

# Crosscurrent

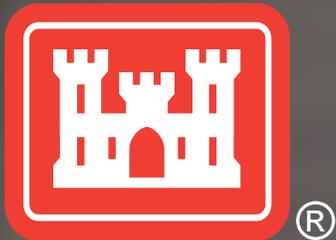
Serving the St. Paul District since 1977

Summer 2020 | Vol. 46, No. 2

## Accomplish the MISSION

-The district assesses sites for potential alternate care facilities  
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-Cameron takes the reins of operations division  
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U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers

St. Paul District



**(Cover)** Scott Snelling, St. Paul District civil engineer, conducts an alternate care facility site assessment in northeast Minnesota, March 31. Corps staff provided planning and assessments for the possible conversion of existing buildings into alternate care facilities.

USACE photo by Patrick Moes



*Crosscurrents* is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. It is published quarterly for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Articles and photography submissions are welcome. Submissions may be mailed or emailed. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word format. Photos should be at least 5 in. x 7 in. at 300 dpi.

The mission of *Crosscurrents* is to support the commander's internal information program for the St. Paul District and its stakeholders. *Crosscurrents* also serves as the commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies and command philosophy to the St. Paul District community and its customers.

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## Comments From The Top: A message from Col. Karl Jansen

MVP Teammates,

The vision of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is to engineer solutions for the nation's toughest challenges. Paramount to this vision is ingenuity and a can-do attitude from a world-class team who exemplifies the Corps' motto, *Essayons!*, French for "Let Us Try." In peacetime and in war, the Corps has risen to the occasion when the Nation calls. Undoubtedly, the Corps answered the call again during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The army is in the leadership business, and a core function of leadership is solving problems. I consider every teammate in the St. Paul District a leader at their level. Effective leaders anticipate a challenge, develop a solution and aggressively make it happen. From protecting our force, to preparing alternate health care facilities, to maintaining our mission essential functions, St. Paul District leaders have delivered in this challenging and uncertain period.

In mid-March, school closures and stay at home orders prompted a swift activation of our Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to transition the majority of our district and field office staff from an office setting to a virtual work environment at home. Aside from

initial limitations with network access and continued challenges with work-family balance, our staff have adapted quickly. They have leveraged a suite of software and electronic communication tools to conduct virtual team collaboration and public communication in order to maintain program delivery momentum. To a large degree, we have remained on track with meeting many important project activities and milestones, which is a testament to the dedication of our team.

The spread of COVID-19 also threatens to overwhelm health-care systems across the country. Anticipating the challenge, Corps leaders developed simple, standard solution for expanding COVID and Non-COVID care. The Corps leveraged a central center of expertise to develop designs and other planning materials to convert hotels and arenas to health care facilities and exported these materials to each district for possible implementation in their respective areas of responsibility.

Our district quickly partnered with the state of Minnesota, formed four alternate care facility, ACF, assessment teams and established a robust reachback team to rapidly assess potential ACF sites and develop the necessary designs and cost estimates for

conversions. In a two week period, our teams traveled all over the state and eastern North Dakota by car, plane and helicopter, and assessed a total of 54 sites – a momentous effort! Minnesota is currently converting one of these sites to an ACF and remain postured to convert others should the need arise as the pandemic continues to evolve.

Perhaps most impressive is the district's ability to continue delivering mission essential functions without missing a beat. The pandemic coincided with the spring melt and start of the navigation and recreation season. Despite the COVID-19 disruption, our emergency management teams remained connected with communities contending with flood risk and our operations division adjusted approaches to keep the navigation channel fully open for commerce and recreation sites partially open to visitors. We owe a debt of gratitude to our dedicated field staff who juggle challenging family situations with the necessity to be in the field doing what they do best for the country.

Whether in an office setting, supporting an alternate care facility, or working in the field, the Corps of Engineer Safety and Occupational Health Management System, CE-SOHMS, continues to guide our number one priority:



force protection. As we gradually migrate back to the office, resume travel and fully open our recreation sites in the coming weeks and months, Accepting personal responsibility, Committing to safety, and Taking personal initiative (ACT) will ensure our safety so we can continue serving our fellow Americans. This is what BUILDING STRONG and Taking Care of People is all about!

Thanks for all you do!!

## The district assesses sites for potential alternate care facilities

Story by Melanie Peterson

The St. Paul District performed 54 site assessments across Minnesota and eastern North Dakota from March 27 to April 8 to support a nationwide FEMA mission assignment to convert existing large spaces into community alternate care facilities to augment COVID-19 response efforts.

