US Army Corps of Engineers®
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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Lock and Dam 4 dewatered for maintenance

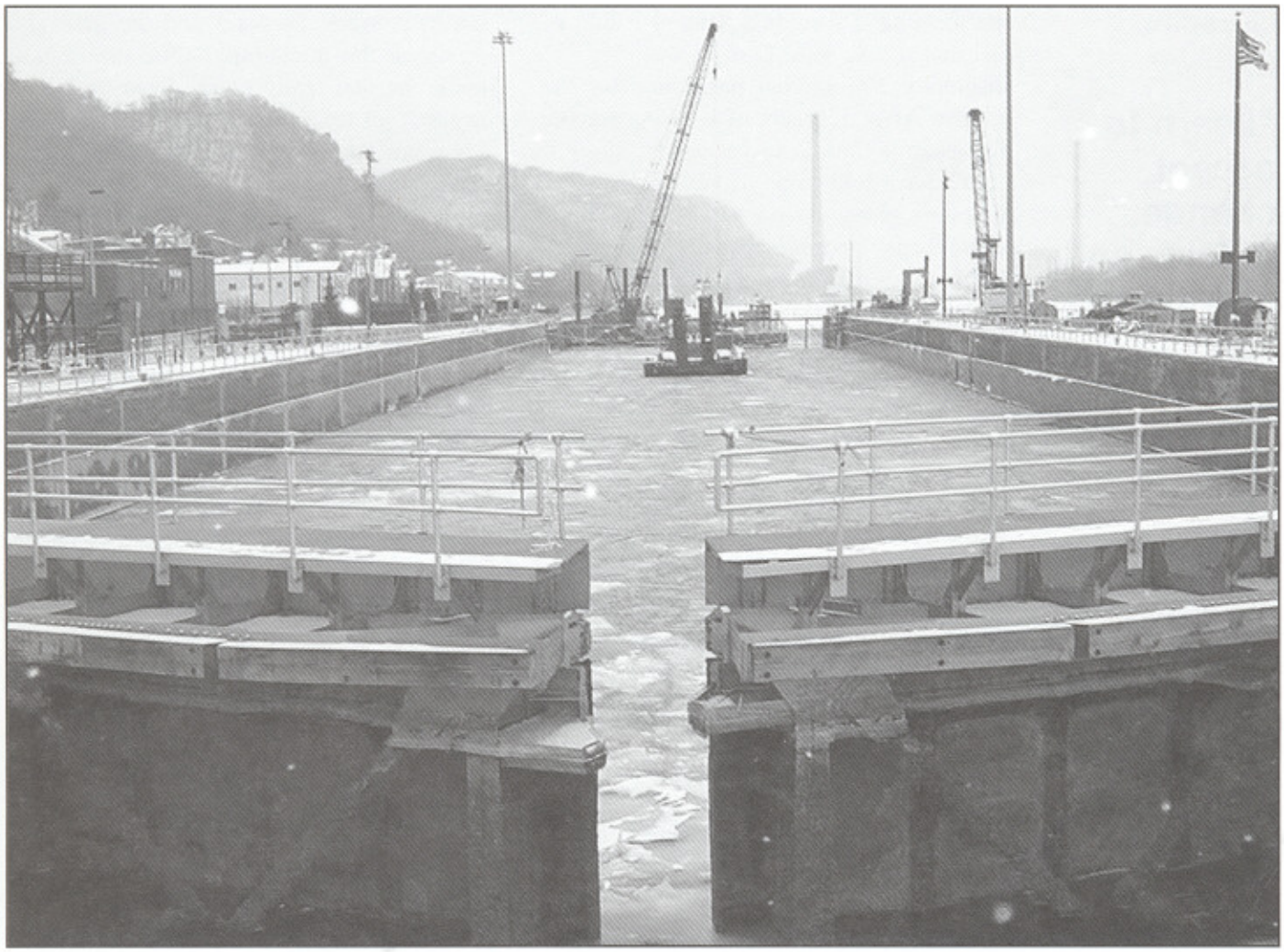


Photo by Lock and Dam 4 staff

Dewatering Lock and Dam 4, Alma, Wis., began in December 2000 and will continue into early March. The main lock chamber, above, is 600 by 110 feet and holds 11 million gallons of water. Water is 22 feet deep when the chamber is full. The Maintenance and Repairs Section in Fountain City worked on most of the repairs. More photos are on pages 4-5.

