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St. Paul District

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Navigation season opens on Upper Mississippi River



Neal Knutson (left) and Tom Krumholz, both lock and dam operators, locked through a tow and barges at Lock and Dam 3 in Red Wing, Minn., April 4, the first week of navigation season. See "Navigation season begins with first tow," Page 3.

After-action reviews signify a learning organization

By Col. Robert Ball
District Engineer

We have been hearing for a year now that the Corps of Engineers is to become a learning organization. The Chief of Engineers and others have written articles on the subject that let us in on the picture. Brig. Gen. Riley, the Mississippi Valley Division commander, has directed that all supervisors conduct at least one after-action review a week to get us into the habit of analyzing our performance and looking for ways to improve. I thought I would give

you my sense for where we are in the transformation to an organization that is constantly learning and spreading that knowledge to others.

The use of after-action reports is well established, whether it is Judy DesHarnais conducting one to teach me how to get on the Metro in Washington, D.C., or Darrel Oldenburg having one on why we don't store the snow removal equipment away before the biggest snowfall of the year.

To get the best use out of these, we need to make sure everyone feels free to participate. That means that ideas aren't ridiculed, people aren't singled out for criticism and anyone with an idea participates – no matter what their position in the organization. My sense is we have a little work to do in those areas.

Spreading the newly learned lesson is a challenge. Telling folks what you know by word of mouth doesn't reach as far as we need it to in a 750 person organization – and it certainly doesn't get the word out to all of USACE. The good folks in information management are looking into automated knowledge management systems that might be of help. Other districts in the division are involved in this experiment, and we hope to have something fielded soon. Until then, we need to keep using things like the geotech branch's project of the month seminar or civilian personnel advisory center's brown-bag seminars to spread the knowledge around.

The after-action review and knowledge management systems are just tools we use on the journey to become a learning organization. If we conduct our daily business in an atmosphere that is open to new ideas and seeks input from others,

we are on track for that journey. Add to that conducting business in a manner that values each other and treats each other with dignity and respect, and we will have not only a learning organization but one in which people can't wait to come to work each day.

Three outcomes emerge at strategic planning session

By Deb Griffith
and Lupe Santos-Jensen

Six outcomes from a December offsite became three outcomes at the February district strategic planning offsite meeting held in downtown St. Paul.

The meeting was the second in a series that focused on developing performance measures for outcomes that were introduced at the December 2002 offsite meeting. More than 50 district employees comprised of senior leaders, supervisors and the Leadership Development Program members attended the two-day meeting.

As an Army Performance Improvement Criteria reminder, here are the basic definitions that the district is using:

Outcomes: Desired end-states that the district, along with others, is trying to achieve and maintain through its mission.

Performance measurement: The process of evaluating work through the use of an algorithm and regularly collected data, for the purpose of giving insight to efficiency or success of the activity.

"The district steering committee, comprised of senior leaders, reviewed the six outcomes

Outcomes, continued Page 12



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Crosscurrents

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Water control team maximizes benefits of water resources

The Corps operates the locks and dams on the Mississippi River for navigation and not flood control.

By Shannon Bauer

Maintaining the region's water resources for maximum economic and environmental benefit is a 24-and-seven operation for the district.

Congress mandates the Corps of Engineers maintain a nine-foot channel on the Mississippi River, control the water levels and monitor the water quality at each of its projects and more on a daily basis.

To do this at the St. Paul District, there is a 10-person water control team, located in the water control and hydrology section that focuses on water resources. "We're a highly-specialized, capable group with a wide variety of abilities," said Bob Engelstad, chief of this section. "Maintaining the water levels throughout the region is a significant

responsibility, and we have to do it right. If we don't, we could flood people out or devastate a local economy."

Engelstad, who's been a hydraulic engineer with the Corps for 31 years, explained that the different Corps' projects maintained by the district are operated for many purposes, such as navigation, flood control, water supply or environmental enhancement. "We have a number of different interest groups that watch our actions very closely," he explained. "We try and operate in a way that meets the interests of all those concerned."

Both the river and the reservoirs have water control plans, which have been approved by the Mississippi Valley Division and Congress. The St. Paul District may not deviate from these plans without going through a public involvement process and obtaining approval up the chain all the way to Washington, D.C.

