US Army Corps of Engineers®
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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District command passes to Col. Robert Ball

Photo by Mark Davidson

Col. Robert L. Ball (right) accepts the district flag from Brig. Gen. Edwin J. Arnold, Jr., commander of the Mississippi Valley Division. The flag exchange is symbolic in the change of command ceremony that took place in St. Paul on July 27, 2001. The purpose of the ceremony is to emphasize the continuity of leadership and unit identity despite changes in individual authority. The flag is a tangible symbol of the unit.

Strive to be the most efficient and responsive organization possible

"My real purpose for writing this is to say farewell to all of you as my time with you and my time on active duty comes to a close."

By Colonel Kenneth S. Kasprisin
St. Paul District Commander

"The heights by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but they while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night." – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry had it right and his assessment describes many of you! Your efforts and accomplishments are unmatched! IG (Inspector General) reports over the past three years have described numerous issues affecting the Corps – everything from PM (Project Management) implementation, property accountability, training, O&M (Operations and Maintenance), grade classifications, etc. In every one of the cases the senior leadership in the St. Paul District had previously identified the problem and had already implemented standard-setting improvements. Unlike many others I have seen, we have not just paid lip-service to improvement – we have done the harder 'right.'

Let me just review a few of your accomplishments:

– A tremendous safety record;
– GF/EGF (Grand Forks, N.D., East Grand Forks, Minn.) feasibility study completed in record time;
– Corps of Engineers Small Business Award;
– Architect of the Year;
– PRT (project response team) housing response for Los Alamos fires;
– Outstanding flood response along the Red, Minnesota and Mississippi rivers;
– Improved rule curves for Rainy and Namakan lakes;
– Best AEP (Affirmative Employment Plan) in the division;
– Improvements in cost of doing business;
– Tremendous Leadership Development Program;
– A revamped emergency response plan;
– A great Public Affairs plan;
– Improved partnering initiatives;
– Significantly reduced EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) issues;
– A new labor-management agreement;
– A great start on APIC (Army Performance Improvement Criteria) initiatives;
– A balanced performance award process;
– Team training initiatives;
– Greater customer involvement;
– The finest management controls in the Corps;
– Exemplary project execution;
– Expanded 'outreach' to better serve the region;
– A great start at addressing recruiting challenges;
– Created a great district historical perspective in the conference room; and
– Improved teamwork at all levels.

I could go on and on about what you have accomplished – it has been a tremendous effort and a true tribute to your character for change never comes easy. Behind every successful project, process improvement, and initiative lies the heart and soul of this organization – great people and great teamwork. None of it would have been accomplished without the dedication and persistence of some exemplary employees.

Although I am extremely proud of the many improvements, your true glory lies in how well you have handled adversity. We unfortunately have lost a number of

Kasprisin, continued on page 5

Games build morale at summer awards day at Long Lake Park June 21

Photos by Visual Information staff

Retiree Al Rosenberg (left) and Bob Mike, Logistics Management (LM).

Capt. Willie Greene (left), deputy chief in Contracting Division, and Brittany, his daughter, display their game prize.

Michelle Schneider (left) and Joe Mose announce winners for door prizes. Maurice Geiken is center.

Gary Jones, Information Management (IM), waits for a pitch.

From the left are: Ann Mershon, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center; Ivette Garrett, Office of Counsel; Ann Paul of LM and her son Nathan.

Among the games for children was a water balloon toss.

From the left are: Terry Zien and Jim Sentz from ED, and Ben Jensen and Jon Lyman from IM.

Corps works with White Earth Tribe to 'expand the circle'

By Ray Nelson
Manager, Cross Lake Recreation Area

The White Earth Tribe invited representatives of the St. Paul District to be a host on a summer transportation institute and to participate in the tribe's graduation ceremony. A common theme for the events was "expand the circle," that is, to grow professionally and emotionally.

On June 29, the White Earth Tribal and Community College invited Yvonne Berner, Tammy Wick and Ray Nelson, all from Construction-Operations Division, to a special closing ceremony or graduation for 15 of their students. These students had participated in a specially developed learning experience program called Summer Transportation Institute, sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MDOT). The agenda included a trip and tour of the Corps' Upper Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam in Minneapolis on June 19.

The participating students in this month-long program were ages 17 through 19. The program goal was to expose these young adults to the job opportunities related to the travel field in several locations around the state. Special day and overnight field trips were coordinated with several different agencies, including the Corps of Engineers, to highlight three particular transportation themes:

- Self-development, recreational, cultural and civic;
- Minneapolis/St. Paul area transportation; and
- Duluth transportation.