St. Paul District

Positioned for the future

Chuck Crist

"Learn to accept change quickly and move on to what's next."

By Chuck Crist,
District Deputy for Programs and Project Management

Leaving an organization is not easy if you like your job and respect and believe in the values and the people who make a real commitment to the taxpayers of this country. But as I said at the recent off-site meeting, I wouldn't retire if I didn't feel that the St. Paul District was absolutely 100 percent positioned for the future. After 32 years of working for the district, it is time to leave.

As I have told some of you, I am definitely going out on top — I feel like John Elway, or more recently, Robert Smith (retired professional football players). My moving on is not without emotions, but it is not with any regrets. I look forward to the next stage of my life and I am definitely excited about my future. As with any decision, you move on and don't look back.

Because I will not get to visit one-on-one with many of you in the district, I would like to share some of my thoughts on the organization and the people and my fond memories of what we have accomplished together. Finally, I would like to give you a few additional thoughts about your future.

I first came to the district in early 1970. Being a Second Lieutenant, I was subject to the 24-hour-a-day commitment. Immediately, I spent over a month on flood duty in Minot, N.D., followed by assignments in numerous functional offices, including a significant time in planning (which then was a separate functional organization).

Seeing the Corps family provide emergency support and dealing with some of the early studies that actually ended up as constructed projects showed me that this was a first-class organization truly out for the good of the public. When I got out of the military, I was fortunate to be selected to join the district as an intern. Many of my first responsibilities were in the Red River Valley, and even though I was inexperienced, the respect I received from the local water agencies and the general public at the numerous public meetings made me feel really good. That isn't to say that all the meetings were easy. I was often put on the spot. The demand for quality and cost-effective and timely projects is no different today than it was in the early 70s. Despite that pressure, I realized that the people's frustrations were not personal but were aimed at making the system more accountable and responsive to the needs of the region. In fact, today I still have many of the same friends throughout the valley.

Since I began, I have worked very hard for the customer in trying to do the right and reasonable thing. Often that is not the easy route or the one that always fits nicely into the technical requirements, but trust me, it is the most rewarding.

In today's climate, being an advocate for the customer takes on even more meaning. However, I don't think I operate any differently today than I did many years ago. As federal employees, we all have a responsibility to provide honest, tireless, and selfless-service to all of our customers. Remember, without the customers and the taxpayers, we wouldn't be here.

The Corps organization and family are sound. We have our ups and downs just like other agencies and families; however, no other federal organization can

Future, cont. on next page

Future, cont. from page 2

accomplish or has accomplished what we can. Our ability to provide a service to the country is unparalleled. The significant press that recently took the Corps to task was disconcerting, but you have to realize that we are not infallible. We can always improve the way we do our work for the people. Our professionalism, integrity, honesty, and loyalty are beyond reproach. We are a class organization, but our pride cannot get in the way of helping our customers. As we old-timers leave the organization, all of you have a responsibility to make sure that you don't forget what we are all about.

As others have left the organization throughout my career, every one of them has said that the people are what they will miss most. I have always tried to treat all of you with equal and honest respect. I attribute our success to teamwork.

Over the years, I have been fortunate to always have people work with me and for me that had the same compassion for our mission. I truly can never thank you enough. The customers of the Upper Midwest can be proud of the dedicated servants of the St. Paul District. Likewise, I am very proud of the people we have in the district. We stand above many in the federal government and throughout the Corps. Leaving this situation is the most difficult of all.

When I first came to the district, I was told that if I ever saw one of my studies result in a project, I would be lucky. However, over the years, I have had an opportunity to be involved in numerous studies that have resulted in flood damage reduction, navigation, and more recently, environmental projects. I was the project manager for some of them, but the projects happened only because of the dedication of the team. Other projects were the result of many other teams and the hard work of all of you.

Your challenge in the future is to do our work quicker and for less money, while still maintaining quality. The customer will demand this. The only way you can meet this challenge is to make sure that you add value in everything you do – from a technical computation to the big-picture perspective. The project management business process must be a way of life.

Many of you don't like the word "change," but you need to understand that the world is changing at a rapid rate. You need to recognize and accept this as a daily occurrence. I often am disturbed by the words "buy-in" and "comfortable."

The pace of change is so rapid that there is no time for you to buy-in to change and get comfortable with change. If you take the time, you will miss opportunities – the end result is that the district will not be as effective as it could be and our customers will lose. Learn to accept change quickly and move on to what's next. You will not always like the change, but you must keep in perspective that your basic job does not change in proportion to your feelings or the actual changed condition.