Water, continued Page 4



St. Paul District photo

Dennis Holme checks water quality.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Rich Pomerleau

Navigation season begins with first tow

By Shannon Bauer

The first tow of the year arrived in St. Paul, Minn., late Sunday evening, March 30, marking the beginning of this year's navigation season. The Phyllis, a tow operated by Alter Barge Line Company of Bettendorf, Iowa, locked through Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn., at 10:45 p.m. and arrived in St. Paul before midnight.

More tows have passed through Lock and Dam 2 since then, and the navigation season has begun. The Minneapolis locks received their first tows in early April.

The average opening date of the navigation season in St. Paul for the last 10 years is March 17. The navigation season opened late this year in St. Paul because of the thick ice on the Mississippi River, particularly on Lake Pepin.

Navigation season opens on Upper Mississippi River



Photo by Jeff Pfannes

Water, continued from Page 3

The Corps operates the locks and dams on the Mississippi River for navigation and not flood control. The locks and dams create slack-water pools for navigation during periods of low- and moderate-level water. These dams, combined with dredging, allows the Corps to maintain the nine-foot channel on the river.

Scott Bratten, a 25-year veteran at the St. Paul District, regulates the pool levels from Upper Saint Anthony Falls in Minneapolis to Lock and Dam 10 in Guttenberg, Iowa.

Each day, he checks pool elevation and water flow at each of these locks and dams. This data is entered into a computer system by the lockmasters. Bratten also



St. Paul District photo

Ferris Chamberlin and Scott Bratten at the gage house in La Crosse, Wis. The antenna at top transmits data.

checks data collected from gages the district has strategically placed around the region, as well as information provided by the National Weather Service and various power plants located on the rivers.

For each pool, there is a primary control point, where a predetermined water elevation must be kept for navigation to continue. Bratten uses the data he's collected on the current flows, elevations and forecasted weather to predict how high or low he must move the gates on each dam to maintain the correct elevation at each primary control point. He monitors his changes throughout the day to ensure he's made the correct modifications.

Regulating upriver affects pools below

How Bratten regulates upriver will affect each pool below, including the pools maintained by Rock Island District, the district directly below St. Paul. He said he maintains contact with his Rock Island counterpart daily.

The busiest season for him is navigation season. "If there's any major rain events or when we're going into winter and the river converts to ice, it can be a bit tricky," he said. "Then, we sometimes have to make changes throughout the day."

In times of flood, Bratten said he removes the gates on all the locks and dams and the water flows in as if the dam wasn't there; it's what he calls "open river condition." He doesn't empty the pools for flood control, he said, because even if he were to completely drain the pools, they're not that big, they'd fill up again in hours.

Reservoirs operated for flood control

Unlike the operating plan for the river, which is operated for navigation, the reservoirs are operated mainly for flood control and recreation purposes. They also don't need to be operated



Photo by Dave Ekstrand

Ted Pedersen out on snow survey

every day of the year like the locks and dams,

explained Kenton Spading, who regulates the Corps' dams in the Mississippi River Headwaters reservoirs.

"Normally in the summer, we're operating primarily for recreation and environmental concerns," he explained. "And in the winter, we're drawing down the reservoirs for spring runoff."

Spading, who's been at the Corps since 1984 and in water control since 1994, regulates the Mississippi Headwaters dams of Leech, Winnibigoshish, Big Sandy, Cross, Pokegema and Gull lakes. There's also a Corps' Red River of the North dam on Red Lake but the Headwaters operations staff regulates it. He also regulates the Eau Galle dam on the Eau Galle River.

Winnibigoshish, Leech, Pokegema and Big Sandy are regulated to provide flood protection for Aitkin, Minn., which is located downstream. Pine River and Gull

Water, continued Page 5

Water, continued from Page 4 can be operated for flood control during extremely wet winters but usually aren't.

The Eau Galle dam was built to protect the city of Spring Valley, Wis., after a huge flood in the 1940s wiped out much of the city.

Most of the reservoirs are drawn down in the winter to provide for spring rain and snowmelt storage. Winnibigoshish and Leech are so big, though, that the drawdowns need to start in September or October each year. "You have to start letting the water out before you know whether or not it's going to snow," said Spading. "You're always kind of biting your nails, wondering if you're going to get down enough or down too far.

Water for fishing opener

"If you let out too much, you won't have enough water back in the reservoir in time for the opening of fishing," he continued. "And if you don't let out enough and there's a lot of snow in March, you could flood people out. It can be a very stressful job."

Ferris Chamberlin, a hydraulic engineer, regulates the St. Paul District reservoirs in North Dakota and western Minnesota. He's been with the Corps 20 years, in water control for the past six. The dams he regulates include Baldhill, Homme, Lac qui Parle, Orwell, White Rock, Reservation and the Highway 75 dam.

