



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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Kindness  
rebuilds Iraq

# Pfenning assumes command



Col. Michael F. Pfenning assumed command of the St. Paul District on July 30, 2004, becoming the district's 61st

commander and district engineer. Prior to assuming this command, he served as chief of the Well-Being Division in the Human Resources Policy Directorate of the Army G-1. (G-1 is the personnel directorate on the general staff – normally, division or higher level staff.)

Born in Vermont, Pfenning was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers upon graduation from the United States

Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., in 1980. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering from the USMA, as well as a Masters of Science and Doctorate in Operations Research from the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colo. His military education includes the U.S. Army Airborne and Ranger schools, the Engineer Officer basic and advanced courses and the Command and General Staff College. Pfenning also served as the Military Fellow at the Joint Center for Political and Economic studies in Washington, D.C.

His significant military awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Army Meritorious Service Medal with six oakleaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with oakleaf cluster and the Bronze de Fleury Medal.

Pfenning's previous assignments include platoon leader, company executive officer and battalion logistics officer, 82nd Engineer Battalion, (Germany); battalion logistics officer, company commander and assistant division engineer, 1st Engineer Battalion (Fort Riley, Kan.); aide-de-camp to the 1st Infantry Division commanding general (Fort Riley); battalion operations officer, 82nd Engineer Battalion; brigade operations officer, 3rd Infantry Division Engineer Brigade (Germany); special assistant and aide-de-camp to the commander-in-chief, U.S. Army Europe (Germany); and commander, 554th Engineer Battalion (Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.). He also served as chief of the Command Planning Group, Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; distribution plans officer, Officer

Personnel Management Directorate, U.S. Total Army Personnel Command, in Alexandria, Va.; and as an assistant professor in the department of systems engineering, USMA.

## Cover



U.S.Army Corps of Engineers photo

Randy Melby, a resource manager at Lac Qui Parle project in Watson, Minn., left for Iraq Feb. 29. His first assignment in Iraq was performing quality assurance work at Kirkush Military Base, located about 100 miles northeast of Baghdad by the Iranian border. After the completion of that project, he returned to Baghdad and started quality assurance for the Ministry of Defense. In the cover photo, taken mid-May, Melby helped distribute shoes, clothes, toys and school supplies to students at a school in Baghdad's Green Zone, a fortified-area for U.S. forces and contractors. "The biggest reward is working with the Iraqi people and being part of rebuilding a new nation," said Melby. Other Corps districts, the St. Paul District Western Area Office in Grand Forks, N.D., and a school in Montevideo, Minn., where Melby's wife works, sent the gifts. Melby returned to Minnesota in late July.



US Army Corps of Engineers  
St. Paul District

### Crosscurrents

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# New dredging fleet names mark character, achievements and personal commitment

By Shannon Bauer

The St. Paul District announced the names of its new dredging fleet in Fountain City, Wis., before an audience of retired and present-day dredge employees in May.

The new dredging fleet will consist of three separate pieces of floating plant – the dredge itself, a towboat and a quarters' barge. The Corps also named an existing crane barge that is part of its non-dredging fleet and a new crew boat for the dredge.

The dredging equipment will replace the 67-year old **Dredge William A. Thompson** in the spring of 2005.

Rowan Electric, Co., of Houston, Texas, with a shipyard in Vicksburg, Miss., is currently building the new dredge. SeaArk of Monticello, Ark., built the crew boat, which arrived in June. Construction of the towboat and



Photo by Marc Krumholz

**Nancy Peck, the wife of the late Dave Peck, master of the Dredge Thompson, and Col. Robert Ball, former district engineer, attended the naming ceremony, May 27. The new crewboat "Peck" is named in her late husband's honor.**

quarters barge has not started, however the towboat is under contract.

The dredge will be christened **Dredge Goetz**, named after William L. Goetz, a Corps' employee from 1960 until 1990. The quarters' barge will be named **Quartersbarge Taggatz**, after former Corps' employee Harold E. Taggatz. The towboat will be named **Towboat General Warren**, after Maj. Gen. Gouverneur Kemble Warren, the district's first district engineer. The **Crewboat Peck** will be named after former Dredge Thompson Captain David R. Peck. Existing Cranebarge 9801 has been renamed the **Leonard** after another former district employee, Richard W. (Si) Leonard.