In summary, your future is as sound as you make it. The opportunities are there and collectively your knowledge, skill, ability and experience will allow this district to continue in the proud tradition of our retirees. The focus on those primary areas of importance was particularly supported at the off-site meeting — all of you need to make sure they are a reality. The off-site memorandum will serve as a road map for all to enthusiastically follow and support. Always look forward, think ahead, work hard, and see the fun side of things. Continue to build on successes and listen to the requirements of our customers, but please keep your work, family, community, and self in balance.

I have been truly blessed to have the opportunity to work with you. Thank you with all sincerity.

"Listen to the requirements of our customers, but please keep your work, family, community and self in balance."

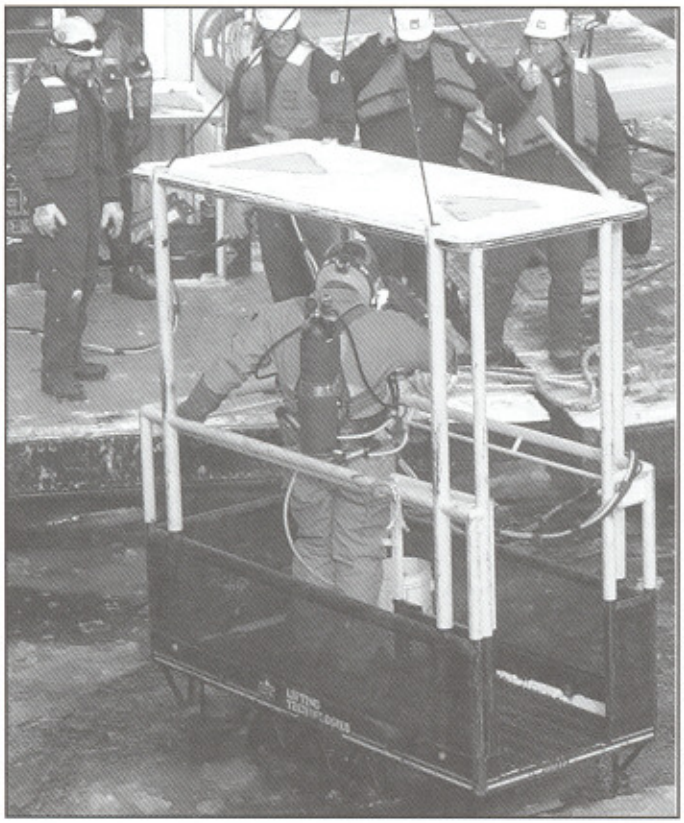
Lock and dam at Alma dewatered

Photos by the staff at Lock and Dam 4

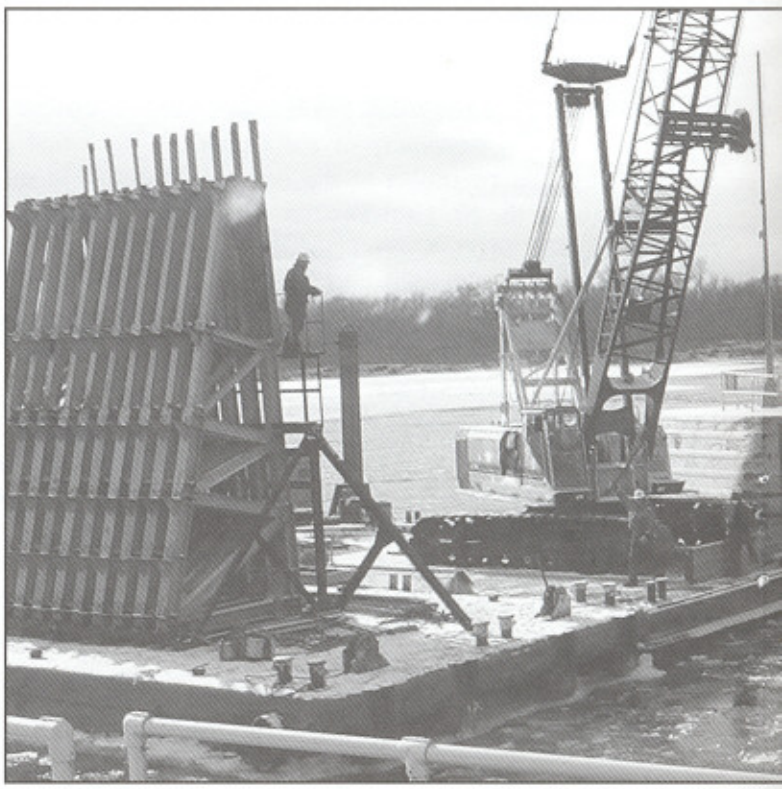
Danny Kircher, lock and dam operator at Lock and Dam 4 in Alma, Wis., carries lumber.

