and to reduce the likelihood of losing

someone in the district, we will launch a number of activities designed to educate the work force on the issue of suicides.

As directed by the vice chief of staff of the Army for all Army units, we conducted a suicide prevention stand-down (an opportunity to focus on a particular subject) within a 30-day window between Feb. 15 to March 15. The stand-down followed a chain-teaching program focused on suicide prevention, allowing leaders to communicate with every member of our work force. The chain-teaching period will run March 15 to June 15.

Phase II of the training, which we need to accomplish by July 15, is intended to be offered to both Department of Army civilians and their families. It is optional, of course, for the families, but we will be extending the invitation to them as well.

The key to mitigating risk is leadership, starting with first-line supervisors and their ability to intervene with their employees.

I thank you in advance for putting your full efforts into this training. Suicide is a preventable tragedy. Any suicide is one too many – please join me in helping to ensure we keep all members of the district family safe. As always, thanks for all your hard work and for all that you do.



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Crosscurrents

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inside

- 2 Command Corner**
- 4 District hosts Holiday Awards**
- 6 Survey crew measures Lake Pepin ice to prepare for navigation season**
- 9 St. Paul District barge sinks at Melvin Price Locks and Dam**
- 10 District delivers on Louisiana hurricane response and recovery**
- 12 News and Notes**
- 15 Postcard from Iraq: Matt Emmons and Tony Fares**



Why Crosscurrents is late: Public Affairs priority this winter and spring was the emergency response to record-breaking flooding on the Red River of the North in North Dakota and Minnesota. This meant Crosscurrents was not published for six months.

Public Affairs specialists from throughout the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked alongside hundreds of others around the clock on a successful flood fight for many communities in the Red River basin. Shannon Bauer, St. Paul District public affairs specialist, led media relations directly from Fargo, N.D. She and colleagues in the district and throughout the Corps worked with local, regional, national and international media and posted frequent news updates on the district's web site at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/pressroom/>.

Public Affairs also offered an aggressive posting of current mission-related news, including the district's flood response, with news clips in the PAO News Articles folder, available inside the network fire-wall throughout the district. With the emergency response completed, the January-February issue is being re-booted, to be followed by news on the flood, recognition of the Civil Servants of the Year, the district's contributions to New Orleans' hurricane protection, Employees of the Month, the christening of the Quarters Boat Taggatz, bringing aboard many new employees, retiree news and other events.

More will be published in Crosscurrents on the remarkable success of the emergency response in the coming months.

District hosts Holiday Awards Dec. 16

More than 150 from the St. Paul District attended the annual Holiday Awards ceremony in Oakdale, Minn., Dec. 16. The event featured the Bliia Lee Hmong Dance Group; comedic skits by district employees; a "Reflecting Back," video and slideshow on the year's events at the district; a nostalgic sweater fashion show; an awards presentation; and door prizes. The awards committee arranged for a buffet.

Those recognized were:

Shannon Bauer, public affairs, won second place in the Corps-wide 2007 Herbert A. Kassner Journalism Award competition for her article on the 10th anniversary of the floods of 1997.

Tom Koopmeiners, district deputy for small and disadvantaged business, as the recipient of the Chief of Engineers 2007 Award for the Small Business Programs Specialist. He received his award earlier in December at the Corps of Engineers Small Business Conference in Memphis, Tenn.

Kari Layman, engineering and construction, recently completed the Army Career Program 18 Leadership Development Program.

Lisa Lund, channels and harbors unit, achieved first place in Herbert A. Kassner competition, in "Contribution by a Stringer (Writer) Category" for her article on the hydrographic survey crew mapping the river after the Interstate 35W bridge collapse. A stringer is someone who does not work in a Public Affairs Office.

Tim Meers, lockmaster at Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, received the 2008 USACE Emergency Responder of the Year award (see Page 13).

Dick Otto, Natural Resources Office, LaCrescent, Minn., received a Commander's Award for Civilian Service for outstanding service and contribution to the National Partnership Program during the period of October 2003 to September 2008.

