US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

Vol. 24, No. 8 August 2001

Emergency ops mission in the bag at Military Expo

The St. Paul District brought in sandbags, shovels and toy dump trucks for a hands-on demonstration of its emergency operations mission on July 28-29 at the Minnesota Military Exposition at Fort Snelling. Holding the bag, above, is Karen Cassidy, Design Branch; top right is Laurie Taylor, Design Branch; and at right is Ken Beck from Real Estate.

Photos by Mark Davidson

Col. Ball takes command

Col. Robert L. Ball assumed command of the St. Paul District on July 27, 2001, becoming the district's 59th commander and district engineer. Prior to assuming this command, he was the deputy chief of staff, engineer, for U.S. Army South in Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico.

Ball was commissioned a second lieutenant and awarded a bachelor's degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1977. Ball also holds a master's degree in engineering from the University of Virginia and a master's degree in strategic studies from the Air University. His military education includes the engineer officer basic and advanced courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the U.S. Air Force War College, and Airborne School.

Ball has served in a variety of engineer command and staff positions. He served as a platoon leader in the 46th Engineer Battalion (combat) (heavy) and then as the aide-de-camp to the deputy commanding general of the U.S. Army Aviation Center. Company command and duties as the adjutant of the 3rd Engineer Battalion, 24th Infantry Division, followed the advanced course. Ball served as an assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics, United States Military Academy, after graduate school. He was the director of engineering and housing, Grafenwoehr Training Area and then became the executive officer of the 409th Base Support Battalion at that post.

Upon his return from Germany, he was assigned as officer in charge of the Resident Training Detachment attached to the 111th Engineer Group, West Virginia Army National Guard.

Ball commanded the 19th Engineer Battalion at Fort Knox, Ky., before he was assigned as the deputy commander of the Louisville District.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, the West Virginia Legion of Merit, and the Parachutist Badge.

Army introduces knowledge management

The Department of the Army distributed a memorandum dated August 8, 2001, signed by Gen. Eric Shinseki, chief of staff, and Secretary of the Army Thomas White, introducing Army Knowledge Management (AKM). It is a strategy to transform the Army into a network-centric, knowledge-based workforce. AKM is intended to improve decision dominance by our warfighters and business stewards – in battlespace, in organizations, and in mission processes.

The goals are:

Goal 1: Adopt governance and cultural changes to become a knowledge-based organization.

Goal 2: Integrate knowledge management and best business practices into Army processes.

Goal 3: Manage the infostructure at the enterprise level.

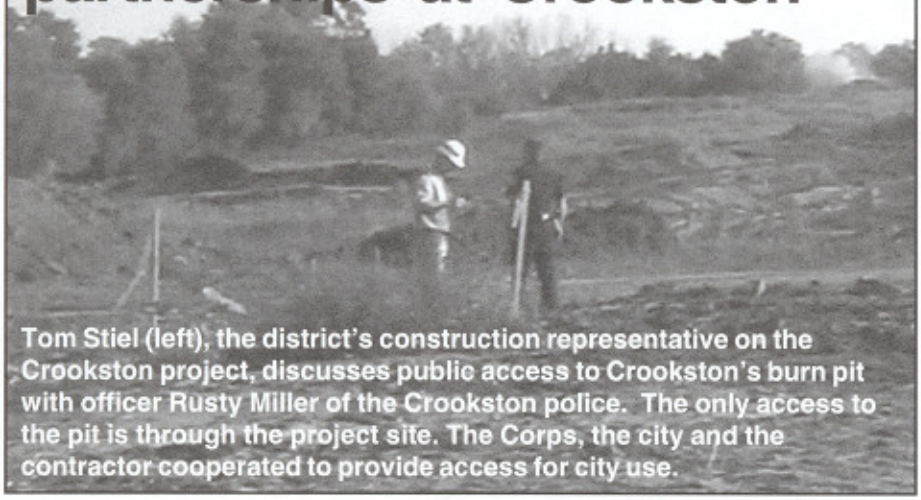
Goal 4: Scale Army knowledge online as the enterprise portal.

Goal 5: Harness human capital for the knowledge organization.

The details of AKM strategic plan are available at http://www.us.army.mil/akm.

(The site requires a password.)

District builds public-private partnerships at Crookston



Tom Stiel (left), the district's construction representative on the Crookston project, discusses public access to Crookston's burn pit with officer Rusty Miller of the Crookston police. The only access to the pit is through the project site. The Corps, the city and the contractor cooperated to provide access for city use.