Baldhill Dam, located on the Sheyenne River in North Dakota and which forms the Lake Ashtabula Reservoir, is regulated primarily for flood control for the protection of Valley City, N.D., Reservation and White Rock dams, which caused the formation of Lake

Traverse and Mud Lake reservoirs, provide flood protection for Wahpeton, N.D., and Breckenridge, Minn., as does Orwell Dam on the Ottertail River in Minnesota. Lac qui Parle dam, on the Minnesota River, helps protect Montevideo, Minn.

Unlike other reservoirs, which are drawn down in the winter, the Lac qui Parle pool is raised a foot in the winter for the benefit of fish habitat. In the spring, he draws it back down to conservation level to make room for spring runoff.

Chamberlin regulates the Homme Dam, located on the Park River in North Dakota, for water supply. He said, "It provides a small amount of flood control benefit on the Park River."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service controls the Highway 75 dam. It drains into the Minnesota River and affects the city of Montevideo, Minn. It was constructed for mitigation measures, and Chamberlin regulates it in accordance to the wishes of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Since the regulators can't always be at work everyday, Farley Haase, water control technician, will regulate the locks and dams or reservoirs when they're out. He's been at the Corps' 15 years, in water control for the last three.



Photo by Ted Pedersen
Dave Ekstrand out on snow survey

When he's not subbing for the regulators, Haase calls several of the district's field sites daily to check their water levels and make needed adjustments. He also records and archives data for the water control section, as well as works on updating the operating manuals for each site. Since they each need to be updated every 10 years, he said, it's an ongoing process.

"Working with the reservoirs is pretty interesting," he said. "It's a challenge, though, to keep the water within its limits."

According to Engelstad, the regulators must deal with the public a lot. They get numerous calls regarding lake levels and whether or not they think it's going to flood. There are a lot of public meetings, he said, and a lot of explaining to upstream folks what goes on downstream and vice versa. He said, "Experience is critical to our success."

Rich Pomerleau, a hydraulic engineer who's been with the Corps since 1974, maintains the district's Corps' Water Management System. This high-end information system, with its own servers connected to the rest of the Corps' system, collects and interprets hydraulic data from across the region, as well as integrates it with other regional data across the country. This information supports project operation decisions.

Gage data beamed to satellite

Reservoir managers and lock and dam operators enter data daily into the system, as is data from automated gages that are beamed to a satellite. A dedicated phone line facilitates two-way data exchange to the National Weather Service.

Water, continued Page 10

Three support recovery from typhoon in Guam

By Peter Verstegen

Snakes. Earthquakes. Typhoons. Bad water.

Two engineers and an [hydraulic technician](#) from the Army Corps of Engineers' St. Paul District endured these and other hazards when they traveled to the small island of Guam, more than 7,500 miles west of the Twin Cities, to help residents recover from typhoon Pongsona. They were there from early January to early February 2003.

Liz Nelsen, Dave Ekstrand and Corby Lewis, engineering division, responded to a call to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency for debris removal in the aftermath of the storm that trashed Guam Dec. 8.

The category-five typhoon had left one fatality, 400 injuries and 32,000 homeless before it moved out to sea. The typhoon flattened Guam, dimmed power generation, contaminated the water supply – even bottled water – and cut phone service in many areas. President George W. Bush had declared Guam and the Commonwealth of Mariana Islands a federal disaster Dec. 11, 2002.

The typhoon had blown through Guam soon after the close of the June – November rainy and windy season. Maximum sustained winds of 150 m.p.h., with gusts up to 184 m.p.h., trashed this unincorporated U.S. territory.

The island is 30 miles long, from 4-12 miles wide and is the largest island in Micronesia. It is 16 hours ahead of central time. The economy depends mainly on U.S. military and tourism.

The Corps' missions were a subset of what FEMA was doing on the island. Missions included water supply, temporary housing, emergency power, debris removal, remote sensing and geographic information, logistics and technical assistance, among others. FEMA had authorized \$17.5 million for the debris mission.

Corby Lewis volunteered for the mission in mid-December. "I was asked to assist with the mission on

January 3 by St. Paul District Emergency Operations Center personnel. I was notified that assistance was needed as soon as possible and that I should be ready to fly out by Jan. 5. Lewis departed Jan. 7 after fulfilling domestic obligations.