The district worked closely with state partners on this initial planning effort. Potential facilities included existing long-term health care facilities, school dorms, correctional facilities, hotels and convention centers. During the site assessments, task members assessed the facilities for: structural soundness, square footage, potential bed capacity, potential isolation space, electrical and communication capabilities, availability of back-up generators, adequate plumbing and HVAC systems, the feasibility of creating a negative-pressure environment to contain germs, safety codes and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Scott Snelling, civil engineer, served as the technical lead for the district's Minnesota alternate

care facility mission. He said this involved participating on site assessment teams, contributing to the report writing process and reviewing the completed reports for consistency. As technical lead part of his role was to stay engaged with the lessons learned by other Corps districts as they built out their alternate care facilities.

Snelling said, the alternate care facility model was structured around the template developed in New York City to convert the Javits convention center into a temporary healthcare facility. He said, the alternate care facility is a valuable risk mitigation tool for the region, even if it is not ultimately needed.

"I was proud to be a part of the St. Paul alternate care facility team," said Snelling. "It was truly impressive to see the team complete approximately fifty site assessments in less than two weeks, including completing the reports and construction cost estimates for each site. I feel grateful that I was able to contribute to such an important mission."

Clay Tallman, project manager, was the alternate care facility assessment team lead for the district's Minnesota response. Tallman said the team worked in conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Health, state fire marshal, regional healthcare providers, emergency managers, local representatives (fire and police departments, sheriff's office and building officials) and the Minnesota National Guard.

Tallman said it was incredibly fast-paced and important to get the best information possible out to decision makers to help Minnesotans be in the best possible position.

"It's an honor and an incredible responsibility to be able to participate in this. We had an amazing team of professionals that assembled the information that we gathered at the sites and put it into a format that made sense to enable smart decision-making," said Tallman. "Seeing firsthand how our district learned, adapted and excelled in such a critically important mission truly makes me proud of our organization."



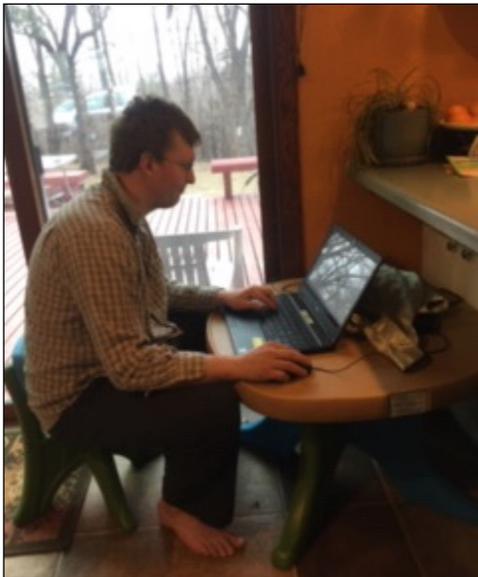
Clay Tallman, project manager, reviews a facility in South Central Minnesota during an alternate care facility site assessment, April 1. USACE photo by Patrick Moes

## Posturing to telework during COVID-19

Story by Shannon Bauer

**L**ife changed abruptly this past spring with the advent of COVID-19.

The week of March 9 and prior, an average of 1 percent of the district's workforce could be found teleworking on any particular day – maybe more on Friday – but by the end of the following week, roughly 50 percent of the district (95 percent of the office staff) started working from home.



Brad LaBadie, Eau Galle park ranger, works from his home office during COVID-19. USACE courtesy photo

What's more, with schools and a number of daycare facilities closed, many employees found themselves faced with trying to both work at home and homeschool and/or take care of small children.

As a response to the pandemic, the district activated its Continuity of Operations Plan, or COOP, March 17 and was able to rapidly adapt to a virtual environment. Phil White, readiness chief, said the district's ability to do this and accomplish both its day-to-day missions, as well as a FEMA mission assignment involving the assessment of alternate care facilities (see story, Page 4), is a testament to the district's professionalism and capabilities.

He credited the district's success to a number of things, including quickly adjusting telework and human resource policies, embracing technology, empowering supervisors to make a number of decisions they might normally not make and leveraging relationships with employees to quickly get everyone moving in the same direction.

To be able to effectively operate, White said, district staff also had to embrace a number of new technologies previously available yet not widely used to include the use of video conferencing and collaboration software. "These tools have allowed us to meet as a team and keep working," White said. "Initially there were some hardships with the Virtual Private Network, or VPN, but I think the information technology staff quickly and adeptly fixed the problems."