Mike Siebel, from the Maintenance and Repair Section in Fountain City, removes old lock armor and concrete by a mitre gate.

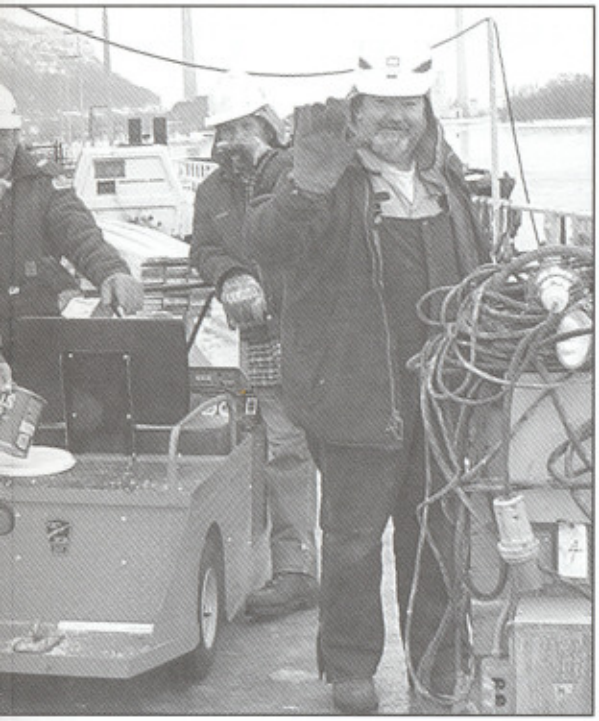
From the left are: W 4; Tim Mertse, weld operator; and Joe D



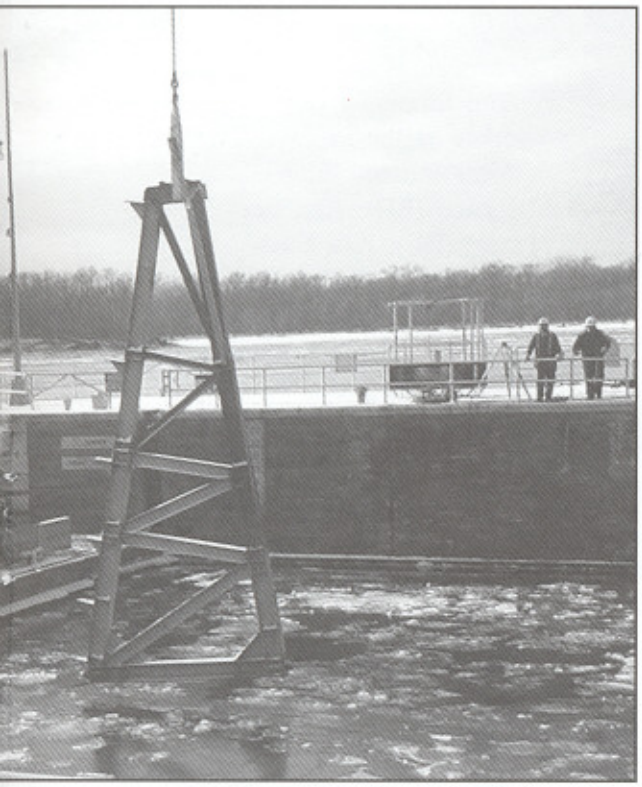
Bill Chelmowski, a diver with Maintenance and Repair Section, descends into ice-covered water of the lock chamber in late December as part of preparations to dewater the lock.



