



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

Vol. 26, No. 8

August 2003

**Seamoor the Sea Dragon attracts
kids on M.V. Mississippi tour**

More photos, Page 5



Teamwork makes big boat a big hit

By Col. Robert Ball
District Engineer

The Motor Vessel Mississippi has come and gone, hallelujah. Another inspection by the Mississippi River Commission is behind us. Now we can get back to our business.

Thank goodness the members of this district did not have that type of attitude this month when we had the M.V. Mississippi, the largest towboat on the river, for our own use or when we hosted the Mississippi River Commission for three days.

Instead, the district project delivery team turned what could have been a chore into an

outstanding example of how to tell our story and connect with others.

Few things turn out well without a plan; this was no exception. Marsha Mose, executive assistant, put together a team that blended experience (Dennis Erickson, Don Powell and Marilyn Kruchten) with new ways of looking at things (Kevin Bluhm and Mike DeRusha). (Other members of the team are listed in the adjacent box.) It was beautiful to watch them work and develop a plan that was as detailed as anything I have seen in the past two years.

And it was no surprise to me that the week the M.V. Mississippi was in our waters, it went as smoothly as it did – between a solid plan and some very dynamic execution from Bryanna Linscheid and Bryan Peterson. How could it be anything but great?

This talented team took the

Teamwork, continued Page 11

M.V. Mississippi low-water team

- Shannon Bauer
- Mark Beseler
- Kevin Bluhm
- Tom Crump
- Richard Davenport
- Mark Davidson
- Dave Deere
- Mike DeRusha
- Jeff DeZellar
- Stephanie Dupey
- Joe Dvorak
- Ted Engelen
- Dennis Erickson
- Jay Grimsled
- Robert Gross
- Kalue Her
- Andrea Hinrichs
- Corrine Hodapp
- Terry Jessesky
- Mike Knoff
- Marilyn Kruchten
- Bryanna Linscheid
- Jon Lyman
- Paul Machajewski
- Kenneth Mertes
- Bob Mike
- Tammy Moore
- Joe Mose
- Marsha Mose
- Jim Mosner
- Darrell Oldenburg
- Dick Otto
- Ann Paul
- Bryan Peterson
- Dean Peterson
- Brad Perkl
- Don Powell
- Jan Pream
- Kevin Ressie
- Russ Snyder
- Georgia Stanonik
- Frank Star
- Elliott Stefanik
- Bill Stute
- Steve Tapp
- Diana Tschida
- Peter Verstegen
- John M. Welch
- Anna Wetterling
- Dan Wilcox
- See Xiong
- Dan Yang



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Crosscurrents

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Cover photo



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Frank Star, wearing his ranger uniform, introduces Seamoor the Sea Dragon to children in LaCrosse, Wis., during a stop of the M.V. Mississippi.

Rangers feel burn of pepper spray

By Corrine Hodapp and Peter Versteegen

Twenty one rangers from the St. Paul District felt a fire-like burning when pepper spray hit their faces during a training exercise April 9.

"It felt very, very hot," said Ray Marinan, a ranger at Sandy Lake recreation area, McGregor, Minn. "My whole face felt like it was on fire."

"The spray came out in a silent stream," said Deb Griffith, a ranger at the Crosslake, Minn., recreation area. "It felt cold when it initially hit my face and then immediately hot, like my face was totally on fire."

"It wasn't as bad for me," said Mary Kay Larson, ranger at Gull Lake recreation area in Brainerd, Minn. When the aerosol stream hit her face, she said, "It felt more like a severe sunburn. I had my eyes closed. But it really, really burned around my mouth, and my sinuses completely drained."

Fellow rangers immediately guided Marinan, Griffith and Larson to the eye-wash station. "I was totally dependent on others. They led me to the eye-wash station, because I couldn't open my eyes," said Larson.

Park rangers trained in the use of pepper spray at Brainerd, Minn., April 9; Crosslake, Minn., May 21; Baldhill Dam near Valley City, N.D., May 13; and Blackhawk Park, Wis., June 2.

Presently, 58 eligible employees have been trained and 32 individuals have elected to carry pepper spray. They carry the spray in belt holsters.