Nick Glatz, information technology chief, said the VPN capacity for the Corps at the time the COOP was activated, was for approximately 10,000 concurrent VPN connections run out of two



Kim Warshaw, project manager, and her daughter, work from home. Students were sent home for distance learning because of COVID-19. USACE courtesy photo

centers. "Unfortunately, when approaching 3,500 connections at each center, we experienced degradation of service," he explained. "As there was a significant demand for more service, the Corps temporarily, within a week, added another 10,000 connections to each center, as well as made several infrastructure improvements, to get everyone working."

**Story continued on Page 6**

## Story continued from Page 5

With large numbers of staff teleworking, internal communication became even more important. Readiness staff created a clearinghouse of COVID-19 information on its internal COOP page, the district's commander and public affairs staff began providing regular updates via email and video, and divisions began hosting all-hands meetings.

"An important part of work is the connection that employees have with their organization and their peers," said Lt. Col. Pat Sullivan, deputy commander. "It was the intent of district leadership to make sure everyone was doing okay at home, because this is a difficult and unprecedented experience for our workforce and society as a whole. Some of the different organizations have been very creative in trying to create these connections virtually.

There have been virtual coffee breaks, all-hands meetings to get information out to everyone and virtual happy hours among other things."

What the district could not assist with, however, was childcare. "It is very difficult,"

said Derek Ingvalson, planning. "Both my wife and I are trying to work 8 hours a day, while taking care of two Pre-K children and teaching curriculum assigned to our school-aged child. One of us works, while the other watches the kids and plays teacher. She gets up to start work at 4:30 a.m., and I usually do not go to bed until 11 or 12 at night. Despite being home with my wife all day, we typically do not get to have more than a couple of hours of quality time together."

Camie Knollenberg, plan formation branch chief, said, "I've really enjoyed some of the distractions that have occurred during video conferences. My favorite was when the presenter's daughter gave him some jellybeans during his very serious talk on hydropower," she said. "He didn't miss a beat. He said, 'Oh, jellybean delivery, thanks very much,' and he popped them in his mouth." "On that same conference, a participant kept trying to contribute, but each time the baby was screaming," she continued. "He switched to using the chat function after that."

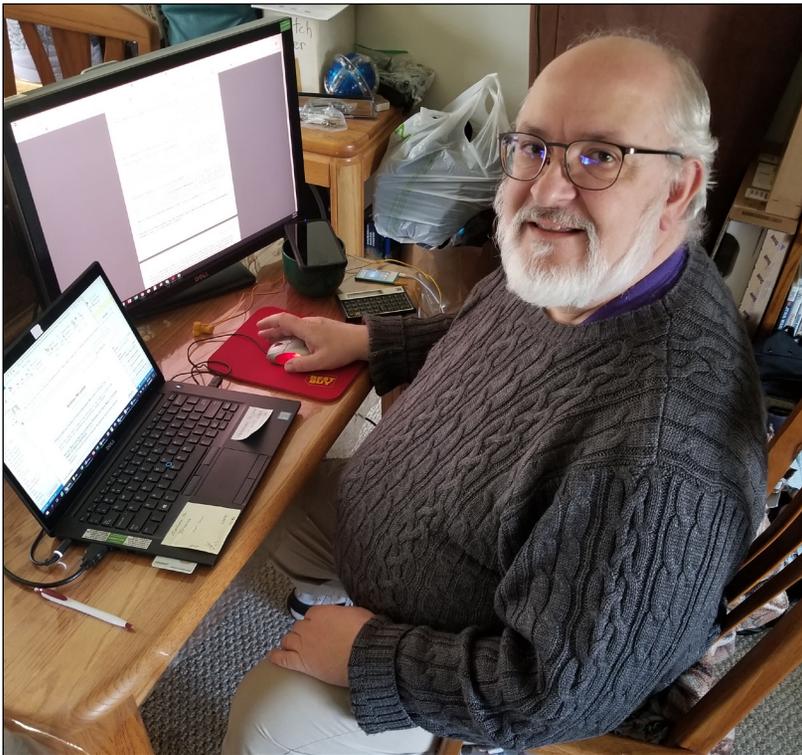
A number of perks to teleworking, however, have included a shorter commute, a more casual dress code and happier dogs. Barry Simmonds, safety chief, said,



Michelle Larson, engineer, with a door and wall her son built into her home office, located in the family room. USACE courtesy photo

his Australian Shepherd Ginger thinks having him home "is the greatest thing ever!"

The district's next steps include refining a reconstitution plan for when and how individuals will return to work. There is also a taskforce working on ensuring that district staff have enough personal protection equipment, for those who can't social distance because of their duties such as the Dredge Goetz crew.