Story and photo by Virginia Regorrah
Resident engineer

Partnering successes in the Army Corps of Engineers come in many different forms. During the pre-construction conferences and partnering sessions, the Corps emphasizes partnering between the Corps and the contractor, with particular attention to conflict resolution and quality construction. But partnering is also defined as the spirit of cooperation among all the interested parties – the Corps, contractor and customer – in producing not only a quality product, but also in fostering a working relationship built on respect and the attainment of mutually beneficial goals.

The flood control project in Crookston, Minn., about 25 miles east of Grand Forks, N.D., illustrates the benefits of partnering.

"The project is on the Red Lake River," said Tom Novak, project manager. "Crookston has had an extensive history of flooding as far back as 1887. The flood of record is 28.6 feet in 1997 – about 12 feet above flood stage."

With this history in mind, engineers from the Corps' East Grand Forks Resident Office, the contractor, KGM Contractors, Inc. from Angora, Minn., and the city of Crookston conducted an informal partnering session to agree upon goals, objectives and to sign a partnering charter.

KGM, the city and the Corps have built such a relationship in the first stage of the project. Construction for Stage 1 of the $11 million project started in July 2001, with a scheduled completion of December 2001.

The flood control project entails the construction of a cutoff channel on the Red Lake River. However, the channel bisects the city's road to its burn site. KGM has accommodated the city by keeping the road open for the city trucks hauling trees to the burn site.

Following the storm on Aug. 8, with winds of over 100 mph, the contractor's superintendent, Dan Lamphere, earned praise from the city's director of public works, Pat Kelly. Lamphere's company, KGM, had cleared the burn site and directed the city's trucks where to dump their loads, maximizing the amount of area for refuse at the burn site. KGM has also continued to maintain the haul road and kept it open for city trucks. In turn, the city has dispatched a police officer to ensure the public does not enter the project site.

Each week, Kelly and the city's project manager, Mike MacDonald, attend a weekly progress meeting with KGM's Lamphere and the Corps' representative, Tom Stiel. They discuss the anticipated progress for the next week and potential issues and resolution at each meeting. Significantly, each asks the others, "What do you need?" This approach has not only kept the project on schedule, but has eliminated conflicts.

The mutual support and continued cooperation among the Corps, the contractor, and the customer – in this case the city – represent partnering at work. Though Corps people tend to think of partnering in terms of the contractor and the Corps, the customer is an important member of the team. Pleasing the customer, including the customer in the meetings and working to accommodate the customer's needs, are essentials in the partnering process. In Crookston, the contractor, the city and the Corps have formed a partnering relationship that benefits all involved.

District on deck with the MV Mississippi

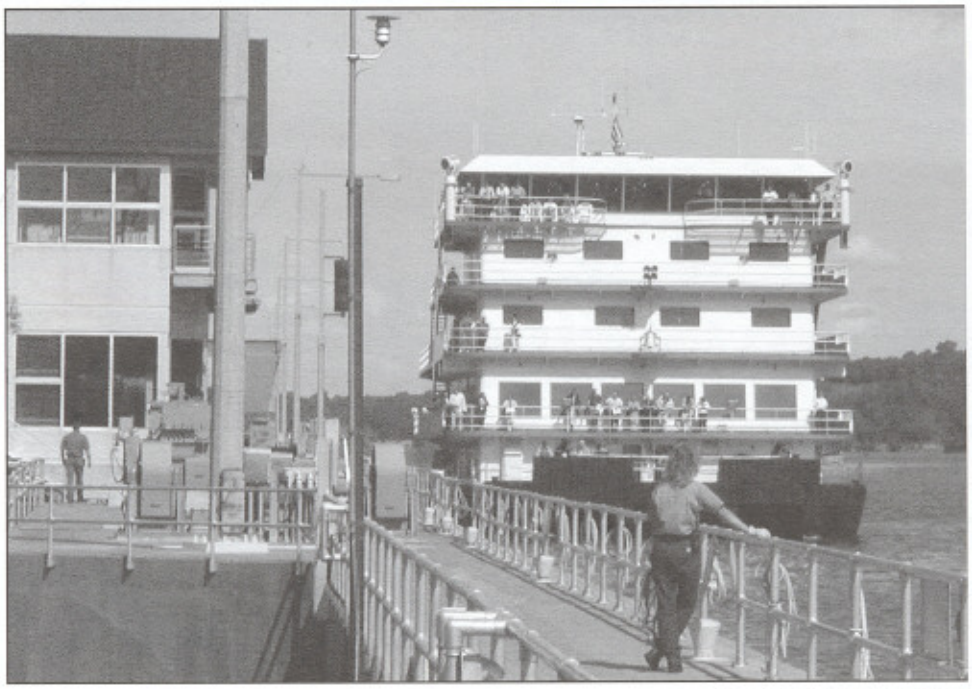


Photo by Nadine DuPree

Photo by Nadine DuPree

Left and above, Temporary Lock Operator Angela Wall assists in the lockage of the MV Mississippi at Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn., on Aug. 9.