"The individuals selected are highly deserving of this recognition," said Col. Robert Ball, district engineer at the time of the dedication. "Their reputation and accomplishments reflect favorably on the Corps of Engineers."

Both St. Paul and Rock Island district members were allowed to nominate deceased individuals to name the new dredging fleet, and a 10-person panel of current and retired district personnel selected these names. Nearly 30 candidates were nominated.

Criteria looked at by the panel included the character, achievements and personal commitment of the individuals nominated, as well as where and how his or her contributions benefited the Corps and Corps'

employees. The names were then approved by Mississippi Valley Division and Corps' headquarters.

Marianne Price, the district's Equal Employment Opportunity officer, served on the selection panels. "I was impressed by the deliberations of the teams I worked with on the naming committees," she said. "One overall premise they all were convinced of was that the selected name be one that was synonymous with 'integrity and dedication to the Corps.'"

"The other thought that I noted was the generational affiliations some of the nominees have with current district employees; it goes back years to the first dredge," she continued. "That historical relationship means we're doing something right!"

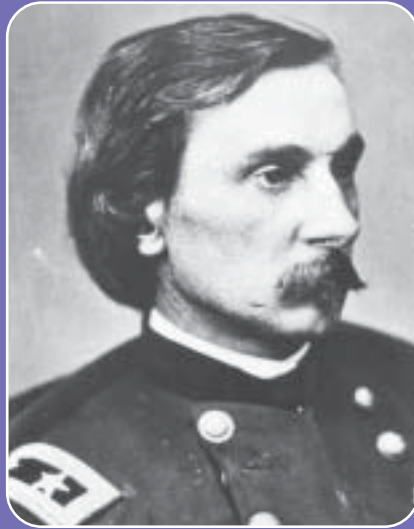
The new dredging fleet will cost \$28 million but will increase job production significantly, reduce fuel consumption and save the district considerable money over time. New technology will allow swing speed, injection of water and other functions of dredging to be automatically regulated thus reducing the risk of plugging discharge lines, breaking swing wires and other problems that go with dredging. Additionally, these new features, such as increased towing horsepower and satellite communications, will make it safer for the crew and much more user-friendly.

See **Distinguished service imprints** new dredge fleet, Page 4

## Distinguished service imprints new dredge fleet

### Towboat General Warren

Brevet Maj. Gen. Gouverneur Kemble Warren served as the St. Paul District's first district engineer.



### Cranebarge Leonard

Richard W. (Si) Leonard began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1940 and retired in 1972.



### Dredge Goetz

William L. (Bill) Goetz began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, in 1960. He served as chief of Construction-Operations Division from 1970 until his retirement in 1990.



### Quartersbarge Taggatz

Harold E Taggatz began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, in 1962 and retired in 1998.



### Crewboat Peck

David R. Peck began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, in 1970. He served as master of the Dredge William A. Thompson, a Corps' fleet dredge from 1990 until his death in 2001.

## Towboat General Gouverneur K. Warren



Brevet Maj. Gen. Gouverneur Kemble Warren served as the St. Paul District's first district engineer. He studied and worked on the Mississippi River from its headwaters to the delta. When Congress ordered the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to undertake

the first systematic project to improve navigation on the upper Mississippi River, Warren was sent to St. Paul, Minn., to undertake the task. His arrival established the Corps as a permanent actor in managing and transforming the Upper Mississippi River.

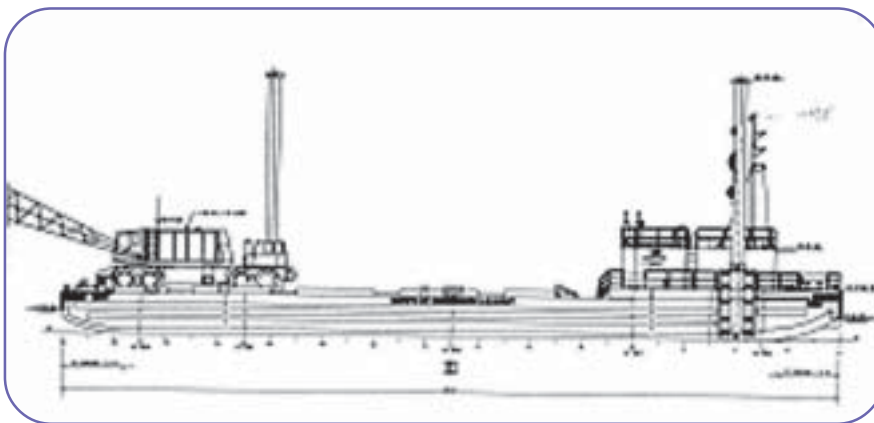
Warren initiated the first mapping projects for the Upper Mississippi main stem and its key tributaries. Between 1866 and 1869, he sketched 30 maps of the Upper Mississippi River.