Terry Zien, program manager, works from his dining room table after the majority of employees were sent to work from home. USACE courtesy photo

## Keeping the Mississippi open

Story by Melanie Peterson

**W**hile the COVID-19 pandemic changed much of what we once considered normal, our operations staff worked to keep commerce moving on the Mississippi River to accomplish the navigation mission. Whether it's the lock and dam staff locking boats through or the Dredge Goetz getting equipment ready to start dredging, the Mississippi remains open.

Brian Kruase, captain/master of the Dredge Goetz, said the team is taking COVID-19 extremely serious. "We are constantly sanitizing all vessels and projects. Our crew has been utilizing N95 facial masks and rubber gloves. Daily safety briefings are also being held," said Kruase. The team is deemed mission critical due the fact that barges are still pushing through the district and are carrying goods to help keep the country operating.



Dale Rud, 3rd assistant engineer, sanitizes door handles on the Dredge Goetz to prepare for the 2020 dredging season. USACE courtesy photo



(above) Matt Platteter, master tender operator/leverman, prepares the Dredge Goetz for the 2020 dredging season. USACE courtesy photo

(left) A towboat with barges passes through lock and dam 4 near Alma, Wisconsin. During the COVID-19 pandemic locks and dams continued to operate with minimal staffing. USACE courtesy photo

## Encouraging responsible recreation



Courtney Kinnett, Sandy Lake park ranger, created a virtual nature scavenger hunt for an after-school program in McGregor, Minnesota. The students observed nature using their five senses and ended the week getting their hands dirty and planting their own seeds. Courtney made bags with the supplies and booklet then posted on Facebook/Google Classroom during the program with them. USACE courtesy photo



Due to COVID-19, Nicole Baker, natural resource specialist, posts a playground closed sign at Gull Lake Recreation Area. USACE courtesy photo



Andrew Buell, maintenance worker, shows his wing span at Pokegama Dam Recreation Area. USACE courtesy photo



Megan Severson, natural resource specialist, demonstrates 6-foot social distancing at Winnibigoshish Dam Recreation Area. USACE courtesy photo



Gull Lake rangers use personal protective equipment and social distancing while picking up trash for Earth Day. USACE courtesy photo

## Cameron takes the reins of operations division

Story by Melanie Peterson

In April, the St. Paul District welcomed its first female chief of operations, Tamara Cameron. No stranger to the St. Paul District Corps of Engineers or to operations, Cameron has been with the district since 2002 and has been deputy chief of operations since 2016.

Cameron has a background in engineering with a bachelor's



Tamra Cameron, the district's new chief of operations. USACE courtesy photos

degree in civil engineering from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree in public administration from Troy University. She began her career as an environmental engineer for the U.S. Navy and served in Okinawa, Japan, as an environmental engineer for the U.S. Marine Corps.

It was working for the Federal Highway Administration as a project development engineer that brought Cameron back to Minnesota. "People from Minnesota, they always find their way back home," said Cameron. Cameron worked in a predominantly male field until she came to the regulatory branch in St. Paul District. In regulatory she worked as a project manager for special projects and became the regulatory branch chief in 2009.

Cameron said, being a female in a male-dominated field like engineering has helped her to be successful. "I've had to work harder; I have to try to exceed expectations. I was lucky to have a lot of good mentors, starting in college, that provided me with support and encouragement." Cameron said she hadn't given

much thought to the fact that she is the first female chief of operations, she just knew that it was one of the best jobs in the Corps. "I grew up on a farm with no brothers," said Cameron, "whatever the work was, I did it. We didn't go get extra help. I've always been focused on hard work and determination."

It was on the family farm where Cameron came to share her mother's passion for horses. Horses are still her hobby and have been a way to connect with the community. She volunteers for Courage Kenny Riders, a horseback riding program for youth and children with disabilities. She has volunteered there for 15 years and enjoys seeing the transformation of the kids from the first session to the last.

Cameron's community involvement also includes volunteering with her county's mounted patrol, which includes supporting the sheriff's office with search and rescue operations, participating in parades and visiting schools. She is part of a local trail riding club, Grant trail rangers, which advocates for trail networks on public

and private lands. Additionally, she is on the board of Minnesota polocrosse, polocrosse is a combination of polo and lacrosse.

Cameron and her husband, Tim Anderson, are both from Minnesota and have been married for 27 years. They have a 21-year old son.

On her selection as chief of operations, Cameron said, "I am honored, and I do feel a responsibility to do well and to not disappoint the leaders that have believed in me and supported my journey to division chief."



Cameron, chief of operations, volunteers with county's mounted patrol. USACE courtesy photo

## Maj. Gen. Toy visits the district during pandemic

Story by George Stringham

**M**ississippi Valley Division Commander Maj. Gen. Mark Toy visited the St. Paul District April 14 to meet first hand with St. Paul District staff, The Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard, Minnesota's emergency management personnel and other partners coordinating COVID-19 response efforts across the region.