Photo by Nadine DuPree

The Motor Vessel Mississippi visited the district Aug. 8-13 for its annual low-water tour. At left is Marc Krumholz on deck of the MV Mississippi. He works in Construction-Operations. Right, the upper deck of the Mississippi looks down on the control building at Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings.

Photo by Nadine DuPree

Photo by Nadine DuPree

From the left are Mike Walker, Engineering Division; Teri Alberico, Steven Clark and Byron Williams, all in Project Management Division. They were on the top deck. The boat was heading to St. Paul.

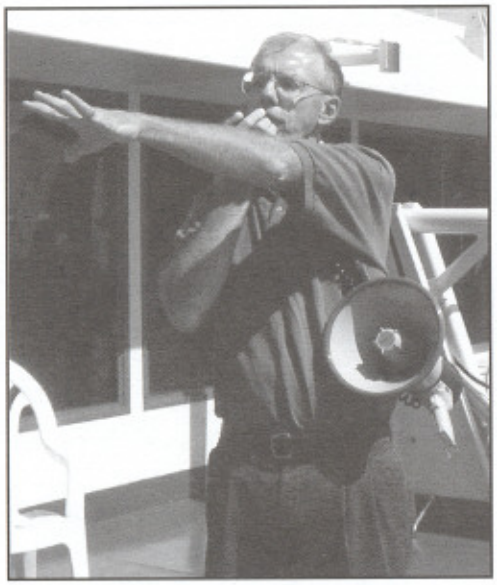


Photo by Nadine DuPree

Dean Peterson, operations manager of the locks and dams project, uses an amplifier to describe features of Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings to district office employees. They were on the top of five decks.

Photo by Nadine DuPree

From the left are Linda Haberkorn, Luann Bartuah, Georgia Stanonik and Bryanna Linscheid. They are on the top deck of the MV (Motor Vessel) Mississippi for an employee open house held August 10.

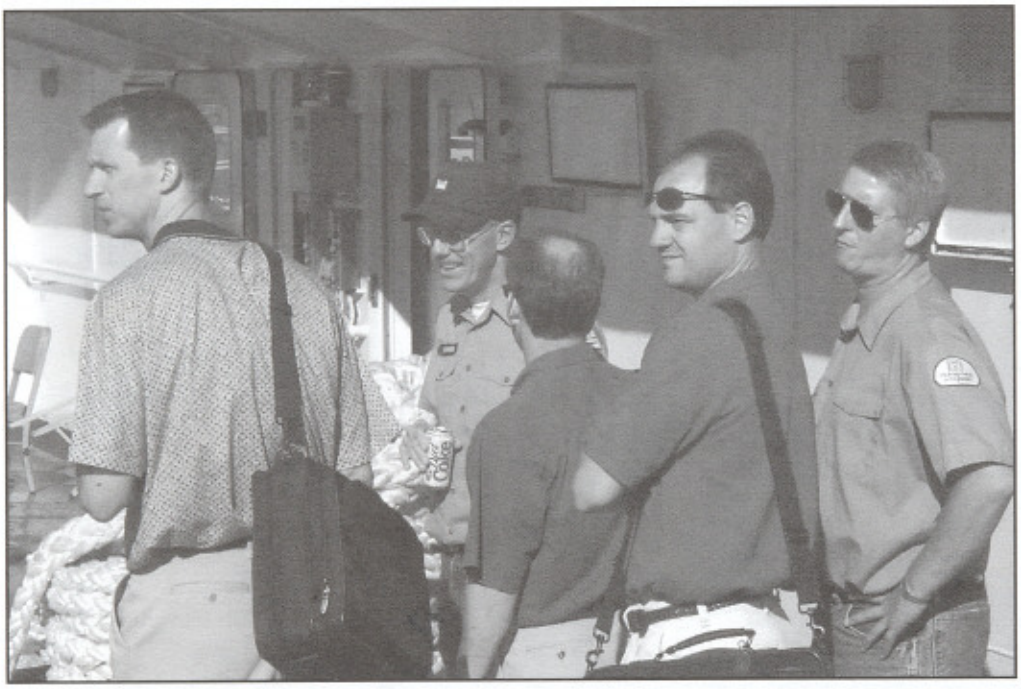


Photo by Jon Lyman

Pictured from left are Steve Tapp, Dean Peterson, Dan Krumholz, Paul Machajewski and Dan Schmidt, all from Construction-Operations Division. They boarded the MV Mississippi on August 9 for a meeting with the Upper Mississippi Waterways Association and the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The MV Mississippi began its annual low-water tour in St. Paul District when it arrived at Lock and Dam 10 in Guttenberg, Iowa, on August 8 at 3:15 a.m. The boat provided an on-board forum for meetings about river-related issues. Stakeholders such as the Upper Mississippi Waterway Association, the Society of American Military Engineers, Associated General Contractors, the Federal Executive Board and district employees gained first-hand views of Corps projects and programs on the Mississippi River. The tour included a public open house in Winona, a public meeting in La Crosse and a round table discussion with mayors.