Shelly Shafer, district emergency manger, received the 2008 USACE Emergency Manager of the Year, at that workshop as well (see Page 13).

Scott Tichy, Baldhill Dam-Lake Ashtabula Recreation Area, and **Dave Reynolds**, formerly at Eau Galle Recreation Area, also received Achievement Medals for Civilian Service for their contributions to the National Recreation Reservation Service.

Brian Turner (photo at right), Gull Lake Recreation Area, received an Achievement Medal for Civilian Service for his role in the activation of National Recreation Reservation Service that went live on Oct. 17, 2007.

Team awards: 2008 Chief of Engineers Environmental Honor Award for the Flood Damage Reduction Project in Grand Forks, N.D., and East Grand Forks, Minn. As a result of this project, both cities are now at a certified 100-year flood protection level. The team: **Steve Adamski**, Office of Counsel; **John Albrecht**, Real Estate; **Chris Behling**, Engineering and Construction Division; **Ralph Berger**, EC; **Jay Bushy**, EC; **Rick Carlson**, Project Management Division; **Mike Evenson**, EC; **Tony Fares**, EC; **Rick Femrite**, EC; **John Fisher**, EC; **Virginia Gnabasik**, EC; **Carl Gray**, EC; **Bonnie Greenleaf**, PM; **Tim Grundhoffer**, EC; **Lowell Hanson**, EC; **Rick Hauck**, EC; **Kevin Henricks**, formerly Contracting Division; **Kent Hokens**, EC; **Bill Hurley**, CT; **Stu Jackson**,

Awards, continued on Page 5



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Brian Turner (right), Gull Lake Recreation Area, receives an Achievement Medal for Civilian Service from Col. Jon Christensen, district commander.

Awards, continued from Page 4
 formerly RE; **Craig Johnson, EC**; **Noeun Kol, EC**;
Mark Krenelka, EC; **Jan Lassen, EC**; **Melissa
 Lembke, EC**; **Mike Leshner, EC**; **Dawn Linder, CT**;
Judy Marshall, PM; **Lon Meixner**, Operations
 Division (retired); **Byron Nelson, EC** (retired);
Michael Nelson, EC; **Marilyn Noss, EC**; **Tim
 Paulus, EC**; **Virginia Regorrah, EC**; **Grant Riddick,
 EC**; **Jim Sentz, EC**; **John Shyne, PM**; **Kevin
 Sommerland, RE**; **Tom Stiel, EC**; **Pat Trudel, EC**;
 and **Jim Ulrick, EC**.

**2008 Chief of Engineers Environmental Honor
 Award and USACE Design Team of the Year
 Award** for the Water Level Management for
 Ecosystem Restoration Pool 5 project. As the result of
 this project, the pool has experienced growth of new
 aquatic vegetation on approximately 2,000 acres. The
 team: **Scott Bratten, EC**; **Kurt Brownell, OP**; **Jeff
 DeZellar, PM**; **Jon Hendrickson, EC**; **Scott Jutila,
 EC**; **Dan Kelner, PM**; **Paul Machajewski, OP**; **Dick
 Otto, OP**; **Brad Perkl, PM**; and **Dan Wilcox, PM**.

Eric Johnson, EC, and **Greg Frankosky, PS**, also
 received safety awards.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

**Jim Peak (right), construction branch, accepts a
 Special Safety Achievement Award from Col. Jon
 Christensen, district commander, on behalf of
 members of the Western Area Office in Fargo, N.D.**
 The award recognizes employees' safety
 emphasis in managing contracts that accumulated
 more than 65,000 accident-free man-hours.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Those present at the Holiday Awards Banquet to accept the 2008 Chief of Engineers Environmental
 Honor Award and USACE Design Team of the Year Award (above) are: **Jeff DeZellar, Project
 Management Division**; **Dick Otto, Operations Division**; **Paul Machajewski, OP**; **Brad Perkl, PM**; **Kurt
 Brownell, OP**; and **Dan Wilcox, PM**. All team members are listed in the text above.