During his brief visit, Maj. Gen. Toy toured the district's Readiness Operations Center, where he observed recent technology upgrades and received a brief on the district's response to COVID-19 and other activities. Rounding out the briefing, the division commander presented his command coin virtually to four individuals who had been instrumental in the successful opera-

tions conducted in support of the response to COVID-19.

"I want to commend each and every one of you for your extraordinary efforts during this time of ever-changing events," Toy said. "Your efforts to both the public and your fellow co-workers hasn't gone unnoticed. As I say, We are Taking Care of People."

Nathan Wallerstedt and Clay Tallman of project management were

recognized for the execution of 52 alternate care facilities, or ACF, assessments in Minnesota and North Dakota; Kevin Hanson for his expertise in developing a COVID-19 dashboard integrated within the district's regular emergency management dashboard; and Kristin Kosterman for devel-

oping and maintaining an all-inclusive site where employees could find information surrounding current events.

Division and district staff then met with the Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management leadership in the state's emergency operations center, where Maj. Gen. Toy saw much of where the state coordinates their COVID-19

response efforts and discussed potential ACFs. Toy also met with Joe Kelly, the state's Homeland Security and Emergency Management director where more detail was discussed about the coordination that had been conducted at the federal and state levels.



Maj. Gen. Toy presents a commander's coin virtually to Clay Tallman, project management, during his visit to the district office on April 14. USACE photo by George Stringham



Maj. Gen. Toy meets with director Joe Kelly, Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management during his visit on April 14. USACE photo by George Stringham

## Sandbagging in a race against high water at Lock 3

Story by Nayelli Guerrero

In early March, Corps staff filled sandbags at Lock and Dam 3 near Red Wing, Minnesota, in anticipation of spring flooding. With water predicted to rise above the lockwall, personnel from several lock and dam sites assisted with flood mitigation efforts.

For the past two years, the National Weather Service predicted that the Mississippi River was

more than 50 percent likely to exceed the lock walls. Corps staff prepared for the worst by securing 75 feet of plywood to the lock's hand railing, installing concrete and plastic jersey barriers and filling 12,000 sandbags. "Our goal is to mitigate the effect of high water on lock infrastructure as much as possible," said Tim Tabery, Lock and Dam 3 lockmaster.

In any flood year, the majority of sandbags at Lock and Dam 3 are dedicated to protecting the first concrete pier house. Situated between the lock and the dam, the island on which the pier house is constructed must be fortified with 8,000 to 10,000 sandbags to prevent the pier house from eroding and washing away in a flood. The pier house contains electricity that powers the dam, as well as a stairway to get across the bridge and move the gates.

This year's sandbagging process was more efficient than usual. Last year Corps staff filled sandbags at Lock and Dam 3 throughout the entire month of March. This year, staff filled 6,000 sandbags in just two days by borrow-



Troy Frank, Lock and Dam 8, was one of the volunteers who helped fill 6,000 sandbags in just two days. USACE photo by Melanie Peterson

ing a sandbag-filling machine from the neighboring Prairie Island nuclear power plant. Not only did the machine reduce labor hours, time and injury risk, it eliminated the need to manually fill sandbags with shovels and PVC tubes. Tabery

stated that additional cost-saving measures are being considered, including water barriers, more concrete jersey barriers and a permanent structure to protect the pier house island.

Even with the machine, the sandbagging process was labor intensive. Ten employees filled each bag half to three-quarters full, to allow room for the sand to settle. Once filled, the 30-40 pound sandbags were stacked on pallets and moved by forklift to the storage area, ready for placement.

This year's flood mitigation process was time consuming and required many hands. Tabery said he remains grateful for the contributions of Corps employees to Lock and Dam 3 flood preparation efforts. "I'd like to thank my colleagues from up and down the river who helped us prepare for this year's flood season."



Judy Denzer, Lock and Dam 4 lockmaster, fills sandbags at Lock and Dam 3 near Red Wing, Minnesota. USACE photo by Melanie Peterson

## Corps completes winter maintenance at Lock and Dam 4

Story by Nayelli Guerrero

**S**t. Paul District, recently completed scheduled winter maintenance on Lock and Dam 4 near Alma, Wisconsin. The Corps' maintenance and repair section from Fountain City, Wisconsin, began work in December 2019 and finished in March 2020.