EEO targets fair and equal treatment for Corps employees

Editor's note: Nadine DuPree, a student in Public Affairs, visited with Marianne Price in EEO for a brief overview of the program. Their exchange follows, with an introduction by DuPree. Her questions are in bold.

In 1964 Congress passed a civil rights law stating that all Americans will have an equal opportunity to housing, education, employment and medical services without regard to skin color, race, religion or national origin. I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Marianne Price, the St. Paul District's equal employment opportunity officer. I asked Marianne for a brief overview of the EEO program and its functions. For more in-depth information, go to the intranet and click on Equal Employment Opportunity or use this address: http://mvpiis/eeo_office/.

What is EEO?

EEO stands for Equal Employment Opportunity and is the compliance office for ensuring equal opportunity in the employment sector.

What services does EEO offer Corps employees?

EEO has the following services:

- complaint process;
- counseling;
- recruitment assistance;
- cultural awareness training;
- multi-cultural program activities;
- compliance inspections;
- reasonable accommodation advice;
- selection panel advisory support;
- orientation socials;
- recognition of outstanding EEO achievement; and
- mediation services.

What is the most important thing you want people to know on the subject of EEO?

On the subject of EEO in the workplace, I want people to know that EEO isn't just about compliance and pushing to get minorities hired. It's more about trying to ensure that EEO principles and practices are applied through human resources management processes, procedures and polices. I would also like to see the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) used more frequently. Sitting down with a mediator and discussing conflicts helps to set the stage for a resolution of potentially contentious issues. ADR can help prevent misunderstandings being blown out of proportion.

What are the functions of EEO?

The EEO Office administers three major programs:

- the Affirmative Employment Program;
- the Special Emphasis Program; and
- the EEO Complaint Processing Program.

How does EEO contribute to the Corps?

EEO is very valuable to the Corps. It is woven into the Corps' mission, which is founded on integrity, ethics and values. You can't have integrity and practice illegal discrimination. The two terms are divergent. EEO is part of the foundation upon which integrity is based. EEO contributes to the Corps by bringing to the table that consciousness; that no matter how successful you are, you cannot achieve true excellence if you operate outside of the American premise that there is room for all. Our goal is to guarantee fair and equal treatment for everyone, and provide for a discrimination-free work environment.

Upper Mississippi River system navigation study resumes

VICKSBURG, Miss., August 2, 2001— Today, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division (MVD), announced that it has been instructed by the director of civil works, Brig. Gen. (P) Robert H. Griffin, Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, D.C., with the concurrence of the chief of engineers, Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers, and the acting assistant secretary of the Army for civil works, Dominic Izzo, to resume the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study.

The refocused study will be modified to emphasize environmentally sustainable use of the river and to address concerns raised by the National Research Council (NRC) in February 2001.

The chief of engineers paused the study in March 2001 to consider recommendations made by the NRC and others on the economic and environmental analyses. The Rock Island District web site has more at http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil.

Bits and Pieces

School supply drive succeeds

The Diversity Subcommittee would like to thank St. Paul District employees for their donations to the School Supply and Cell Phone Drive.

The donations included:

- 16 cell phones;
- two back packs;
- 56 folders;
- 54 packages of markers/pencils/pens;
- 25 notebooks;
- eight packages of paper;
- 10 boxes of tissues; and other supplies.

The donations went to the Heart of the Earth School and the Four Winds Native American School. The Four Winds School distributes the supplies to all children in need throughout the Minneapolis school system

MVD emerging leaders selected

DeLisa Kviz, a systems accountant in the district's Resource Management Office and Randy Urich, a forester in the Natural Resource Project Office, La Crescent, Minn., have been selected as MVD (Mississippi Valley Division) emerging leaders. They attended the first MVD Emerging Leaders' Conference in St. Louis in late July-early August.

Lockmasters selected

Dan Schmidt, who was the lockmaster at Lower St. Anthony Falls (LSAF) in Minneapolis, is going to be the new lockmaster at Lock and Dam 5 upon the retirement of Lorne Hedin. Hedin, the current lockmaster, retires on October 3.