With transportation being the focus, MDOT, Detroit Lakes Emergency Services, the Corps and several other businesses and agencies hosted and gave the students a glimpse of the travel industry. They were able to see behind-the-scenes tours of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport, MDOT offices and emergency services facilities.

It was a pleasure while attending the ceremony, to listen as students described their experiences in the program. One young lady told of how terrified she was to walk across the grated walkway at Upper Saint Anthony Falls. Others described their first plane trip and a boat excursion on Lake Superior.

The program allowed these young adults to experience many first-time events in their lives. It was gratifying to hear them express interest in the job areas that they had no idea ever existed! The Corps, by participating in what seems to have been a small investment in time for personnel, may one day be considered by a young individual seeking employment with the Corps because of our willingness to get involved with such a promising new program.

One young man's story left me with an lasting impression of what this program can exemplify. At the awards ceremony, one of the instructors very graciously described this young man's determination. It seems he lives

Photo courtesy of Kathy Dewey

Four St. Paul District personnel encouraged the White Earth Tribal and Community College students to expand their circle to include the Corps of Engineers for careers and student positions. Among the four are Aaron Steen, a tour guide and student assigned to Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam for the summer (bottom left); Steve Lenhart, lockmaster (bottom center); Bryanna Linscheid, a student in Construction-Operations (third from right); and Yvonne Berner, second from right in bottom row. They hosted the students on June 19 at the lock and dam in Minneapolis.

eight or so miles outside of Mahnomen, Minn., the town where the school is located. "Shortly after the program began," she said, "I inadvertently found out that he did not always have a ride to school and was walking the distance in order to participate in this program. He didn't want to bother anyone for a ride," recalled the instructor.

In the commuter-crazed world of transportation, one young man with a strong desire to learn more, took one step at a time on his own two legs, and showed that we are capable of "expanding the circle," by walking!

Thanks to tribal and community college, MDOT and all who participated in the program for their efforts to provide the opportunities to "expand the circle" of these young people.

St. Paul District photo

From left are Ray Nelson the manager of the Cross Lake Recreation Area; Tammy Wick who works in the district's Headwaters Office; Deb McArthur of the White Earth Tribal College; Yvonne Berner of the Regulatory Branch; Dr. Helen Klassen, president of the White Earth Tribal College; and Cherlyl Martin from the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Kasprisin, cont. from page 2

employees from failing health, but in every instance you have pulled together to support their family and friends and have found ways to manage the workload. We have numerous employees who face significant personal issues every single day but still manage to render an outstanding service to the district and to the many regional customers. Many of our customers and stakeholders have publicly acknowledged your great efforts and are extremely appreciative of all you have accomplished! GREAT JOB!

My real purpose for writing this is to say farewell to all of you as my time with you and my time on active duty comes to a close. As I've said to many, this decision has been extremely gut wrenching. You and our Army represent the best America has to offer and it is very difficult to leave, but my time has come.

My deepest thanks for the camaraderie, the support and most of all your friendships! We've shared many good times and some bad. The challenges are relentless but the rewards have been tremendous. I wish I could start it all over again.

I sent the following note to the senior Corps leadership and upon reflection, thought I'd also share it with you:

"I can go on forever about all the great things 'we' have done, but I know we can do better. Quoting from our phantom founding father, Patrick Henry: "Should I keep back my opinions through fear of giving offence, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country." Hence, I'd like to leave you with a couple of final thoughts:

1. Take time to live and preach the 'ethos' of our profession. I've seen too many of our profession (military and Department of Army civilian alike) that have forgotten what we are about. Stomp out the 'self-serving' and 'this is only a job' crowd. They form an infectious breed that pose an insidious health risk to our organization.

2. Recognize and deal with our defects.

a. The resistance to change that continues in the form of a cultural paradigm is poisonous.

b. Eliminate the substandard performers – it is not impossible!

c. Challenge everything.

d. Kill the image over substance mentality.

3. There will always be conflict – between the individuals and our organization and between the

Kasprisin, continued on next page

Photo by Jon Lyman

St. Paul District Commander Col. Kenneth Kasprisin (center) and members district enjoy a humorous moment during his retirement coffee on July 25 at the district office.

organization and our society. There will also be issues among technical or procedural beliefs, ethical views and political perspectives. Assuming you can find it objectively, continue to do what is "right!" Organizational and societal 'rights' must be adequately represented when placed into conflict with individual issues.