The team rehabilitated the lock's four tainter valves, using a crane to remove the valves from the bottom of the lock walls. The project included sandblasting and painting the tainter valves

with three coats of vinyl paint. "This type of rehabilitative work is critical to maintain infrastructure that is over 80 years old," said Judy Denzer, Lock and Dam 4 lockmaster.

On the lock wall, the team demolished a large section of concrete and installed a new section of armor plating on the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi River. The maintenance work fixed damage that occurs throughout the navigation season when tows entering the lock southbound come

into contact with the upper wall, damaging its armor plate and the bull nose, the part of the structure separating the lock from the dam.

High water during last year's navigation season contributed to damage that occurs as 105-foot wide

tows attempt to maneuver into a 110-foot wide lock. Currents are stronger during high water flows, especially when the dam's gates are raised. If tows overcorrect, they come into contact with the lock structure.

The project was originally scheduled to take place after dewatering the lock chamber. With

dewatering delayed until 2021, operations management decided to go ahead with rehabilitating the valves and wall in order to improve navigation safety. Shortly after maintenance completion, the Corps reopened the lock to allow tows to travel north to St. Paul.



Maintenance and repair staff work on the tainter valve rehabilitation at Lock and Dam 4 near Alma, Wisconsin. USACE courtesy photo



The team preps one of the tainter valve pits in order to remove the tainter valve. The work was performed by the maintenance and repair section as part of the tainter valve rehabilitation at Lock and Dam 4 near Alma, Wisconsin. USACE courtesy photo

## Peer supporters step up in crisis

Story by Jane Mathison, Emily Kostner and Jon Sobiech

**W**e've all had to adjust to a new, albeit temporary, "normal" since COVID-19 began to affect the way we do business. Regardless of if you work in an office or on a job site, are a supervisor or not, things have changed. The safer-at-home and social distancing directives are working to slow the spread of the virus but also causing a connection deficit that could likely intensify stress levels and affect physical and emotional health. The St. Paul District Critical Incident Stress Management team, or CISM, can provide information about stress and ways to cope.

CISM provides confidential and discreet peer support in response to stressful work environments or incidents. A CISM Team is a group of peer supporters, Corps employees representing all mission areas, who have undergone special training to assist their fellow employees. Our goal is to lessen the overall impact of stress and accelerate recovery. It has been proven that through the understanding and support of peers, feelings of stress usually



The CISM logo. USACE courtesy graphic

pass more quickly. We want to ensure that our fellow Corps employees are doing well by helping them process through normal reactions to abnormal events, like a pandemic.

For more information, contact Jane Mathison, Emily Kostner or Jon Sobiech.

Crisis Text Line: Text "hello" to 741741 for discreet and confidential help.

## Onboarding continues during Continuity of Operations Plan

Story by Shannon Bauer

**C**ivilian personnel hasn't missed a beat as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although all of the staff are teleworking, they managed to onboard 25 new employees since March 17, when the district activated its Continuity of Operations Plan for a pandemic.

"We haven't seen a decrease in staffing needs," said Abby Hansen, civilian personnel chief. "It's been just as busy."

She said the office is doing everything it needs to do for managers and new personnel virtually. "This really isn't new for us, though, because we are a district with many field sites," she said. "We've always done it this way for the field. It is new for a lot of district office hiring managers, however, so it's been a change for them."

What can't be done now, such as physicals and drug testing required for some positions, she said, is being deferred until a later date. The positions are contingent upon completion of those items when available. The biggest hurdle has been finding



Abby Hansen, civilian personnel chief. USACE photo by Emily Chavolla

places for individuals to get their fingerprints taken, when a lot of the usual places aren't providing services. Hansen said the security staff has had to call around and find some workarounds.

Many of the new hires have come into the office just long enough to get a CAC and a computer and then went home to begin work with training taking place virtually. "In my own office, I've had two new employees start, and we've done a number of things to get them up and running," she said. "I think we've used every virtual tool available to provide them the training and instruction they need."

## Civil Servants of the Year announced



**Paul Machajewski**  
*channels and harbors*  
**Customer Service**

Paul served on three teams to develop new dredged material management plans. He's outgoing and quickly makes friends wherever he goes. He's very involved on several teams

trying to resolve issues and most of the time there are diverse and conflicting sides represented.  
*-nominated by Steve Tapp*

*"I am truly shocked and humbled by this nomination. I want to thank my past and current coworkers and supervisors who have taken me under their wings during my 30+ years of federal service."*

**Position title:** Dredged material manager  
**Total years with the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers and federal government:** 30  
**Previous positions/employment:** channel maintenance coordinator, program analyst, outdoor recreation planner, park ranger  
**Education:** Bachelor of recreation administration  
**Hobbies:** Volleyball, golf, bow hunting, ice fishing, hiking with family and dogs  
**Residence:** Winona, Minnesota