A stack of A-frames on the left dwarf Lloyd Dosh from the Main crane lowers a frame into the lock chamber to form a bulkhead



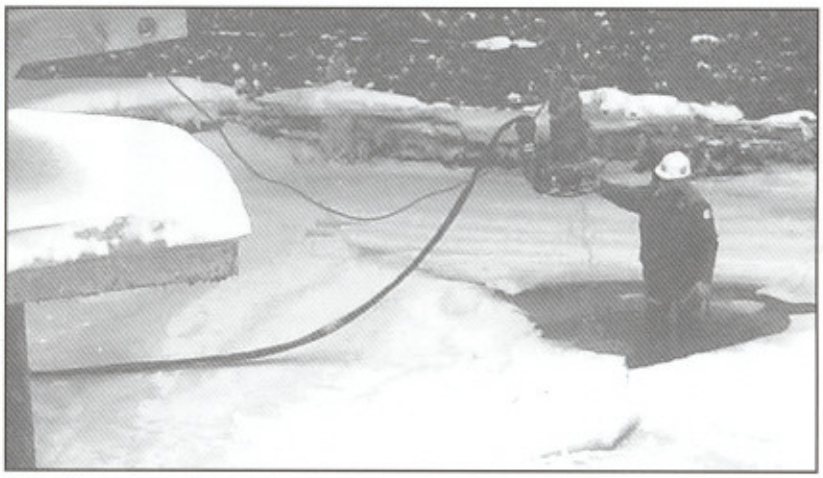
William Mountin, head operator Lock and Dam
lder, Fountain City; Allen Breitung, crane
e Dale, a head operator at Lock Dam 4.



aintenance and Repair Section in Fountain City. A
ad to dewater the lock chamber.

Danny Kircher with hammer, and Duane Wilson, from the Lac Qui Parle project in Watson, Minn., install a trip guard over electrical cable.

Connie Brantner, an office automation clerk, and William Mountin, head operator, stand in a valve tunnel nearly 600 feet long at the bottom of the lock chamber. The tunnel functions to lower water levels in the lock chamber.



Dewatering requires installing a pump to keep water levels low in the lock chamber for maintenance.

Nearly 600 visit booth at Government on Display

Photo by Jon Lyman

In the top photo from the left are: Andrea Childress, Dave Valen and Mark Davidson. Staffing the district's display in the bottom photo are Karen Cassidy, Shelly Shafer and Marsha Gilliland.

Photo by Peter Verstegen

By Mark Davidson,
Chief of Public Affairs

Nearly 600 people visited or picked up information at the district display at the third annual Government on Display Expo on Feb. 3-4, at the Mall of America in Bloomington. Mall of America officials estimate that more than 360,000 people visited the mall that weekend.

The district's display was located in the Nordstrom's Court for the first time. Mark Davidson, Public Affairs Office chief, was the Nordstrom's Court coordinator for 10 federal and state agencies with a land management and natural resources mission. The event is sponsored by the Federal Executive Board of Minnesota.

The following district personnel worked at the event:

John Bailen, Engineering Division (ED); Ken Beck, Real Estate (RE); Ken Buck, Construction-Operations (CO); Karen Cassidy, ED; Andrea Childress, ED; Bob Dempsey, ED; Marsha Gilliland, CO; Paul Johnson, ED; Robert Keady, RM; Jodie Kormanik, ED; Linda Krueger, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC); Jan Lassen, ED; Kari Layman, ED; Jon Lyman, Information Management (IM); Mark Nelson, RE; Grant Riddick, ED; Shelly Shafer, CO; Georgia Stanonik, Office of Counsel (OC); Lori Taylor; and ED; Dave Valen, ED.

An introduction to the Corps and Regulatory

Article and photos by Nadine DuPree, Public Affairs Student

My name is Nadine DuPree and I'm a student employee working in the Public Affairs Office. I started working for the Corps last June. Truthfully, I would have to say I didn't even know that the Corps existed before I was hired. I'm still becoming more familiar with the many branches and programs of the Corps.

To further my knowledge about the St. Paul District and the Corps, I have been assigned to write monthly stories about the roles and missions of divisions, offices, branches and sections that my fellow employees might find interesting. The general idea of the story is just to get an overview as a way to gain a better understanding.

As I began my research the first resource I turned to was the district web site. There I was immediately overwhelmed with information. I took a few days to read through all the information. After my research I was able to come up with questions to ask during my interviews. The subject of my first story is the Regulatory Branch.

The first person I interviewed was Yvonne Berner, a project manager for the St. Cloud area. "The purpose of the Clean Water Act is to restore and maintain the biological integrity of the water of the United States," said Berner.

The Regulatory Branch administers Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged of fill material into water, including wetlands. Section 10 regulates structures or work affecting navigable water of the United States.