Survey crew measures Lake Pepin ice to prepare for navigation season



The survey crew lugged aboard the ice auger and launched the airboat on the Mississippi River ice at Lake Pepin Feb. 18. Their mission was to measure the ice in preparation for the spring navigation season.

Ice, continued on Page 7

Photo by Shannon Bauer



Photos by Shannon Bauer

Kevin Ressie (above photo at left), small craft operator, and Jim Marquardt, survey technician, measured the thickness of the ice on the Mississippi River on Lake Pepin. Photo at right: Ressie uses an auger to drill through the ice. Marquardt holds a gauge to measure ice thickness.

Ice, continued from Page 6

Lake Pepin is located on the Mississippi River between Red Wing, Minn., and Wabasha, Minn. The Corps takes ice measurements at this location each year in support of its navigation mission. It is the location of choice for these measurements, because the lake is the last part of the river to break up, and the current is slower on Lake Pepin than it is on the rest of the river.



Each year, the survey crew uses an airboat to travel on the ice, a portable global positioning system to identify the exact location for taking the measurement, and a measure to gauge the thickness of the ice. In addition to measuring the ice thickness, they also record the general condition of the ice. This data is used by the towing industry to assess best time and safety for towboats to break

through the ice to begin towing to St. Paul, Minn.

The Motor Vessel Deana Ann, a tow operated by Marquette Transportation Company, Inc., Paducah, Ky., locked through the Lock and Dam 4 in Alma, Wis., March 23, at 2:50 a.m. The tow was pushing 15 barges, 12 with agricultural commodities and three empties. The average opening date

Ice, continued on Page 8

Ice, continued from Page 7

of the navigation season in St. Paul for the last 10 years is March 20. For many of those who live in the Midwest, the first tow of the season is the unofficial countdown to spring.

Normally, ice measurements are completed weekly until the navigation season begins. The data are posted on the district's Website at www.mvp.usace.army.mil/navigation.

Members of the news media interviewed Jim Marquardt, survey technician, on the shore of Lake Pepin on the Mississippi River, Feb. 18. Bottom photo, Marquardt and Ressie move out to their next sampling point. The crew went out on the ice four times between Feb. 18 and March 18. About 11 miles downriver of Red Wing, Minn., were open water all winter.



Photos by Shannon Bauer



St. Paul District barge sinks at Melvin Price Locks and Dam

By St. Louis District Public Affairs

A small barge that was a support vessel for the Dredge Dubuque, St. Paul District, sank Dec. 17 downriver of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Melvin Price Locks and Dam near Alton, Ill.

The Dredge Dubuque is a small cutter-head dredge based in Fountain City, Wis. There were no personnel aboard the dredge or barge at the time of the sinking.

The Dredge Dubuque arrived at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam Dec. 15 to winter over inside the

land-side guide wall area, downstream of the locks and dam. The small barge sank there.

Three work pontoons also broke loose and were recovered by personnel from the Melvin Price facility. These same personnel also removed four floating barrels from the water.

A small quantity of oil created a sheen of about 1,500 square feet. It was quickly surrounded with floating absorbent booms available for that purpose by Melvin Price personnel. The U.S. Coast Guard, the Environmental Protection

Agency, and the Illinois E.P.A. were called to the scene. The Coast Guard estimated that a maximum of 40 gallons of oily material may have entered the water, but it was contained.

The St. Louis District sent its floating crane Sewell to the site Dec. 18 to support recovery operations. Divers arrived from the St. Paul District to assess possible damage to the 20-by-60 foot barge and began plans to raise it safely. There is no anticipated environmental damage from the incident.