"On Jan. 8, I went through the in-process at the Aloha Reception Center at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, with a three other debris mission personnel," continued Lewis. "We



St. Paul District photo

"The 'trophy' was actually a champagne fountain that I found in the debris that a private citizen dropped off at the Dededo reduction site," said Dave Ekstrand. He is standing beside local residents hired by the contractor to work at the site. "The trophy was a joke by myself to try and lighten up and create a friendly work environment at the reduction site. The two with Ekstrand were from a crew of six who worked long days with him in the aftermath of typhoon Pongsona. Ekstrand has worked six disasters, not counting emergencies in the St. Paul District.

were given a safety briefing, issued emergency operations clothing, given instructions for filling out time-sheets, checked to insure that

we had taken the appropriate vaccinations and issued airline tickets to fly out that afternoon.” Lewis crossed the International



Photo by Corby Lewis

Liz Nelsen, right, hands a job ticket to a foreman for Environmental Chemical Corporation, Inc., the prime contractor for the debris removal. “The picture was taken at the end of the day in the village of Dededo,” said Nelsen. “My job as a quality assurance was to watch what was being put in into the trucks and to then write tickets out. This was how they got paid.”



St. Paul District photo

Corby Lewis (center) and the debris removal crew with whom he worked, paused at the end of a day’s work in a neighborhood subdivision at Dededo, Guam, Jan. 15. Debris crews had collected 52,700 cubic yards of an estimated 300,000 cubic yards of debris by that date.

Date Line the next day and reported to the disaster field office Jan. 10. “We were briefed by the colonel, issued cell phones, given rental car contracts, and given tours of the debris mission on the island,” said Lewis.

Ekstrand, Lewis, Nelsen and others received a briefing upon arrival at the disaster field office about what to expect from living and working conditions on the island.

They arrived at the start of the dry season. “Many days it did not rain at all,” said Ekstrand, an hydraulic technician. “A hot easterly wind for days blew clouds of dust through the debris sites, making you cough, as the dust coated your greasy, sun-screened body with a layer of filth. One day meshed with the next,” said Ekstrand. “My days were long, working from 6:30 a.m to 7 p.m. for five weeks.”

“I was part of the quality assurance team,” said Nelsen. “Except for a few days in the beginning, I had the same crew the entire time. My crew consisted of at the start one backhoe, two trucks and three laborers. It continually changed,” she said. “At times I had four backhoes and 10-15 trucks.

“Driving on the island was hard, especially at the beginning, because when we arrived only a few of the traffic lights on the island had power,” said Ekstrand. “Guam National Guard troops manned the busy intersections during the day, but we started and finished work in the dark.”

They experienced the earth shaking and heard about snakes slithering at night. “While there, I felt a couple of tremors,” said Ekstrand. “Jan. 27, a tremor at 10:30 p.m. shook my bed sideways.”

Guam, continued on Page 13

Himmerich, Mose, Rothstein, Schneider named St. Paul District Civil Servants of the Year



Dave Himmerich

Position Title: Acting chief, information management.
Duties: Providing information management/information technology support to the district for approximately 750 personnel. Serve as a consultant and technical advisor to the commander and staff. Through subordinate supervisors and a

35-person staff, manage the IM/IT activities and resources that include: automation, telecommunications, library, records management, printing, publication and visual information services in support of the district's missions.

Years at Corps: 18.

Previous Positions: Civil engineer in general engineering section, assistant to design branch chief, project manager.

Education: Bachelor of Science, civil engineering, Univ. of Wisconsin-Platteville, Wis.

Hobbies: Church leadership, choir, home improvements, woodworking and camping.

Residence: Brooklyn Center, Minn.

Family: Wife of 17 years and three sons.

Comment: "Having the nomination by my peers is an honor to receive this award, and thrilled by the fact that I was actually selected as a Civil Servant of the Year," said Dave Himmerich. "As I look around the Saint Paul District and see the high degree of professionalism and commitment to public service that so many folks have, it gives great meaning to this award. It is this commitment to quality service of so many that makes me proud to a part of the Corps family. Thank you all for this recognition as Civil Servant of the Year!"



Amy Rothstein

Position Title: Program analyst on detail to project management.
Duties: Performs budgeting, programming and analytical support functions for programs and project management division; works with PPMD management, project managers and others to prepare, analyze

and justify budget estimates.

Also works with project managers to identify and track local cost-sharing responsibilities for studies and projects within PPMD and facilitates financial closeout of studies and projects upon completion.