The training reflects a new and significant change in safety at campgrounds. A ranger's authority has not changed; but beginning with the 2003 recreation season, they are now authorized to carry a defensive weapon.

Originally, the development and implementation of a chemical aerosol spray



Photo by Jeff Kleinert

Mary Kay Larson, a ranger at Gull Lake recreation area in Brainerd, Minn., said the pepper spray "really burned around my mouth. And, my sinuses drained completely."

program for the Corps' visitor assistance program was considered as part of studies and recommendations from the Corps' visitor/ranger safety review initiative.

In 1999, the Corps of Engineers' director of civil works approved a one-year test of Oleoresin Capsicum (pepper spray) at Belton/Stillhouse project in the Fort Worth District in Texas.

Following a successful test, the Southwestern Division extended it a second year into 2000 at Belton/Stillhouse project. The division recommended the test be expanded to all projects within the Fort Worth District in 2001 and to the entire division in 2002.

Maj. Gen. Robert Griffin authorized Corps' park rangers to carry and use pepper spray capsicum for self-defensive purposes in an order April 2002.

The order requires rangers to meet five criteria before they can carry pepper spray:

- Be employed at a Corps' water resources development project in a permanent, seasonal or temporary position, including student career experience program, the stay-in-

Pepper spray, continued on Page 4



Photo by Jeff Kleinert

David Reynolds, a ranger at Eau Galle recreation area in Spring Valley, Wis., rinses pepper spray off his face at the eye-wash station during a training exercise.

Pepper spray, continued from Page 3
school program or as a summer hire;

- Be hired as a park ranger/manager, environmental protection specialist, any related natural resource position in the biological science job series or outdoor recreation planner;
- Be authorized to wear the natural resources management uniform;
- Work in a job function that has been determined at risk under the district position and project job hazard analysis process, and;
- Successfully complete all pepper-spray training and related ranger training.

Rangers Corrine Hodapp, Blackhawk Park, and Chris Botz, Baldhill Dam, conducted the training. They attended a train-the-trainer course last fall in the Rock Island, Ill., district office.

The eight-hour day of training involved classroom discussion, hand-to-hand combat techniques (using inert pepper spray) and



Photo by Deb Griffith

Ranger Zeb Hemsworth, Leech Lake recreation area, waits to douse his face with water after his face was saturated with decontamination fluid to lift the pepper spray off his skin. Isaac Moll (right), student ranger at the Crosslake, Minn., recreation area, accompanied him.

receiving a direct hit of pepper spray to the face.

As part of the St. Paul District's policy on pepper spray, eligible employees receive six hours of instruction.

Employees electing to carry pepper spray are strongly encouraged to experience the full effects of being sprayed.

At a minimum, they must be exposed to a minor degree of pepper spray to experience a mild irritation.

Carrying pepper spray is a voluntary program and using pepper spray on an aggressor is a last effort in self defense.

"It gives our folks the opportunity to use it, if they desire, and is not pushed on anyone," said Kevin Berg, park manager. "Secondly, the training ... was professionally done. The bases were well-covered, the expectations and requirements were well-communicated to our employees and the opportunity for 'hands-on' experience with pepper spray was good."

Said Marinan, "I'd never want to take it for real, especially when my eyes and mouth are open."

M.V. Mississippi hosts more than 2,000 visitors for low-water tour

More than 2,000 people visited the M.V. Mississippi during stops in LaCrosse, Wis., Winona, Minn., and St. Paul Aug. 6-10.

The district hosted listening sessions, meetings and community visits for a variety of stakeholders and members of the public in order to inform, as well as learn about issues important to the public the district serves.

This is the seventh low-water tour by the M.V. Mississippi into the St. Paul District.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Above, Don Powell, environmental program manager, welcomes a citizen to the M.V. Mississippi in Winona, Minn. Below, Diana Tschida (left), project management, experiences the lockage at Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn.



Photos by Dennis Erickson

The M.V. Mississippi became a platform for district team-building exercises. Participants are (from left) Tim Tabery Lock and Dam 1; Huy Nguyen, Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, both in Minneapolis; Jeff Just from Lock 3 near Red Wing, Minn.; See Xiong, project management; Jean Schmidt, information management; and Brad Perkl, environmental branch.