4. Our employees have the same moral obligation as we when they accepted a job/ profession in the public trust. The turf protection and unwillingness to make the hard (right) decisions only wastes time and money. Our taxpayers deserve more than they get for their dollar. Force the efficiency and effectiveness improvements – APIC is a great model.

I came across a quote after I sent that note and realized that Thomas Jefferson said it much more succinctly in a letter to John Wayles Eppes in 1814: "No government can be maintained without the principle of fear as well as duty. Good men will obey the last, but bad ones the former only. If our government ever fails, it will be from this weakness."

Expect controversy. We have always faced it and suspect it will continue into the foreseeable future. Thomas Jefferson acknowledged it a long time ago in a letter to George Washington (1784): "A most powerful objection always arises to propositions of [public works]. It is that public undertakings are carelessly managed and much money spent to little purpose." Richard Marshall, the president, AGC (Associated General Contractors) circa 1920 said: "The Bolshevistic regime of Russia favors the taking of industry by the government … The Corps of Engineers favors the application of the same principle."

BOTTOM LINE: You are a great district with superb employees but you can do even better! Never let complacency and arrogance infiltrate your ranks. Constantly strive to be the most efficient and responsive organization possible. Your future is bright with a very healthy workload.

I am convinced that we here in the St. Paul District continuously strive to do 'what is right' and I am confident you will continue to seek improvements in the way we do business. Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken" characterizes many of your individual and collective efforts. Continue to take the road less traveled!

I'd like to leave you with a few quotes:

"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change the way you think about it!" – Unknown

"When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot in it and hang on." – Thomas Jefferson

"This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man." – Shakespeare

"Always do right. This will gratify some and astonish the rest." – Mark Twain

"God grants liberty only to those who love it, who are always ready to guard and defend it." – Patrick Henry

It has truly been my honor and privilege over these past three years to serve with you in the Corps of Engineers' St. Paul District. I am convinced you are collectively the best employees and the best district in the Corps!

I'll miss you!

Ken

Campers' kudos to staff at headwaters sites

"First, the staff is truly exemplary ....

"Second, the area is neat and clean ....

"Third, we do not have to face the commercialization that is common to the private campgrounds."

June 9, 2001

6938 Wyndham Way
Woodbury, MN 55125-2767

Mr. Gregg Struss
Resource Manager
Gull Lake Recreation Area
10867 East Gull Lake Dr.
Brainerd, MN 56401

Dear Mr. Struss;

Over the last 25 years my wife and I have camped in a variety of public and private campgrounds within and outside of Minnesota. For most of the last 15 years my wife and I have come up from the Twin Cities to the Gull Lake Recreation Area to spend vacation time.

The last two years my work schedule has not permitted vacation time, but this summer once again I have some vacation time. My wife and I could have gone camping virtually anywhere in the state, since there are many well-run and beautiful campgrounds in this state. But, again we recently chose the Gull Lake Recreation area, and have just returned from there. Why did we choose Gull Lake?

First, the staff is truly exemplary. They are friendly and helpful to campers. They do enforce the regulations, and do so in a friendly but firm manner. They are also knowledgeable about the area and its history, as well as much of the wildlife and plants/trees.

Second, the area is neat and clean. I am well aware that not all campers exhibit good behavior with regard to keeping their site clean, or leaving it clean. Also, many people do not worry about creating a mess in the bathroom because it is not their bathroom. However, the sites and bathrooms are always neat and clean. I know this must at times be a difficult job to keep the areas clean.

Third, we do not have to face the commercialization that is common to the private campgrounds. So many private campgrounds market products on the grounds, and/or their staff are frequently trying to market extra items. Many people like us want to get away from commercialization – we see enough of it every day.

So, we commend all of you at the Gull Lake Recreation Area. It is nice to know that there is always such a great place to go for camping, and it is especially nice to know that we see the same familiar, friendly and helpful staff. Soon I will be retiring, and we hope to camp at Gull Lake much more frequently throughout the spring – summer – fall seasons. We have not had the courage to try winter camping. But, that would be a bit of a challenge since our pop-up trailer has no heat!

You probably do not receive many letters with positive feedback, because as a society we often only write letters when we are upset. However, many times over the years we have heard positive comments from others about the camping experience at Gull Lake. So, we certainly feel there are a large number of "happy campers" out there just like us.

We hope that you folks keep up the great work for many years into the future.

Sincerely,

Larry & Diane Uhlir

"Thank you ... for going beyond the call of duty .... the kind of human level, service-oriented actions of two bottom level representatives can do more to improve the attitude of taxpayers than any program or brochure coming out of Washington."