**Tom Novak**  
*project management*  
**Leadership**

Under Tom's leadership, nearly 30 environmental restoration projects across Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa were completed. Many of these projects involved working with a diverse stakehold-

er group across multiple states that resulted in the enhancement of the Mississippi River.  
*-nominated by Nate Wallerstedt*

*"I have thoroughly enjoyed my career at the St. Paul District. I was fortunate to work with so many talented team members though the years."*

**Position title:** Project manager  
**Total years with the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers and federal government:** over 31  
**Previous positions/employment:** Architectural firms in St. Paul and Denver  
**Education:** Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Architecture  
**Hobbies:** Grandpa, Gardening, Golf, Reading  
**Residence:** Pine Springs, Minnesota



**Paul Johnson**  
*engineering and construction*  
**Excellence Beyond Expectations**

Paul demonstrates extreme selfless service with his flexibility and mission-first approach and his dedication to doing whatever it

takes to meet the organization's critical missions. He is the ultimate team player who is always willing to travel anywhere at any time, and for any length of time, to respond to emergency situations and/or urgent project needs  
*-nominated by Gary Wolf*

**Position title:** Surveying technician  
**Total years with the St. Paul District:** 24  
**Total years with the Corps of Engineers and the federal government:** 27  
**Previous positions/employment:** Private sector surveying and surveying with Rock Island  
**Hobbies:** Auto restoration, home renovation/remodeling, woodworking, playing piano  
**Residence:** Minneapolis, Minnesota

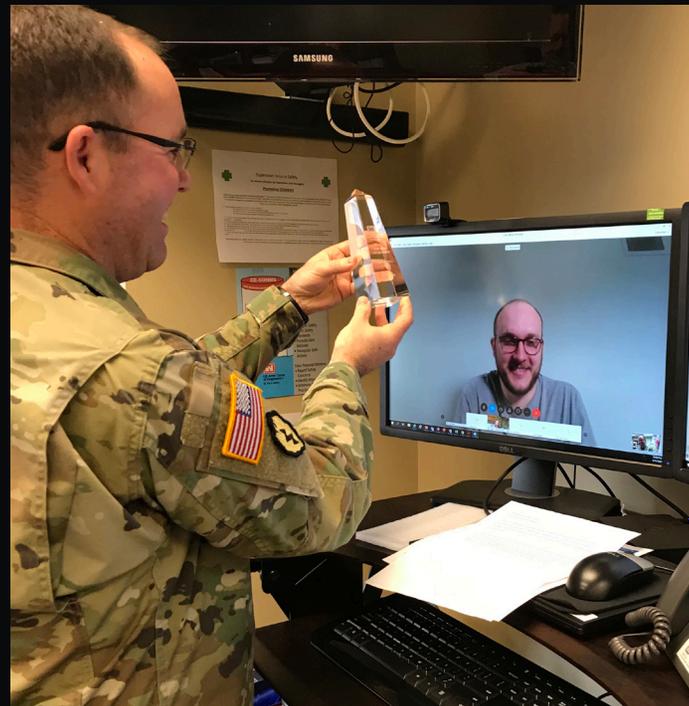
## Recognizing our Employees of the Month: The MVPs of MVP

### February



**Scott Snelling,**  
*engineering and construction*

### March



**Kristoffer Laman,**  
*regulatory*



## Around the District



*Col. Jansen commissioned St. Paul District employee and U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Wade Carr into the U.S. Navy as an ensign on April 10. This ceremony is normally conducted in-person, but because of social distancing guidance, the oath of office was delivered via WebEx. USACE courtesy photo*



*Megan Severson, natural resource specialist, brought water safety bags and activity books to Deer River Elementary School, which they used when distributing food to school families during COVID-19. USACE courtesy photo*



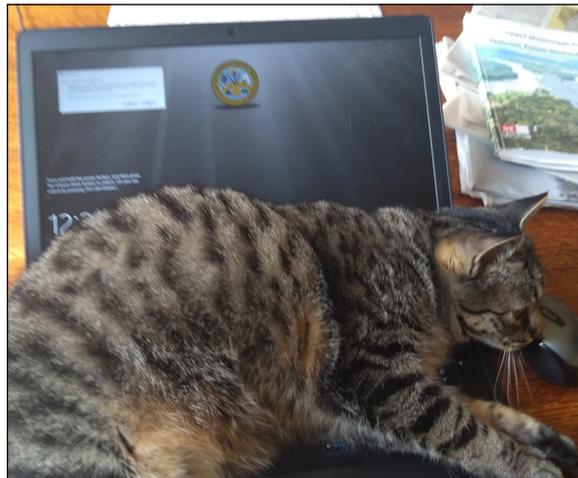
*Pokegama Dam Recreation Area park rangers Jeff Cook and Megan Severson assisted with a water safety outreach event with Itasca County Sheriff's Department March 12. USACE courtesy photo*