Shifting sands in navigation channel ground towboats



At right is John Bauers, a contracts inspector with the St. Paul District channels and harbors unit in Fountain City, Wis. He is discussing the channel closure near Diamond Bluff, Wis. with a deck-hand from Lametti & Sons, Inc., Hugo, Minn.



By Peter Verstegen
Photos by Paul Machajewski

When sand choked the Mississippi River near Coulters Island July 29, channels and harbors unit had a dredging plan ready to clear the navigation channel. The unit, based on Fountain City, Wis., mobilized survey boats, coordinated marine advisories and called a dredging contractor to clear the choke point at river mile 801.6, near Diamond Bluff, Wis.

“Just after 11 a.m., July 29, a down-bound tow with 11 fully loaded barges ran aground, blocking the channel,” said Steve Tapp, channels and harbors project manager. “In an effort to free the grounded barges, the tow shifted sands on the bottom of the river, creating bumps in Pool 3 that left the channel blocked for the next 54 hours.

“The grounding halted nine tows pushing 54 barges,” he added.

Channels and harbors project office sent a hydrographic survey launch to map the channel the

next morning. “Once Launch 53 had checked the site, we decided whether the channel should be closed until a detailed survey could be conducted,” said Tapp. The district advised the Coast Guard to close the channel.

Groundings one week earlier prompted a hydrographic survey of the area on July 23 and the preparation of a dredging plan. Dredging at mile 801.6 was scheduled for July 29 – the day of the grounding.

A mechanical dredging contractor began to clear the first of nearly 40,000 cubic yards of sand and silt from channel July 30.

“They were on-site that morning and began dredging as soon as the new survey was complete and dredge cuts were laid out,” said Tapp. By 5:30 p.m., July 31, a pilot channel about 180-foot wide had been cut between the nine-foot contours. Shipping resumed.

“All waiting vessels safely transited the area as of Aug. 1,” said Dan Krumholz, project manager. “Complete maintenance dredging will take several weeks.”



St. Paul District photo

Mark Krenelka was part of the forward engineer support team-advance in Iraq. His mission was to identify basic infrastructure problems and develop a scope of work. Above, he tests the water system at a presidential palace.

No 'typical' day in Iraq for Krenelka

Mark Krenelka, a construction representative in the St. Paul District's Grand Forks, N.D., resident office, provided Dan Yang, public affairs, the following highlights of his five-month duty in Kuwait and Iraq. Their exchange follows.

How long have you worked in the St. Paul District?

One year, five months.

And with the Army Corps of Engineers?

One year, five months.

Where were you deployed?

Kuwait and then Iraq.

How long were you gone?

My deployment was from Feb. 16 to June 17, 2003.

Briefly describe your duties in Kuwait.

In Kuwait, I was assigned to the job order contract trailer. My job was quality assurance inspector.

We had one contractor who performed all projects less than

\$500,000. We had many projects going simultaneously, such as converting warehouse space to office space, installing air conditioning for troops billeted in 'open bay,' upgrading electrical to handle the demands of Army surveillance equipment, etc.

What was your mission in Iraq?

I was part of the forward engineer support team-advance.

The original list we received had 28 people attached to the gulf regional

engineer office who were supposed to be going to Iraq. As the weeks went by, that list was whittled down to four people (two civilians, two military).

Our original mission was to identify basic infrastructure problems and develop a scope of work for a contractor. We also were to repair what we could in order to provide basic services. Besides our FEST-A group, there were people from communications, logistics, supply and others who were part of the early-entry command post.

How much time did you have to prepare?

We were given a one-day notice of departure, although we knew days in advance that we had made the final cut and would be going. Security was tight enough that even the airport personnel were unaware of our flight.

When did you arrive in Iraq?

We flew to Baghdad under total blackout conditions on April 10 or 11. The British crew wore night vision goggles, and we landed at Baghdad International Airport in the

middle of the night. We unloaded the plane in total darkness except for a couple of red flashlights. The C-130 [transport aircraft] took off immediately afterward with no lights on the runway or on the airplane itself.

Describe the conditions when you first arrived.