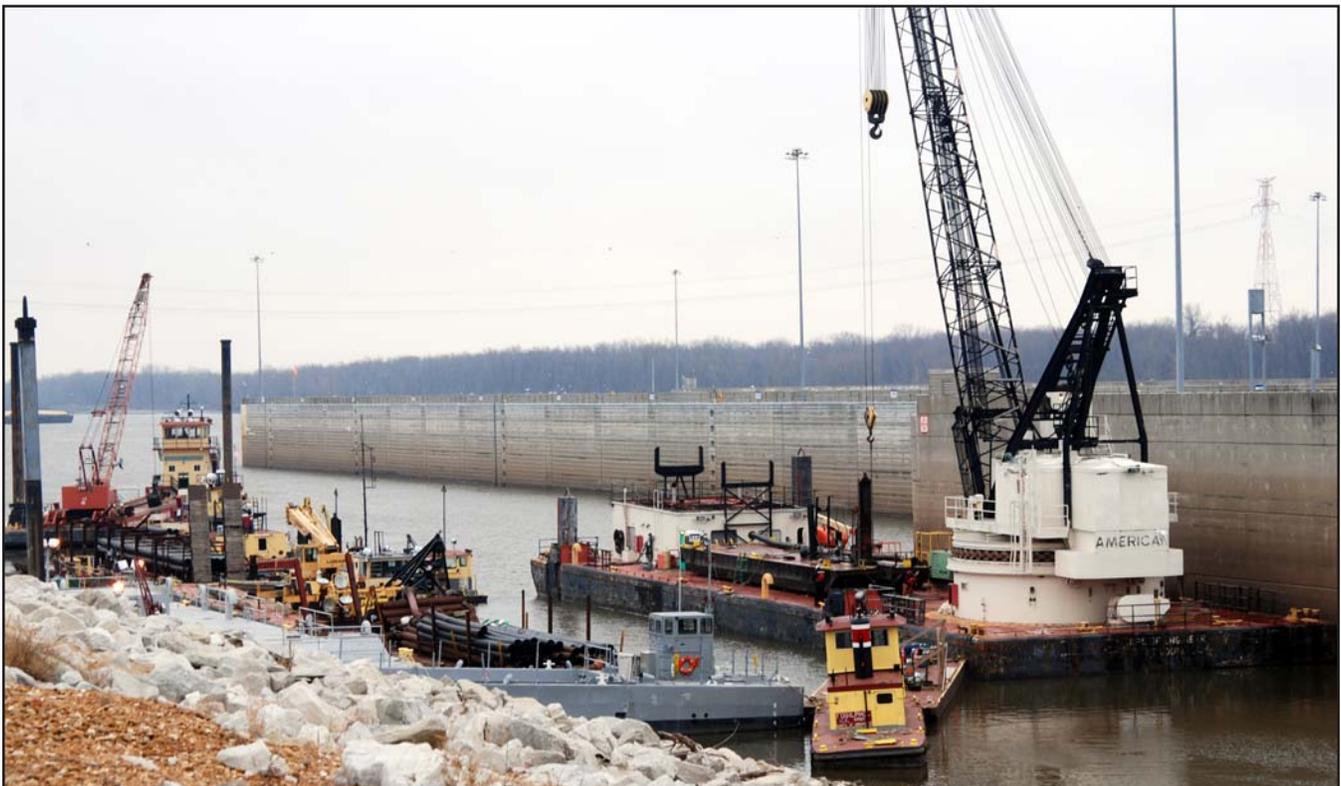


Photo by Alan Dooley

The Crane Barge Sewell, right, lifted a St. Paul District work barge out of the water at Melvin Price Locks and Dam near Alton, Ill., Dec. 20. Recovery operations took place inside the land-side guide-wall downstream of the locks and dam. The work barge that sank supports the Dredge Dubuque mission.

District delivers on Louisiana hurricane response and recovery

By Shannon Bauer

Two hurricanes and two recovery field offices marked the St. Paul District's first official efforts at responding to any Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, assigned hurricane recovery missions needed in Louisiana since being given the mission in 2006.

Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, then the Mississippi Valley Division commander now retired, gave the St. Paul District this mission because the Memphis District, the district originally given the responsibility, was then still actively engaged in hurricane recovery efforts resulting from Hurricane Katrina.

When first tasked, the St. Paul District's emergency management office led the district's effort in developing an operating plan for such a response. This past year, with Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, the district got to try out its operating plan not just once, but twice.