Years at Corps: 12.

Previous Positions: Budget officer, budget analyst, supervisory accountant and staff accountant.

Education: Bachelor of Science, accounting, St. Cloud State Univ., St. Cloud, Minn., summa cum laude.

Hobbies: Spending time with her family, relaxing at the cabin, volunteering time with her daughter's Girl Scouts troop and church activities.

Residence: Ramsey, Minn.

Family: Husband, son and daughter

Comments: "I am honored to receive this award," said Amy Rothstein. "I have had the privilege of working with good people over the years. I attribute a lot of my success to the opportunity, support and encouragement I have received."



Marsha Mose

Position Title: Executive assistant.
Duties: Strategic planning, congressional liaison, project management of special events, strategic communications, and whatever the district engineer wants me to do.
Years at Corps: 11 years off-and-on with the district; six years in

Germany with ties back to district.
Previous Positions: Geotech engineer, engineer manager, project manager, chief programs management
Education: Bachelor's degree in civil engineering, Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis.
Hobbies: Gardening, fishing (or hanging out in the boat while others fish), photography, nature, hiking and biking.
Residence: Hudson, Wis.
Family: Husband and seven- year-old son. Two dogs, one cat and one new blue-tongue skink (lizard).
Comments: "It's such an honor to be recognized by my fellow employees in this way," said Marsha Mose. "I am very grateful to be working with such wonderful people."



Michelle Schneider

Position Title: On detail as project manager; permanently, hydraulic engineer.
Duties: Project management: Manage an environmental restoration study and flood insurance studies, hydraulics - modeling and design of environmental restoration projects and navigation projects.

Years at Corps: 11.
Previous Positions: civil engineer.
Education: Master of Science, civil engineering; bachelor's degree, civil engineering, Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis.
Hobbies: Playing with my children, home improvements, gardening; Before kids – watching hockey and television in general.
Residence: Shoreview, Minn.
Family: Husband and three children.
Comments: "It's an honor to receive this award," said Michelle Schneider. "Thank you."

Researchers seek to improve fish passage

An interagency team is looking at ways to improve fish passage through the navigation dams that restrict fish movements on the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway. The effort recognizes that improving fish passage through the dams is a valuable way to restore the river ecosystem, and it's one that can be accomplished through changes in dam operation and with structural fishways.

Of the native fish species in the river system, at least 34 migrate, including rare species like paddlefish and popular sport fish (catfish, walleye, northern pike and bass). The migrating fish can move downriver through locks, as well as gated sections of the dam. Upriver passage, however, is dependent on hydraulic conditions through the dam gates and individual fish behavior and swimming abilities.

The study looks at possible operational changes in addition to structural modifications that could improve fish passage, thus improving access to new habitats. That improved access to habitats could potentially benefit fish and mussel populations throughout the river system. The technical report, expected in June 2003, looks at: the importance of habitat connectivity; fish behavior and swimming performance; alternatives for improving fish passage; ways to limit the passage of invasive fish species; site priorities; evaluation of cost and benefits; and implementation recommendations. Directed questions or comments to Dan Wilcox, a Corps of Engineers fisheries biologist with the St. Paul District, at 651-290-5276 or daniel.b.wilcox@usace.army.mil.

From the *UMR-IWW System Navigation Study Newsletter*, March 2003.

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Regulators around the Corps have hydrologic models and forecasts at their fingertips. As does the general public, since much of it is located on the internet. "We want to get the hydrologic data out to the whole world as quickly and efficiently as possible," he said. "It helps reacting to a flood happen a lot faster." In fact, more than two million people looked at the water control section's website during the 2001 floods for water information.

Pomerleau's job consists of ensuring needed data arrives each day, as well as that the system keeps running. "There's nothing worse than coming in to work in the morning and having one of the regulators waiting for you because somebody can't input the data," he said. "Every day is different."

A system of 110 gages

The information in CWMS, however, is only as good as the data going in. Ted Pedersen and Dave Ekstrand, hydrology technicians, maintain a system of 110 gages throughout the district's rivers and projects.

Each gage measures the water levels, water temperature, wind speed and wind direction. They are small units, about one foot by one foot and six inches deep. Most of them send the information to CWMS via phone or satellite.

Pedersen, whose been at the Corps for 23 years and in water control for the last six of those

years, said he and Ekstrand periodically check each gage to make sure they are providing accurate information.