"All permits are evaluated in accordance with Section 404, which prohibits discharging dredged or fill material into U.S. water without a permit from the Corps," Berner said.

The district maintains Regulatory offices throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin. Mick Weburg, an ecologist said, "The district reviews about 1,200 projects in Minnesota and 1,600 in Wisconsin each year."

I asked Berner what was the most important thing she wanted people to know about regulatory issues and she said, "I would want people to know we have to go by the rules that are handed down to us, and that a regulatory goal is to encourage no net loss of wetlands."

I asked Berner what is the public reaction to the Corps when they find out that they need a permit. "Most people understand and are cooperative," Berner said. "But there are some people who get upset because the Army is involved in regulating their land.

"Another goal is to help the public have a better understanding of regulatory, because it is a customer service branch that deals strictly with the public. Regulatory relies on and invites input from the public as well as other Corps programs and offices, such as the Office of Counsel, and Project Management," Berner said.

This article is a simple overview of the regulatory program. I would also like to take this moment to thank the very knowledgeable people in the Regulatory Branch for their time.

I will be writing monthly stories about the roles and missions of divisions, offices and other branches of the district. If you have any story ideas they would be appreciated. You are welcome to call, e-mail, or stop by the Public Affairs Office.

Michael (Mick) Weburg, an ecologist

Yvonne Berner, project manager for the area around St. Cloud, Minn.

Black History Month: Education is vital lesson

By Nadine DuPree, Public Affairs Student

February is African-American History Month and many schools around the metro area participate in an event called National African-American Parent Involvement Day or (NAPID). I participated because I'm an African-American Corps employee who attends high school. NAPID gives parents of Africa-American children a chance to see what their children's school day is like first hand. Parents are better able to attend to their children's educational needs and concerns, making it easier to become more involved in their education.

I participated in NAPID day at Harding High School in Saint Paul where I'm currently a senior. A student group called African-American Student Advocacy Program, or ASAP, of which I am a committee chairperson, sponsors NAPID day at Harding.

The day began with a continental breakfast with parents and students. Parents attended morning classes with their child and discussed any concerns they might have with their child's teacher.

At lunchtime, parents met in the community center that is connected to Harding. At the center they may have lunch with some of other parents. After lunch, students sang the Black National Anthem and presented original rap and poetry.

Toward the end of the day a school administrator, student representatives and their parents held a forum. The group formed a consensus to express concerns and suggest ways that parents can be more involved. Concerns ranged from lack of programs for African-American students to parents having a stronger voice in the education of their children. Participants learned both of networking opportunities with other parents of African-American children and of the importance of African-American history class so students can understand their history. NAPID student committee members and parents agreed that NAPID was a big success and beginning of long-overdue changes. The event sent a strong message to African-American students that education is the foundation for a successful life.

Crosscurrents

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St. Paul District

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Address all inquiries to:

Editor, *Crosscurrents*
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Army Corps of Engineers Centre
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

District Engineer — Col. Kenneth Kasprisin
Public Affairs Chief — Mark Davidson
Editor — Peter Verstegen

e-mail: cemvp-pa@usace.army.mil
Phone: 651-290-5202

Obituaries

Char Hauger, 53, acting chief of Regulatory Branch and Chief of Policy Analysis Section, died on Feb. 13, 2001. The service was held in Stillwater, Minn., on Feb. 17. Memorials to the American Cancer Society.

David R. Peck, 48, Captain of the Dredge William A. Thompson, in Fountain City, Wis., at the emergency room of Community Memorial Hospital in Winona, from a heart attack on Feb. 4. 2001. The service was held February 7 in Alma, Wis. He is survived by his wife, Nancy, an employee of Channels and Harbors Project in Fountain City.

Ron Iverson, 51, a tender operator (river pilot) in the Maintenance and Repair Section of the Physical Support Branch, Fountain City, Wis., of natural causes, on Jan. 18, 2001. He started with the St. Paul District in Oct. 1985 as a deck hand on the Dredge Thompson. The funeral was held January 22 in Rushford, Minn.

Burnell Reinitz, lockmaster at Lock and Dam 10, Guttenberg, Iowa, from the late 1960s until his retirement in 1986, died on Dec. 13, 2000.

Emil K. Bodal, age 96, of Deephaven, Minn., died on February 18, 2001. Emil (known as Jack to his friends, worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for 37 years (1930-1967). He was assistant chief of Construction Division.