When Hurricane Gustav struck the Louisiana coast Sept. 1, the district was called upon to set up a recovery field office in Baton Rouge, La., and provide a home and support for Corps' commodities, power and roofing planning and response teams. When Hurricane Ike made landfall along the Texas and Louisiana coasts two weeks later, Sept. 13, the mission of the RFO expanded to include recovery efforts in Louisiana caused by this second hurricane.

Yet, the day after the last of these teams had finished their mission and the St. Paul District was about to close up shop in Baton Rouge, FEMA assigned the Corps a Hurricane Ike debris mission in the southwest corner of Louisiana. Within days, the district relocated the RFO from Baton Rouge to Lake Charles, La., to better support this mission.

Shelly Shafer, the district's emergency manager, arrived in Louisiana two days before Hurricane Gustav made landfall. She turned on the lights in Baton Rouge and turned off the lights in Lake Charles.



Although not new to emergency response, having worked 10 hurricanes, seven floods and five other events to include the 9-11-01 terrorist attacks and the Interstate 35W Bridge collapse, it was the first time Shafer served as the emergency manager for a RFO. It was also the district's first time setting up a RFO.

"Back in 1997, there was an office established with the same function in Grand Forks, N.D., for the Red River flood recovery, said Shafer. "The way of doing business, however, has changed drastically since that time. Both FEMA and the Corps have made tremendous strides in disaster response during the past 10 years.

"The most significant change for the Corps has been the establishment of a trained ESF #3 [Emergency Support Function #3, Public Works and Engineering] team leader cadres and planning and response teams for each of the primary missions," she continued. "The Corps and FEMA are joined at the hip, openly sharing lessons and challenges and working together to continually enhance our effectiveness and capabilities."

Standing up a RFO today is essentially opening up a satellite district office with all the support services located there that a district would normally provide. Shafer said it is a challenging task and requires that each team member do his or her job in order for the RFO to be successful. As emergency manager, she said, it was her role to be a conductor – to lead the team, provide guidance and direction as needed and make sure the team has everything it needs to do its job.

The St. Paul District set up its RFO in Baton Rouge in record time, she said. "Within a couple of days of getting the go-ahead and funding from FEMA, we had a fully operational RFO," she explained. "This would not have happened without the valiant efforts of the district's RFO team to include Mark Nelson from real estate; Dave McFarlin from the Corps' Logistics

Hurricane, continued on Page 11



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Lupe Santos-Jenson (left), equal employment opportunity, deployed to the Louisiana Field Recovery Officer, first in Baton Rouge, La., and then in Lake Charles, La., to serve as personnel specialists. With her in the photo is Cindy Cox, Vicksburg District.

Hurricane, continued from Page 10

Agency; and Dave Wright, Laurie Kennedy and Dave Husted from the Corps' information technology group, or ACE-IT. "They worked tirelessly until the facility was leased and completely wired, furnished, supplied and equipped."

Setting up the RFO did not happen without its challenges, though. Shafer said the team initially worked out of FEMA's Joint Field Office in Baton Rouge, and there was not enough space to separate the Corps' RFO staff from the PRT and ESF #3 management cells. "The working environment was very chaotic. Some of the simplest routine tasks, such as printing a document, became an arduous task," she said. "Our computers could not be connected to the FEMA network, and we did not come self-contained with printers and other equipment to allow us to work independently."

Additionally, since Baton Rouge was heavily impacted by Gustav, the JFO experienced intermittent power loss. Plus, the School for the Visually Impaired, where the RFO staff spent their nights, was without



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Liz Dvorak (left), civilian personnel, and Shelly Shafer, district emergency management chief, review staff issues at the Louisiana Recovery Field Office in Baton Rouge, La.

power for several days. "Both resulted in conditions far from ideal for working and living, but the team did a great job of making the most of the situation," said Shafer. "They did not let the conditions slow down our missions."

Overall, she said, "it was very rewarding to be able to assist the people of Louisiana get back on their feet and serve with the outstanding team members from throughout the Corps. All of the district's support staff, both in Louisiana and at home, played a key role in making the Louisiana RFO a success. Of special note, she added, was the district's human resource staff to include Liz Dvorak, civilian personnel; Kris Fairbanks, engineering; Lupe Santos-Jenson, equal opportunity; and Jan Pream, operations.