In addition to maintaining the gages, they also accomplish the annual snow surveys each year. They measure the depth of the snow throughout the district to help both the operators and the National Weather Service determine the

amount of spring runoff there will be and allow them to predict whether or not there will be flooding.

"You can't get how deep the snow is from a satellite," said Pedersen. "We have to go out in the field and take a look."

The water quality program run by this section is mandated by the Clean Water

Act of 1972. The Corps is required to monitor the water quality at all of its reservoir projects, as well as the locks and dams, to determine a baseline for water quality conditions and to identify problems. Where they find problems, they are supposed to work with other environmental agencies to develop improvement strategies.

Dennis Holme, a physical scientist who's been with the Corps for 26 years, works on the water quality program with Jim Noren. He said they ensure proper samples are taken throughout the district and then sent to a lab for testing. "We have several instruments that measure temperature, specific conductance, dissolved oxygen and acidity," he said.

Holme said the district's been monitoring its projects for a number of years and there are some that are improving, some staying the same and some that are degrading. Where there are concerns, he explained, he and Noren are working with other agencies, such as the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency or the North Dakota Public Health Department, to try and identify and solve the problem.

They also support the district's dredging program by testing ground water quality at dredging sites, as well as the material being dredged.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Kenton Spading



Photo by Peter Versteegen

Steven Mottl, left, and Bob Anfang stuff the Devils Lake, N.D., planning and environmental impact statement into boxes for mailing April 8. The report identifies constructing a 300-cubic-feet-per-second outlet from Pelican Lake to the Sheyenne River as the preferred alternative to alleviate flood damage at Devils Lake, if the lake continues to rise. The project is estimated to cost \$186.5 million in today's dollars. The main report is also posted on the St. Paul District website at: www.mvp.usace.army.mil/

Congressional trips build relationships

By Marsha Mose

Marsha Mose accompanied Col. Robert Ball, Judy DesHarnais and Jim Stadelman to Washington, D.C. in March to discuss projects with policymakers in Congress.

Col. Robert Ball, district engineer, mentioned in last month's *Crosscurrents* he had been in Washington, D.C., in March, visiting U.S. representatives and U.S. senators in whose districts and states the St. Paul District operates.

The district visits with its congressional delegation in Washington twice each year, once in the spring and once in the fall. The spring visit is usually timed to be soon after the release of the President's budget.

This way, the district leadership is able to discuss the budget numbers with the various members and to address their concerns if the budget is not to their liking, especially on specifically authorized projects within their districts.

The members may ask the district commander to provide supporting documentation for them to pursue increased funding for certain projects or programs, or to fund something that wasn't. The district engineer also briefs the members about the status of ongoing projects.

Judy DesHarnais, the deputy for programs and project management, regularly participates in the visits along with the district commander. For this last visit, Jim Stadelman, chief of programs management also participated.

"As a first-timer to the congressional visit process," said



Photo by Marsha Mose

Judy DesHarnais, deputy for programs and project management, and Col. Robert Ball, district engineer, brief U.S. Rep. Earl Pomeroy of North Dakota about district projects in his district. At right is A.J. Wojciak, a legislative aide.

Stadelman, "I found it fascinating to observe the inner workings of our government. It was a privilege to play a part, however small, in educating our members of congress and their staffs about the work we do in the St. Paul District."

"What surprised me most was the steady stream of supplicants we saw at most of the Congressional offices we visited – each group attempting to educate and influence their elected representatives," continued Stadelman.

The district contingent visited with all the senators and representatives from Minnesota and North Dakota, and the senators and representatives of second, third, seventh and eighth congressional districts of Wisconsin. This meant 19 individual meetings in four days.

The meetings were held in the members' offices, which are located in one of six buildings on either side of the U.S. Capitol. The group walked a great deal and found

knowledge of the building layouts and the tunnels and labyrinths that connect them invaluable – especially in rainy weather.

When a particular senator or representative was unable to meet with the district commander directly, one or more of their staff members conducted the discussion.

"Some of the staffers that we meet with have been in their positions for years and are very knowledgeable about the Corps of Engineers and our various projects and programs, and other staffers are brand new in their jobs and require more background information in our meetings with them," said DesHarnais. "Sometimes the meeting is conducted 'on the hoof,' as it was this spring with U.S. Rep. Earl Pomeroy from North Dakota. He needed to head over for a vote at the Capitol, and so invited the commander and others along for the walk and the discussion of projects was held en route.