He acquired the first floating plant – a dredge and snagboat – for creating and maintaining the navigation channel and began trying to establish a continuous four-foot channel at low water

from St. Paul to St. Louis. He requested funding for the first wing dams and closing dams, anticipating two future projects (the four-and-a-half- and six-foot channels) for the Mississippi.

Warren first suggested a system of 41 reservoirs for the St. Croix, Chippewa, Wisconsin and Mississippi river basins to store and release water for navigation. Finally, he recognized that only locks and dams would make the river between the mouth of the Minnesota and St. Anthony Falls navigable for large vessels. While he requested funding for the locks and dams, the system he envisioned would not be completed until 1963.

## Cranebarge Richard W. (Si) Leonard



Richard W. (Si) Leonard began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1940 and retired in 1972. His first position with the Corps was in Texas on the Lake Texoma flood control project. In 1945, he transferred to the St. Paul District, where he worked until 1963, when he took a position at the North Pacific Division office in

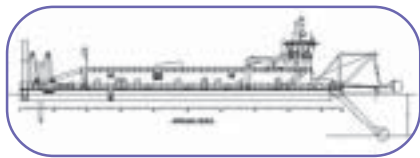
Portland, Ore. In 1966, he returned to the St. Paul District as chief of Engineering Division, a position he occupied until his retirement.

Leonard was responsible for the unprecedented success of Operation Foresight during the 1969 flood emergency on three different river basins.

As flood emergency organization

chief of staff, he supervised flood protection and emergency assistance to communities throughout the district. National representatives of the Office of Emergency Preparedness and the Chief of Engineers called the speed and quality of the assistance “phenomenal” and “truly remarkable.”

He was also recognized by the State of Minnesota for his flood protection expertise, as well as assisted state personnel in developing their rules program. As chief of Engineering Division, he instituted a major reorganization that improved work coordination and expedited completion of complex engineering studies. Leonard received the Department of the Army Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service and was selected to the District Hall of Fame.



**Dredge**  
**William L. Goetz**

William L. (Bill) Goetz began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, in 1960. He served as chief of Construction-Operations Division from 1970 until his retirement in 1990, a time of unprecedented environmental awareness.

As resource agencies requested more sensitivity to the environment of the Upper Mississippi River in the early 1970s, Goetz pushed Corps' division and headquarters staff to provide funds to evaluate the impacts of dredging on the environment. When the Great River Environmental Action Team was formed, Goetz insured the district supported the effort, which is believed to be the first Corps' project to establish a working partnership with natural resource agencies.

When confronted with suggestions by resource agencies to perform more dredging using expensive mechanical equipment, Goetz provided leadership for acquisition of a surplus dredge booster pump and additional floating pipeline, thus allowing the Dredge Thompson to continue operations by transferring dredged material to environmentally acceptable locations further from the dredge site.

He was named Civil Servant of the Year, was a recipient of the Meritorious Civilian Service Award and was inducted into the District Hall of Fame in 1991.

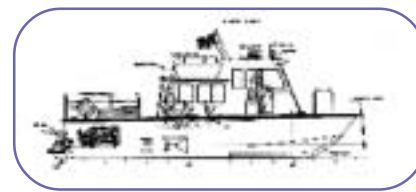


**Quarters barge**  
**Harold E. Taggatz**

Harold E Taggatz began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, in 1962 and retired in 1998. He served as assistant chief of the Construction-Operations Division for the last 12 years of his career.

During his tenure, he managed each of the various branches, spending much of his time in positions closely related to the navigation mission. As co-chair of the interagency River Resources Forum from 1983 to 1997, he was instrumental in solidifying a strong, trusting relationship with Corps' partner agencies on the Upper Mississippi River. Taggatz earned recognition throughout the Corps for his participation on a number of committees and task forces.