"They did a tremendous job in making sure taskers were getting issued and filled in a timely manner and taking great care of incoming team members," she explained. "They made sure each team member had a safe place to lay their head, although at times it was a cot, as well as made sure everyone got paid and that most returned home with a certificate of appreciation and a commander's coin and everything in between."

News and Notes

January-February highlights

By Mark Davidson

Global War On Terrorism

The district supports rebuilding the countries of Iraq and Afghanistan. Since 2002, more than 90 St. Paul employees have volunteered for duty in these two countries. In January and February, three people from the district served in Iraq and four were in Afghanistan.

The St. Paul District leads St. Bernard's Parish recovery work

Dozens of district employees are either working in the New Orleans area or working back in St. Paul to support the recovery mission and get the work done by the summer of 2011. This project is in the billions of dollars.

2009 Upper Midwest flood fight preparation

The district prepared for flood fights on the Red River of the North at Fargo, N.D.-Moorhead, Minn., at Minot, N.D. on the Souris River, and at Devils Lake, N.D. The district worked with two regions from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the states of Minnesota and North Dakota.

2008 Hurricanes Gustav and Ike response

Nearly 50 St. Paul employees responded to Baton Rouge and

Lake Charles, La., from August-November 2008 to support hurricane recovery. Altogether, they installed more than 10,000

temporary blue roofs on houses and removed more than 50,000 cubic yards of debris.

Broomball team wins 4 of 6

Members of the St. Paul District broomball team won four of six games by season end, Jan. 21. One match was cancelled due to weather.

For the season, team members played six matches in downtown St. Paul after work, Dec. 3, 2008 - Jan. 21, 2009.

Team members included: Joe Mose, project management; Jim Noren and Andrey Kravats, both engineering and construction; John Bailen, retired chief of engineering division; Jim Sentz, E.C.; and Lt. Col. John Kunkle, former deputy district commander. Other players were: Azure Snyder, part of the extended Corps family; Jane Flewellen, project management; Corrine Hodapp, Eau Galle Recreation Site, Spring Valley, Wis.; Lindsey Fey, a friend of Azure Snyder; Col. Jon Christensen, district commander; Kurt Heckendorf, EC; Kari Layman, EC; and Tom Crump, project management.

Photo by Tammy Wick places first

The photo at right, by Tammy Wick, an administrative assistant at the district's Headwaters Office, achieved first-place honors in the Corps-wide Herbert A. Kassner journalism competition Feb. 13 under: Contribution by a Stringer (Photography). A stringer is someone who does not work in the Public Affairs Office. Wick's photo previously won in the Corps' Water Safety Photo Contest.

Her photo was from the nature walk at the Sandy Lake Water Institute, Sandy Lake Recreation Area, McGregor, Minn. "This day in particular was our 'nature walk' along the river," said Wick. "The kids were fortunate enough to see minnows, frogs, tadpoles, water bugs, turtle eggs, grasshoppers, clams, crayfish and more. I titled the photo 'He looks like me,' because that is the expression I read on her face."





U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo

Maj. Gen. Bo Temple, deputy commanding general, civil and emergency operations, recognizes Shelly Shafer, district emergency manager, as Emergency Manager of the Year for 2007.

Shafer: Emergency Manager of the Year 2007

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Washington, D.C., awarded Michelle Shafer its Emergency Manager of the Year award at a workshop in Orlando, Fla., Dec. 2, 2008.

Shafer is the St. Paul District emergency manager and has worked for the district since 1985. She also serves on the Headquarters Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning Advisory Committee and Temporary Housing Project Delivery Team. In addition, she is a Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, Emergency Support Function #3 (public works and engineering) team leader.

Shafer received this award for her leadership, both regionally and nationally, in improving the federal government's emergency response efforts and for her outstanding leadership during numerous regional emergencies in 2007, to include spring flooding in the Red River of the North river basin, the I-35W Bridge collapse Aug. 1 and flash flooding along the Mississippi River in southeastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin that summer.