Ray Nelson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Crosslake Recreation Area
Crosslake MN

June 12, 2001

Dear Mr Nelson,

I would like to thank you and your staff for your help, and for going beyond the call of duty. On May 25th the people who work in your office ran a program and conducted tours of the dam for the grade-school children of the Crosslake Community School. The event was a big success for the children and their parents. After the tour of the dam the kids went across the street for a tour of the Historical Society's Log Village and eventually they were rained out. The people in your office invited the children into their meeting room and put on a video to entertain them until their parents arrived to pick them up.

When I went to the Corps of Engineers office a couple weeks previous to arrange the tour, I spoke with Matt Priebe and Barry Wendorf...summer interns. They felt they couldn't commit on the spot for the employees on duty for the 25th, so they both unreservably and enthusiastically volunteered to do it themselves although it was to be a day off for each of them.

Now here's my observation....We all hear of the frustrating and sometimes infuriating aspects that Federal Government can present to the taxpayers. All too often the benefits are taken for granted or are overlooked. However, with all the "bad press" aimed at the "monsterous government", the kind of human level, service-oriented actions of two bottom level representatives can do more to improve the attitude of taxpayers than any program or brochure coming out of Washington.

I hope that these two workers along with their co-workers who supported them receive a well deserved pat on the back. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Neil R. Hunt
President
CCS PTA

CC; Roland Hamburg
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Operations Manager
Headwaters Lakes Project

6 headwaters sites provide recreation to camping public

The St. Paul District operates six recreation areas in the headwaters of the Mississippi River. The sites get high marks from visitors for their cleanliness, solid maintenance and informational programs. Cross Lake, Gull Lake, Leech Lake, Lake Pokegama, Sandy Lake and Lake Winnibigoshish host visitors from spring to fall. The sites offer camping, boating, picnicking, fishing, and playgrounds amid the forests of northern Minnesota.

Beef clinic brings 4-H'ers up to speed

Photo courtesy of The New Richmond News

While 4-H members watch, beef clinic instructor Allen Kraft demonstrates some tools of the trade while he teaches outside his home south of Hammond, Wis. Kraft, a veteran beef cattle raiser, was getting ready to head for Fargo, N.D., on this early June day, to show some of his prize beef cattle in a regional competition.

Life after the Corps: Former training officer Al Kraft instructs 4-H members

Reprinted by permission of The New Richmond News

Allen Kraft lives so far south on County Hwy. T that his place is almost in Pierce County. His beef cattle farm is much smaller than it once was, since he's sold off most of his property and now lives in semi-retirement.

But he and his family still love to raise and show beef cattle, and that's why the St. Croix County Extension asked him to teach a June 2 clinic on beef cattle.

Kraft's talk covered the basics – the kinds of beef cattle that 4-H kids can raise, the equipment necessary to groom, fit and show the animals, and the factors that judges look for when competitions take place.

Kraft and his daughter, Amanda, 18, brought out four of their own animals, a crossbred steer, a purebred Angus heifer and two Herefords.

The Krafts were getting their own animals ready for a five-day beef cattle show in Fargo, N.D., so it was a good time to demonstrate fitting techniques to the visiting 4-H youngsters.

Before the clinic began, Amanda carefully cleaned, combed and groomed the Angus heifer – something the kids would have enjoyed seeing, had they been there that early. With a bucket of water

Photo courtesy of The New Richmond News

Amanda Kraft drives a pair of Angus cows out of the corral to prepare for a St. Croix County 4-H beef clinic. At 18, Amanda is already a veteran of many cattle shows and competitions.

and a bottle of conventional store detergent, she washed the animal down, then partly dried the heifer and arranged her coat with a wide, metal-toothed comb and spray bottle containing a substance that makes the hair stand up and respond to combing – almost like a mousse for humans.

Kraft said that the clinic covered how to clip hair and make an animal presentable for competition, and offered them choices on fitting, trimming the tail heads and how hair differs between the relatively smooth coat of an Angus to the thick, curly hair of a Hereford.

"We're going to talk about what the kids should look for when they start out next year," said Kraft, whose own family begins preparing its animals as early as January and February, long before the show schedule begins.

"The more time that the kids can spend with their animals, the better off they'll be," he added.

Kraft encouraged the young 4-H'ers to attend at least one competitive show before the St. Croix County Fair.

"I am the beef chairman with the Ellsworth Livestock Preview Show," he said. "That would be a good show for a young owner to attend. There's so much you can learn in advance (of the county fair) by being in one of these shows."