Krenelka deploys to Iraq

By Mark Davidson

Mark Krenelka, a construction quality assurance engineer with the St. Paul District Grand Forks, N.D., office, headed into Baghdad, Iraq, to help the people there by restoring basic services U.S. citizens take for granted – clean water, electricity at the flick of a switch and a toilet that flushes – on April 12.

Krenelka is part of the Corps' forward engineering support team, or FEST. His team's job is to inspect power plants, water purification plants, wastewater treatment plants

and more.

"We hope to get the plants up and running very soon to restore the basic services for the people in Baghdad," said Krenelka. "We have to be very careful because these facilities might be booby-trapped."

He left his home in Grand Forks on Feb. 9 and traveled by airplane and bus to Fort Benning, Ga. "I got nine immunizations there," he said. Krenelka's journey overseas resumed on Feb. 16 from Atlanta to Aviano Air Base, Italy. "I arrived in Kuwait City on Feb. 17 and then got a smallpox and anthrax shot," he said.

Three other Corp's employees worked with Krenelka in the Job



Submitted photo

Mark Krenelka

Order Contract or JOC trailer at Camp Doha, Kuwait, from Feb. 17 to April 11. "I worked with Scott Kool from the Portland District, Ed Dean from Memphis District and Wayne Tharrington, who is assigned in Kuwait," said Krenelka. "We handled most of the JOC jobs."

One contractor had the JOC contract and they are awarded almost all jobs under \$500,000, said Krenelka. "The contractor had about 20 jobs to do, although some of them were on hold for various reasons such as security or the work area being occupied by military personnel," he said. "We also handled lots of the paperwork in the JOC."

Krenelka was billeted on Camp Doha in a room with three other men. "It's not bad when you consider how many people are in open bay barracks, which is 50-100 people in a warehouse with cots," he said. "Most of the TDY people stay in nice apartments in Kuwait City, but I didn't want to drive 45 minutes to and from work each day so I elected to stay on Camp Doha and share a room."

The food at the mess hall in Kuwait is pretty good, said Krenelka, considering how many

Krenelka, continued Page 13

Outcomes, continued from page 2 developed at the December offsite and spent time discussing, revising and combining some of them in order to eliminate redundancy and to focus on the critical outcomes for the region and the nation," said Marsha Mose, executive assistant.

Three outcomes

Because of the district steering committee work, the three revised outcomes are:

1. The Mississippi River is a world-class commercial navigation system, premier recreation area and healthy ecosystem.
2. Watersheds are economically, recreationally, socially- and environmentally successful.
3. USACE-St. Paul District is a world-class public engineering organization.

During the break-out sessions, each group was asked to verify the outcome statement they were assigned, as well as a draft list of

key success factors, or KSFs, that the steering committee had also developed. KSFs need to be achieved to realize outcomes. Once these were confirmed or revised by each group, they then worked on developing performance measures for each of the KSFs.

Examples of two performance measures under the first outcome statement are the time it takes commercial vessels to lock through the Corps' structures and the duration of channel blockages. Draft performance measures were developed by each group for the KSFs and briefed back to the entire group. The offsite groups for all of the KSFs identified 68 performance measures.

The district steering committee will further refine the performance measures developed during the offsite to focus on what is most critical for the district to achieve in its outcomes to meet the HQUSACE vision.

Bits and Pieces

Summer Awards Picnic set for June 19

Mark your calendars for June 19 for the Summer Awards Ceremony at Eau Galle Recreation Area, Spring Valley, Wis.

Retirees may contact Janet Golubski for ticket information at 651-290-5423.

Current employees will be notified from whom to purchase tickets by e-mail and office flyers. Planned activities include a softball tournament, bocce ball, volleyball, kids games and a pet-look-alike contest.

Scouts plant trees at Corps camp site

Cub scout and girl scout troops planned to plant nearly 500 tree seedlings at Corps' Winnibigoshish Dam Recreation Area at Deer River, Minn., the week of April 21. The trees purchased as a wildlife packet from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources nursery at Willow River.

Planting bars borrowed from the U.S. Forest Service in Deer River will be used to place the trees as a reforestation and wildlife enhancement project near the campsites.

Photos of the activity and a write-up will appear in a later *Crosscurrents*.

Greene slated for Army command

A Department of the Army selection board announced Jan. 30 that Maj. Will Greene, acting chief of contracting division, has been selected to attend the Army's Command and General Staff College. Col. Robert Ball, district engineer, said, "It means that Maj. Greene has been recognized by the Army as having potential for service with distinction in positions of even greater responsibility."