*Bobber and Gull Lake park rangers, Nicole Baker and Brian Turner, attended the Special Olympics Winter Carnival on Feb. 27 at Confidence Learning Center to talk with participants about safety on the frozen lake. USACE courtesy photo*



*Judy Denzer's, Lock and Dam 4 lockmaster, coworker demonstrates improper ergonomics for a home desk. USACE courtesy photo*

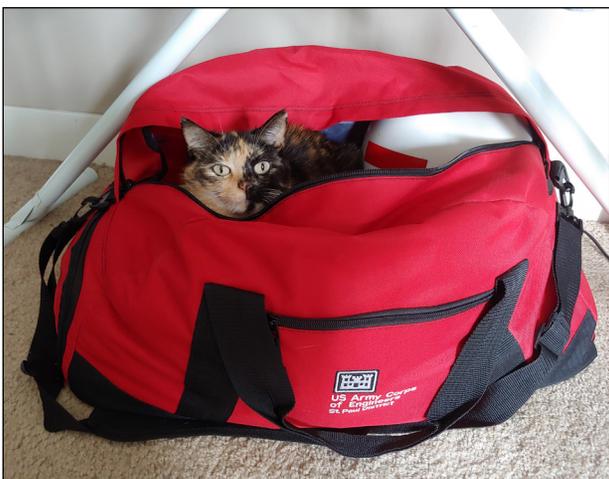


*Herbert the Brave reminds Andy Meier, lead natural resource specialist, to remove his CAC from his laptop. USACE courtesy photo*



*Dave Rydeen, engineering and construction, and his make-shift office for teleworking. USACE courtesy photo*

## New co-workers during COVID-19



*Hermonie Krug discovers a Corps inspection bag while Erin Krug, engineering and construction, works from home. USACE courtesy photo*



*Steve Riley, regulatory, and his coworker, Meeko work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. USACE courtesy photo*



*Duncan and Ginger do not appropriately social distance from their mom, Colleen Whaley, CPAC. USACE courtesy photo*

## News and Notes

### New Hires

**Adam Arnodly**, lock and dam operator, operations, Alma, Wisconsin

**Lydia Bechteler**, office automation assistant, operations, Brookfield, Wisconsin

**Douglas Bergeson**, lock and dam equipment mechanic, operations, Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Samantha Fink**, lock and dam operator, operations, La Crescent, Minnesota

**Faye Healy**, ecologist, operations, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Kelsey Hoffmann**, biologist, regional planning and environmental division north, Moline, Illinois

**Katie Leslie**, archaeologist, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Collin Moratz**, biologist, regional planning and environmental division north, Moline, Illinois

**Megan Severson**, natural resources specialist, operations, Grand Rapids, Minnesota

**Janel Shafer**, office automation assistant, operations, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Rachel Steiger**, wildlife biologist, regional planning and environmental division north, St. Louis, Missouri

**Dean Zwiefel**, human resources specialist, civilian personnel advisory center, St. Paul, Minnesota

### Retirements

**Jeffrey Olson**, supervisory biologist, operations, St. Paul, Minnesota, retired March 31, 2020

### Taps

**LaVane Dempsey** passed away April 24, 2020. He was a geotechnical engineer with the St. Paul District for 32 years.

### Promotions

**Travis Burrier**, civil engineer, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Karen Eklund**, regulatory specialist, operations, Hayward, Wisconsin

**Heather Henneman**, supervisory civil engineer (hydraulic), engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Roy Lawson**, lead construction control representative, engineering and construction, Fargo, North Dakota

**Nathan Meisgeier**, civil engineer (geotechnical), engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Colin Riddick**, geologist, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Jordan Skoug**, engineering equipment operator, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Bryan Sprang**, civil engineer, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Colleen Whaley**, human resources assistant, civilian personnel advisory center, St. Paul, Minnesota

### Congratulations

**Major Andrew Berreth** graduated from Command and General Staff College April 23.



**Alex Nelson**, engineering, and his wife Katie, welcomed Oswald William Nelson on Feb. 5. He arrived at 7 lbs, 5 oz and 20.5 inches.



**Sam Smith**, project management, and his wife Laura, welcomed Charles Richard Smith, March 22. He arrived at 8 lbs, 4 oz.