Different animals are led in different ways. For example, dairy cattle owners will walk backwards, pulling their animals along and leading them into "sets," or poses, for judging. A beef animal owner will walk alongside the animal and use a stick to guide the animal's feet into place for judging.

When the animal is in competition, the judge will ask the owner when the animal was born and what weight it is.

"He will put his hands on it to determine how much condition there is in the animal and the length of its loin," Kraft said.

"It's a pretty subjective process. Judges know what wholesalers and consumers want, and that will determine how well the animal does. The judge knows a buyer does not want a lot of back fat, so he will run his hand along the loin, or grab a fold of skin behind the hind leg to measure how much fat is there."

Heifers are judged in a similar way, although the judges will watch for body forming that's more "moderate," and, as Kraft put it, "with some femininity in the body, but some thickness and depth to the ribs."

Obituary

Bruce Ragan, who retired from Construction Branch in 1995, passed away on June 29. Bruce suffered a heart attack and stroke in May. He is survived by his wife Betty and two daughters.

Condolences can be sent to Bruce's family at 5840 Sunrise Drive, Minneapolis 55419.

Safety Corner

Boating safety starts before you're on the water

Photo by Scott Tichy

Chris Botz, a park ranger at Lake Ashtabula, wears a Type III Personal Flotation Device (PFD). The boat is equipped with a siren, air horn, public address system and a blue strobe light to warn boaters. Rangers routinely do water safety patrols and PFD checks on the lake, which is 27 miles long and one-half mile wide or 5,234 acre feet. The maximum depth is 42 feet.

By Chris Beaman
Safety Office

The web site on-screen listed stories about boating accidents, and there was no shortage of news clippings. Unfortunately, every one of them ended the same way – three or four people dead because someone either didn't know what they were doing, or didn't care enough to do it right.

The message was clear – if you're going to get behind the wheel of a boat or personal watercraft, you need to know and respect the rules of the road.

Boating safety starts before you're on the water. Preparations should begin with a check of the weather – no sense heading into trouble if you don't have to. As the day goes by, listen to the radio for updates while keeping an eye on your surroundings – sudden wind shifts, lightning flashes and choppy water can indicate a storm is approaching.

However, boating mishaps don't always occur on the water. Putting the boat on a trailer has produced its share of fatalities, too. Listed below are some things to check before getting on the road:

- Ensure the boat and trailer are compatible;
- Properly adjust tie-downs and supports;
- Ensure rollers and bolsters are in good condition;
- Ensure the tow-ball and coupler are securely fastened and locked;
- Ensure the safety chains attaching the coupler to the tow vehicle's frame are in place.

Next, take a look at your itemized checklist. According to the Coast Guard, the most important safety item on your boat is the Personal Flotation Device (PFD).

There are four types of PFDs to choose from. Type I (off shore) is the only one recommended for rough water because it's capable of turning an unconscious person face up. Type II (near shore) is effective for keeping your head above water in calm weather while Type III (flotation aid) is only designed to help you float during water-skiing and kayaking activities due to the availability of rescuers. Life rings or throw cushions are classified as Type IV, but they're no longer accepted as substitutes for PFDs.

As an added precaution, always carry a variety of sizes based on your family configuration, even it means carrying a couple of spares. When not in use, PFDs should be stored in a place where they can float free if the boat capsizes or sinks.

The remaining checklist items should include your vessel's overall condition, and the communication, fuel, galley, heating, and ventilation systems (if applicable).

In addition, the backfire flame arrester, dewatering device and alternate propulsion method should be inspected. Once you've checked these areas, ensure the following items are on board and in good working order:

- A portable VHF radio;
- Sound devices and fire extinguishers, if required;

• Anchor and anchor line (at least five times longer than the water depth);
• Visual distress signals, and navigation lights and shapes;
• Compass and charts;
• Manual pump or bailer, paddle or an oar;
• Lights, flashlight and extra batteries;
• First-aid kit; and
• Marine-rated spare parts and tools (never use automotive parts).

In addition, make sure you have your boat registration and FCC marine radio license, other important documentation, and assorted boating handbooks.

Following these checks, focus attention on your own needs to stay comfortable and safe in case of an emergency. This list should include matches, sunscreen, prescription medicines, sunglasses and hat, foul weather gear, binoculars, extra clothing (preferably wool), and food and water. Put things that need to be protected in a watertight pouch or a container that floats.