Greene remains assigned to the St. Paul District through the summer of 2004.

Schanilec awarded MVD 2002 Hard Hat of the Year



Schanilec

Francis Schanilec, a construction representative with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' St. Paul District working on Phases 1 and 2 of East Grand Forks' flood control project, has won the 2002 Hard Hat of the Year award from the corps' Headquarters Mississippi Valley Division. The award is given each year to recognize excellence in construction quality management. A 36-year federal employee, he has been with the corps for 17 years.

Francis Schanilec, a construction representative with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' St. Paul District working on Phases 1 and 2 of

Guam, continued from Page 7

Another tremor shook his bed nearly five hours later. "I went into the hall," he said.

Brown tree snakes, a mildly venomous snake, came out at night and were good climbers.

"They crawled up and shorted out the power, including computers, and have caused ecological problems," said Ekstrand.

Lewis participated as part of the quality assurance team and assisted in administering the debris removal contracts. "I was assigned a contracting crew to work with, and stayed with the same crew for the majority of my 30-day rotation," said Lewis. "During a typical day, I ensured that debris was properly separated, ensured trucks were fully loaded, issued load receipts for payment, and communicated with residents about our mission. My crew and I worked 12-hour days, seven days a week."

Lewis returned to work at the district office Feb. 11; Ekstrand and Nelsen reported to work Feb. 10. "Overall, it was a good mission with a lot of support," said Nelsen.

Krenelka, continued Page 12

people they have to feed. "Everything is disposable – paper plates, foam cups and plastic silverware," he said. "The portions are huge, so you don't have to worry about going away hungry."

Despite the eight-hour time difference (5 a.m. in Kuwait is 9 p.m. — the day before in Minnesota) Krenelka has communicated by e-mail with family and fellow workers. "My wife supports me in whatever I do, but she is anxious for me to come home," he said. "I have received a number of e-mails from my coworkers back home."

Grant Riddick honored as February Employee of the Month



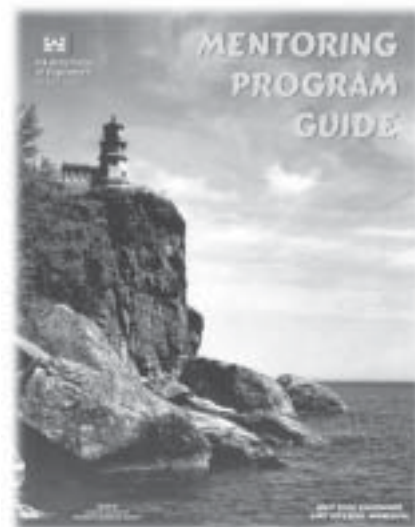
Photo by Jon Lyman

Grant Riddick, right, received Employee of the Month honors from Lt. Col. Tom O'Hara.

Grant Riddick, a geologist in engineering division's design branch, spent mid-January through February in Grand Forks, N.D. to direct drilling operations in support of the flood control project design and construction. "The drill crew retrieves core samples to identify and classify soil types," said Chris Behling, design branch, who nominated Riddick for the award.

"Riddick worked outside from sunup to sundown, Monday through Saturday, with air temperatures averaging 3 F and wind chills 30 to 40 degrees below zero," said Behling. "He endured weeks away from his family in frigid conditions, while completing work in meticulous fashion with an always-upbeat attitude. Riddick's thorough work over the last eight years has been critical to the project's success."

Mentoring Program Guide now available



The St. Paul District Mentoring Program kicked off with two brown bag sessions in the district office April 23 and 29 along with a presentation to field staff April 25. A notice regarding the program, with a link to the Mentoring Guide and the application forms, has been e-mailed to all employees. Applications for both mentors and mentees (you could be both!) will be received by the EEO office. See more on the district's intranet at mvpiis/EEO_Office/mentor/.

Coming events

- May 28-29 MVD Planning Conference in Minneapolis, Chuck Spitzack, point of contact;
- June 2 Pine River dam dedication;
- June 19 Summer awards ceremony and picnic at Eau Galle recreation site, Spring Valley, Wis.;
- Aug. 6 M/V Mississippi enters in the district for community relations and employee events;
- Aug. 11 Revised date:** Mississippi River Commission visit officially starts;
- Sep. 11 Retiree luncheon in St. Paul, Minn.;
- Sep. 21 Upper St. Anthony Falls lock and dam at Minneapolis, 40 years old;
- Dec. 12 Holiday awards ceremony and luncheon.