During an emergency, Shafer coordinates between the Corps and other agencies responding to the same disaster, providing Corps' assets to local communities when needed and more.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo

Maj. Gen. Bo Temple, deputy commanding general, civil and emergency operations, recognized Tim Meers, lockmaster, Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, Minneapolis, as Emergency Responder of the Year for 2007.

Meers: Disaster Responder of the Year 2007

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Washington, D.C., awarded Tim Meers its Disaster Responder of the Year award at a workshop in Orlando, Fla., Dec. 2, 2008.

Meers has been the lockmaster at Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam in Minneapolis since 2001 and a Corps' employee since 1975. The Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam facility served as the location for the incident operations center throughout the search and recovery efforts of the Interstate 35W Bridge collapse in August of 2007. Throughout the three-week recovery effort, Meers worked long hours every day to coordinate the numerous logistical needs of the different agencies working at the site, as well as played a key day-to-day role in closely managing water levels in synchronization with diving operations.

Meers received this national award for the leadership he provided throughout the search and recovery process that took place after the bridge collapsed. "Meers was thrown into a chaotic environment that found his own site and staff affected, having to make difficult decisions at every turn and surrounded by top officials from various organizations with which he had never dealt," said the St. Paul District Commander Col. Jon Christensen.

Fares thankful for holiday gifts

Editor's note: During the holiday season, the St. Paul District collects and sends gifts for co-workers who have deployed overseas. Here's a note from Tony Fares, project engineer, Ramadi Resident Office, Iraq. See related note on "Postcard from Iraq," Page 15.

I wish you and your families and all coworkers Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

I am doing fine here. There is a lot of work, I have 11 construction projects and am preparing for a presentation in Arabic to be given to the Iraqi contractors about construction quality management in addition to structural assessment projects that arise.

Today I received a package from the district containing Christmas items. I shared with

coworkers here in the Ramadi Residence Office. Thanks for keeping me in mind and for sending the package.

I am planning to take my rest and recuperation in late February. I will stop at the office to say Hi.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Tony S. Fares, P.E.
Project Engineer
USACE, GRC
Ramadi Resident Office



St. Paul District photo

Ice freezes in dredge fleet at Guttenberg, Iowa, for winter

By Peter Verstegen

After being unable to get back to Fountain City, Wis., due to ice, the dredge fleet set up camp for the winter just downriver of Lock 10, Guttenberg, Iowa. Said Bob Gross, captain of the dredge fleet: "We arrived in Guttenberg on Dec. 5 and took the pontoons off the tow, and then I tried leaving again the next morning ... with just the dredge and quarters barge and some others, but the ice was too thick and I could

not steer, so I decided that was as far as we were going to get." The fleet returned to home port in Fountain City, Wis., March 18. "To the best of my knowledge this was the first time that the dredge did not make it back to Fountain City," said Gross. "The reason it was so late when we started back was because we were dredging to close some of the breaches on the dikes just above Canton, Mo., and it was that late when we finished."

Postcard from Iraq

Gulf Region Division
2009
Baghdad, Iraq



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo

Editor's note: Matthew D. Emmons (second from left), construction representative at the time of this photo, Habbaniyah Project Office, Iraq, met Tony Fares (middle), St. Paul District design branch, while on temporary duty at the project office at Habbaniyah. They served in Gulf Region Nov. 2008 - May 2009. Emmons left St. Paul District in Sept. 2004 for his first tour in Gulf Region. He is now a lockmaster in Nashville District.

Emmons wrote:

He [Fares] has been TDY to the Habbaniyah Project Office, from his regular duty station at the Ramadi Resident Office, to perform structural assessments of five buildings aboard Camp Habbaniyah that we are renovating for the Iraqi Army. Tony (above) is seen at an eventual office building complex that the Iraqi Army Protection Battalion will occupy for administrative work. This photo includes myself and contractor project manager John Reardon, to Tony's left, along with some other contractor engineers. Tony's language skills and knowledge of the culture sets him apart from the rest of us over here.

Sincerely, Matt Emmons