Finally, remember to file a float plan before you leave. Write down a complete description of the boat with registration number, the names of people on board, where you're going, your expected return time and a phone number for the local or state marine authority.

When you're out on the water, be sure everyone knows what to do in an emergency and where to find the safety equipment. A good idea is to ensure that more than one person knows how to handle the boat in case the primary operator becomes sick or incapacitated.

Boater safety tips

• Check the weather;

• Ensure boat and trailer connections;

• Take an adequate number of PFDs and wear them;

• Ensure your motor and equipment are working well;

• Inventory safety accessories;

• Monitor your consumption of alcohol;

• Stay with the boat when capsized or swamped.

In addition, don't overload the boat or allow passengers to move about in a way that may change its balance. Stay away from known or posted restricted areas, and don't operate near swimmers or divers.

But most of all, monitor your consumption of alcohol. Most states define impairment at .10 percent Blood Alcohol Content (B.A.C) but even lower levels may affect a person's equilibrium.

Alcohol can also create a "tunnel-vision" effect that limits your peripheral vision, impairs your ability to focus on objects, and reduces your night vision, especially for reds and greens – the colors of running lights.

A good rule of thumb is one drink (or less) per hour. The best policy, though, is to wait until you're anchored for the day before you start enjoying alcoholic beverages on board.

Alcohol notwithstanding, it's a good idea to temper your fun because in three hours of normal boating activity, the noise, motion, sun, wind and glare can frequently double an individual's reaction time.

Unfortunately, accidents still thwart our best intentions. If the worst does occur, and you find yourself in the water, you may fall victim to hypothermia (a subnormal temperature within the central body) in a matter of minutes.

Survival in cold water, however, depends on many factors – water temperature is only one of them. Others include body size (large people cool slower than small people) and fat content (heavier people cool slower than thin people). Children cool faster than adults do. And swimming or treading water will cool a person 35 percent faster than if they remain still.

Most importantly, remember that water conducts heat many times faster than air. Since most boats will float even when capsized or swamped, you're objective should be to get in or on a boat as fast as you can.

Should you swim for shore? No. Granted, some good swimmers can go 0.8 miles before being overcome by hypothermia. But the majority of people wouldn't last 100 yards. Besides, distances on the water can be very deceptive. Staying with the boat is usually the best thing to do, and it will make it easier for rescuers to spot you.

For information on boating safety classes, contact the American Red Cross or your local Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Zach Bertschi makes 'Player of the Year'

The following question-and answer session highlights Player-of-the-Year honors for Tim Bertschi's son, Zach Bertschi. Zach received honors from the North Dakota Coaches' Association and USA Today. Public Affairs Chief Mark Davidson posed the questions to Tim Bertschi, the operations manager of the Western Flood Control Project Office, Fargo, N.D.

How long has Zach been playing baseball?

Zach started shortly after he could walk – actually playing catch and hitting off a tee when he was about four years old.

What did you teach him about baseball?

I tried to teach him good mechanics and fundamentals when throwing – although he throws left-handed and I throw right-handed – and hitting. This leads to success and makes for less injuries.

How did your Corps duties, particularly spring flooding duties, impact upon his playing?

I missed some early-season games both as a coach in his early years and a spectator in 1997 and 2001. Flood years usually means a late spring cutting the high school season short, but Zach has played three years of American Legion baseball averaging about 65 games per summer once school is out.

Photo courtesy Tim Bertschi

Zach Bertschi winds up in a pitch against Jamestown, N.D.

What's his favorite position?

Center field, he likes to pitch but likes to throw runners out more.

How long has he been playing on the Fargo South team?

He played with the Fargo South High School team since he was a sophomore – three years.

What does his coach say about what kind of player Zach is and what he meant to the team?

In the *Fargo Forum*, his high school coach Roger DeMers said "When you take a look at the total package, no one has all the skills in all aspects of the game like Zach does." This was in the context of comparing him to other top players in the EDC (Eastern Dakota Conference). He was voted MVP of the Fargo South Team, the North Dakota Coaches' Association Player of the Year and USA Today Player of the Year.

Will he play baseball after high school and where?

After considering several offers, he decided to attend St. Cloud State University and play baseball there.

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St. Paul District

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2001 varsity statistics for Bertschi

At bat: 86; hits 39; runs scored 30; RBIs (runs batted in) 25; batting average of .453; home runs, 3; stolen bases 13 for 13; triples 1, doubles 8.

Pitching: 4 wins; 2 losses; 1 save; .069 ERA (earned run average); 46 strikeouts in 40 innings pitched.