Our first home was an abandoned hangar at the airport. Find a spot and put up your cot. Conditions there were pretty bad, so we were happy when, after a couple of days, we were told the early-entry command post would be moving into one of Saddam Hussein's palaces. The palace was better than the hangar, but only marginally. We had bombed it, so all the windows were blown out and it was covered with dust.

Of course, we also bombed the power plant so there was no electricity or water. We grabbed a maintenance closet for our billet. No windows and lots of fire extinguisher dust, but we thought it was better than dust, wind and bugs.

When we first got there, the perimeter was secured by the fighting forces. After about two weeks they moved out and the looters moved in. The palace was the only secure area, so we could look across the bridge and see



U.S. Army photo

Mark Krenelka

hundreds of looters. Unfortunately, they got to a lot of stuff we could have used. However, their need was probably greater than ours.

One thing that was a pleasant surprise is that the climate in Iraq was much better than Kuwait. I knew that summer was still on the way and it did get into the 90s and had been over 100; but generally, the mornings were cool and there was usually a nice breeze. Also, the general landscape was arid, but there were a lot more trees and shrubs there.

What was a typical workday?

There really was no typical day. Basically, our job was to look at the infrastructure, figure out what it looked like before it was damaged or how it operated and provide assistance in preparing a scope of work to restore, replace or repair that system.

When we first got there, a co-worker and I started rebuilding the damaged main distribution panel so that it could be hooked up to a portable generator. A few days later, we were at the presidential palace downtown, assessing the electrical and mechanical systems.

We also met some Iraqis at the main gate. The 5th Corps paid cash for a generator and they were delivering it, so we had to escort them. We also took advantage of their old beat-up crane and had them pull a diesel fuel day tank out of the bombed-out power plant.

One day, we spent half a day with the contractor as he prepared to test the palace water system. We spent the other half of the day investigating a canal that was rising and encroaching on the motor pool. This was happening while other canals and the lake system were dropping.

Were there any other Corps of Engineers personnel working



Graphic courtesy of Julie Shoemaker, Transatlantic Programs Center

directly with you?

A convoy from the gulf regional engineer office showed up. That made about 13 Corps of Engineers' people. The coalition forces land component command tasked our team to restore services to the palace. A Kuwaiti company was hired to assess the damage and prepare a bid.

The 5th Corps moved into the palace compound. They were there for the long haul and were occupants of most of the buildings. The 5th Corps tasked the Corps of Engineers to assess the various buildings in the palace compound, many damaged by bombs, the dropping water level of a nearby lake and canal system and the perimeter wall, much of which had holes or had collapsed.

How much time did you get for sleep and personal duties?

We got our eight hours of sleep, but the rest of the time was spent on the job. We had a daily project management meeting at 7 p.m. to review the day's events and discuss tomorrow's activities. We took

advantage of slow times to do a little laundry by hand, but that's about it.

What were your meals like?

Our diet was almost strictly MREs (meals ready to eat). I had two hot, well, I'd say 'tepid,' prepared meals there.

What was the reaction of your family when you came home?

They were extremely glad I was home and very proud that I was able to serve my country, especially my father.

What was the reaction of your friends and fellow workers when you returned?

They, too, were happy to see me and were anxious to hear about Baghdad, so I did a short 'PowerPoint' for my co-workers.

Anything else you want to add?

Depending on your perspective, my timing for temporary duty there was incredibly good or incredibly bad. We were very busy, construction-wise, when I first arrived in Kuwait, getting ready for

Krenelka, continued on Page 11

Contributors boost *Crosscurrents* to 'Four-Star'

By Dan Yang and Peter Verstegen

For the first time, *Crosscurrents* has broken into the ranks of the Army's four-star publications.

Crosscurrents emerged on the Army's four-star list in the August 2003 *Post-30-*, published by the command information division, office of the chief of public affairs. Only 71 publications made the list, among hundreds of publications throughout the Army.

The following contributors made it possible.