Tim Meers, the lock leader at Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, has been selected as lockmaster at LSAF. He will assume his new duties on October 7.

District office prepares for recruiting open house

The Recruitment Committee has sent out invitations to school vocational officials to attend the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' St. Paul District Recruitment Open House on Wednesday, October 17, 2001, from 9 a.m to 4 p.m.

The event is jointly sponsored by the recruitment team, lead by Russell Williams in Project Management, and the Special Emphasis Program Committee.

The objective of the open house is to tell the Corps story to career contacts and to establish partnering relationships for careers at the district and the Corps.

Contacts are Yvonne Berner in Regulatory Branch and Carol Olson in the EEO Office.

Change of seasons requires extra caution when driving

By Chris Beaman
Safety Office

The start of fall means many things to many different people. Some of us look forward to the burst of fall colors while others prepare for family gatherings or gather with friends and family to watch football on television. Still others wait for the first snowfall and a chance to snowboard.

But one thing we can all agree on is the safety of our children. After Memorial Day weekend, the streets will be filled with children heading back to school and, most likely, heading innocently enough into your driving field of view. So please be extra cautious on your drive to and from work. And if you're driving kids to school, make sure they're buckled-in.

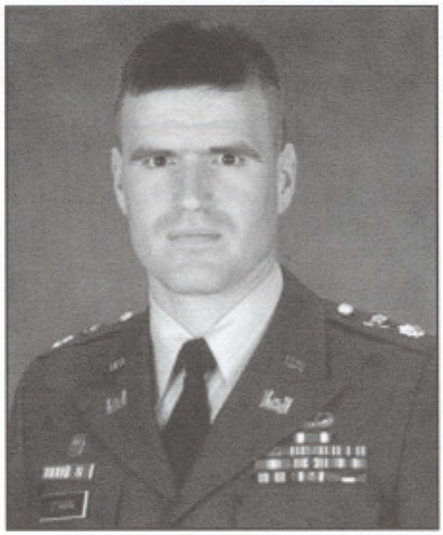
Here are some driving tips to keep in mind:

- Watch for children darting in and out between cars;
- Watch for early-morning cross-country runners;
- Follow the "School-Zone" speed limits;
- Use extra caution at school crosswalks;
- Follow the directions of crossing guards;
- Be aware of school buses loading and unloading children;
- Stop when you see those red flashing lights; it's the law.

O'Hara returns to Minnesota, assumes district deputy job

Maj. (P) Thomas E. O'Hara, Jr., assumed the duties of the St. Paul District deputy district engineer on July 23, 2001, after serving as battalion executive officer, 27th Engineer Battalion (C)(A), Ft. Bragg, N.C.

O'Hara was commissioned into the Corps of Engineers in June 1985 out of St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn. After graduating from the Engineer Officer Basic Course in 1987, O'Hara served in a variety of field assignments. He served as platoon leader and company executive officer in the 11th Engineer Battalion (combat) (heavy). O'Hara was then selected to serve as a joint staff intern in the Capabilities Analysis Division (CAD), J8, for one year. After the Engineer Officer Advanced Course, O'Hara served as the assistant brigade engineer for 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division during Operations Desert Shield/Storm in Southwest Asia. He then was assigned to the 23rd Engineer Battalion, 1st Armor Division in Friedberg, Germany, where he served as company commander, battalion adjutant, and assistant S3. O'Hara was then assigned to the United States Military Academy where he taught Systems Engineering and Engineering Management and served in the Operations Research Center.



Maj. Thomas E. O'Hara, Jr.

Most recently, O'Hara was assigned to XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg from June 1998 - July 2001. In addition to serving as the 27th engineer battalion executive officer, he also served as the XVIII airborne corps engineer plans officer, engineer operations officer, and as the deputy J7, Joint Task Force Bravo, Honduras.

O'Hara's military education includes the engineer officer basic and advanced courses, CAS3, U.S. Army Command and General Staff School, and Jumpmaster School. He has master's degrees in mathematics and operations research from Pennsylvania State University and currently holds the academic rank of assistant professor.

O'Hara's military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with two leaf clusters, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medals, the Senior Parachutist Badge, the Joint Staff Identification Badge, and the bronze deFluery medal.

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Obituary

Retired Assistant Lockmaster Verne Link passed away on Sep. 2, 2001 at the age of 72. Link began his career with the Corps of Engineers at Lock and Dam 9 in Eastman, Wis. He then moved to Lock and Dam 8 in Genoa, Wis., where he retired in 1972 as assistant lockmaster.