Articles

January-July 2003:

Col. Robert Ball
Chris Beaman
Shannon Bauer
Sharonne Baylor
Kurt Brownell
Mark Davidson
Mike DeRusha
Stephanie Ehnstrom

Bob Espenson
Dennis Erickson
Deb Griffith
Jeff Kapaun
Mark Krenelka
Tricia Liggett
Marsha Mose
Jim Peak
Matt Percy
Virginia Regorrah
Brig. Gen. Don Riley
Lupe Santos-Jensen
Peter Verstegen

Photo credits

January-July 2003:

Shannon Bauer
Kevin Baumgard
Kurt Brownell
Mary DeFlorian
Bob Dempsey
Mike DeRusha
Dave Ekstrand
Sgt. Angel Harris
George Heib

Stan Kalinoski
Jeff Kapaun
Jeff Kleinert
Master Sgt. Jack Lee
Corby Lewis
Jon Lyman
Tim Meers
Jill Mickelson
Marsha Mose
Darla Orchard
Ryan Otto
Ted Pedersen
Jeff Pfannes
Cindy Samples
Francis Schanilec
Irene Stearns
Gregg Struss
Mark Upward
Randy Urich
Mark Valentino
Peter Verstegen
Anna Wetterling
Tammy Wick
Terry Williams
Holly Zillmer

Four-Star standards for command information and good journalism

Army public affairs, command information division, critiques Army publications weekly. Army newspapers that best exemplify command information principles and good journalism are given a "four-star" status and recognized on a quarterly list published in OCPA's *Post -30-*. Rating criteria consists of:

- 1) **Responsiveness:** Be responsive to both commanders and soldiers. They should provide two-way channels of communication, such as a Commander's Hotline, Letters-to-the-Editor and readership feedback, such as on-the-street opinion surveys. The newspaper should communicate both up and down, left and right.
- 2) **Responsiveness:** Cover contemporary issues facing soldiers, civilian employees and their families. Topics could include terrorism, domestic abuse, street gangs, AIDS, fraternization, crime and date rape.
- 3) **Balance:** Provide a balance of news, showing the "big picture" of the Army worldwide, as well as covering the command and local community.
- 4) **Appearance:** Layout bold and innovative design page designs to entice readers.
- 5) **Writing:** Consist of clear, concise and accurate writing. The content should educate, entertain and enlighten.
- 6) **Regulatory compliance:** Comply with all Army command information principles in AR 360-1.

Source: *Post-30-*. August 2003

Bits and Pieces

Compiled by Dan Yang

Births

Amy Hingsberger, civilian personnel advisory center, and her husband Tom celebrated the birth of their second son, Samuel Vincent, July 30. Mom and baby are at home with big brother John, 2, and doing well.

Jodi Kormanik, hydraulics and hydrology, and her husband Paul, celebrated the birth of their first son, Nikolas Paul, Aug. 5. Nikolas arrived at nine pounds, five ounces and 21 and one-half inches long. Mom and baby are doing great at home with big sister Joy.

Ann Banitt, hydraulics and hydrology, and her husband, Troy, celebrated the birth of their second daughter, Rachel Louise, June 11. Rachel arrived two weeks ahead of schedule at seven pounds, eight and one-half ounces and 21 inches long. Both Ann and Rachel are doing well. Big sister Nicole is enjoying helping out with her little sister.

Welcome

Molly McKegney, was recently hired as an attorney in the office of counsel. She has an undergraduate degree in behavioral science and law from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Wis., and graduated summa cum laude with a law degree from the University of Wisconsin law school.

Kristopher Taverna, deck-hand. Work-study student **Chao Yang** will assist in the regulatory branch at the St. Paul District office. She will be a senior this fall at Harding High School, St. Paul, Minn.

Krenelka, continued from Page 9

the possibility of war. Once the war started, we were busy running for bunkers as we endured two to three weeks of missile alerts.

During this period, we carried our chemical suits and gas masks everywhere we went, and I became very proficient at putting them on in a hurry. I was selected to be a member of task force fair and arrived in Baghdad two days after its fall.

I feel very privileged to have been a part of the coalition forces land component command and the early entry command post. I also feel fortunate to have had an opportunity to experience Baghdad in the early days of U.S. presence.

We had confrontations with Iraqi looters – we had to threaten to shoot their car – and explored Iraqi ammunition caches while scrounging for supplies.

While doing an assessment at a deserted presidential palace, we had to unlock doors using shotgun blasts.

We were driving our humvee up and down the steps of the building that now houses our St. Paul District contingent in Baghdad. At the time, there was only a small group of infantry living in and securing that building. Living and working with our fighting forces was a great experience that I will always cherish.

Farewell

Al Geisen, chief of design branch, engineering division, retired Aug. 1 after 32 years of civil service.

Teamwork, continued from Page 2

approach that we should take advantage of having the M.V. Mississippi in our waters. They seized every opportunity to host meetings, hold open houses and conduct workshops.

By week's end, the district had already conducted two workshops with diverse groups of stakeholders, held three partnership events, boarded more than 2,000 people at three open houses and executed three team-building events for district employees. All events went flawlessly and received multiple compliments from those attending.

The momentum continued with the arrival of the MRC. Dan Wilcox and Tom Crump presented two complex projects that needed help and won pledges of support from the commissioners due to their persuasive arguments.

When Brig. Gen. Don Riley, the other commissioners and the Mississippi Valley Division staff left Lock and Dam 10 in Guttenberg, Iowa, we received only positive feedback. None of that would have happened without people like those listed who had a great attitude, the skills needed to accomplish the mission and a great sense of teamwork. I could not have been prouder of this group of stellar folks.

Well done!

Coming events

- Sept. 9 ASA(CW) visit (tentative)
- Sept. 11 Retirees' reunion
- Sept. 15-18 Congressional visits

Rick Carlson honored as June Employee of the Month

“Rick thinks of others and is the best example of a team player that I can think of,” said Ed McNally, project manager and one of Carlson’s nominators. “He is consistently upbeat, he looks for ways to assist, coordinate, and organize activities within the district and with project sponsors or stakeholders.”

“Rick consistently delivers high quality, professional products in a pleasant and timely manner,” said Tom Crump, who also nominated Carlson. “Just today, he was asked to drop everything and prepare an assessment of financial capability of one of our local sponsors. He rearranged his schedule and accomplished this task in less than six hours.”

Both McNally and Crump recognized Carlson’s initiative to do things that go beyond the



Photo by Jon Lyman

Col. Robert Ball, district engineer, presents Rick Carlson Employee of the Month plaque for June.

expected level of effort and Carlson’s consistent performance at a high level and his unassuming demeanor along with an impressive quantity and quality of work.

“His knowledge of the flooding problems of hundreds of communities throughout the district is extremely valuable. Because of his technical competence and his spirit of cooperation, Rick is a welcome addition to any team,” said Crump.

Landscape architects society honor Sullivan



Submitted photo

Doris Sullivan

Doris Sullivan, engineering division, is slated to be inducted as a fellow in the American Society of Landscape

Architects annual meeting in New Orleans, La., Nov. 1.

Highlights of her recent honors are Landscape Architect of the Year 2000 for the Army Corps of Engineers; the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service to her and the team for contributions to emergency housing relief provided by the permanent response team deployed to West Virginia after devastating floods; the Lob Pine Award 2002, from the Minnesota Chapter of ASLA, for her 10-12 years of service to the chapter. This is the highest honor presented by the chapter in recognition of leadership, her sustained contributions to chapter and dedication to the profession.

Schanilec receives Hard Hat of the Year at senior leaders meeting

St. Paul District employee Francis Schanilec received honors as 2002 Hard Hat of the Year at the senior leaders conference in Portland, Ore., Aug. 4. Corps’ headquarters selected the Grand Forks, N.D., resident earlier this summer. This award follows Schanilec’s selection as the Corps’ Mississippi Valley Division Hard Hat of the Year earlier in the year.

Schanilec is a Corps’ construction representative currently working on phases one and two of the East Grand Forks, Minn., flood control project. He received this award for providing outstanding technical experience, construction management and team building skills during the past year’s

construction on the East Grand Forks project. He has maintained excellent quality project safety and a project to be completed ahead of schedule.

The award is given out annually by the Corps to recognize excellence in construction quality management by its construction field personnel.

Schanilec has been a federal employee for 36 years, working for the Corps for the past 17 years. “I went to work for the Corps in 1986, feeling very proud to be able to work for an organization that does so much good work all over the world. I always went to work always trying to do the very best that I could and never really thought about awards,” he said. “Getting the national Hard Hat of the Year award — what an honor! It’s really hard to comprehend and all the congratulations is just fantastic.”