In 1996, he received the prestigious Hammer Award for his efforts as chair of the Corps' National Task Force for Operations and Maintenance Plan of Improvement. He was named Civil Servant of the Year and was inducted into the District Hall of Fame in 1998.



**Crewboat**  
**David R. Peck**

David R. Peck began work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, in 1970. He served as master of the Dredge William A. Thompson from 1990 until his death in 2001.

Peck started as a deckhand on the district's mechanical Dredge Hauser, dredging and maintaining the Upper Mississippi River nine-foot navigation channel. He later transferred to the Dredge Thompson, where he became an engineer equipment operator and soon advanced to the position of Coast Guard licensed tender boat operator.

During the non-navigation season, he worked for the district's maintenance and repair unit, performing lock rehabilitation and other preventive maintenance work. He advanced to the position of sandblasting and painting leader, performing this function for several winters at the Fountain City Service Base in Fountain City, Wis.

After several years as a boat operator, Peck advanced to the position of leverman, with responsibility for operation of the dredge. In this position, he expanded his interest in the overall operation and management of the dredge. He also began to pilot the dredge between locations. In 1990, at the age of 38, Peck became master the of Thompson.



## Alberico coaches international teamwork



Photo by Brian Temple, Europe District

**Teri Alberico (right), planning, programs and project management division, participated in a Partnership for Peace-U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' initiative in Tajikistan in May. The trip fostered communication and cooperation among delegates from Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Observers from Afghanistan, the United Nations, NATO and the U.S. Agency for International Development also attended. With her are Zohir Mullomalikov (left) and Akmal Akhmedov.**

*Teri Alberico traveled to Tajikistan and the Republic of Georgia to facilitate international cooperation in emergency management this summer. She will return to Georgia for a second visit in September.*

By Teri Alberico

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies are building international cooperation in Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in emergency response and other areas. Participants from these four nations learned to use geographic information systems, or GIS, in emergency planning and response.

The mission, so far, has provided for two visits to Tajikistan and one to the Republic of Georgia. It includes a return to Georgia in September.

The first trip to each country is a conference. The second includes additional workshops and a tabletop exercise.

The conferences include plenary sessions in which each nation presents information on a predetermined topic. In Georgia, the topic was how to facilitate border crossings for emergency response personnel and material. The delegates also attend working-groups in GIS, communication, scenario/exercise planning or coordination. The nations receive invitations urging them to send

delegates who are versed in each of these areas so every attending country is represented in each working group.

The coordination group allows delegates to begin working out significant issues and make connections to help them during actual emergencies. The GIS group creates new data representing the affected area, identifies data and resource needs and investigates potential data sources.

During the Tajik workshop the United Nations GIS staff met with the delegates and discussed future data sharing opportunities for the country and the region.

In Tajikistan, the communication group was facilitated by Brian Temple, Europe District public affairs specialist, who did a lot of role-playing work and practice interviews. Participants expressed gratitude for the practice interviews. He led them through media workshops and prepared them for the difficult questions, attitude and the slant of a news story from the likes of CNN.

During the Tajik tabletop exercise, the delegates split into country groups, set up "EOCs," then e-mailed information and shared data about a simulated earthquake. Only the communication working group stayed together. They led "real" media and diplomatic representatives through a presentation on the program and conferences, then toured the on-going exercise. After the tour, the emergency situations manager got to put his new skills into practice during interviews by local and international media.



Photos by Jonathan Sobiech

**Randy Urich, forester, explains to the kids how to determine the age of a tree is by counting its growth rings**

## River education days attracts 1,400 students from 3 states

By Jonathan Sobiech, forester

Nearly 1,400 students in grades four through six, coming from three states, experienced the sights, smells, textures and sounds of the Mississippi River during river education days at Trempealeau, Wis., and Prairie du Chien, Wis., May 11-12.

Jon Sobiech, Kurt Brownell and Randy Urich from the St. Paul District's natural resources project office in La Crescent, Minn., partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others to host a two-day festival, held at the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge and the Villa Louis grounds in Prairie du Chien, Wis.

The wildlife refuge is between Mississippi River mile 718 on the south and river mile 724 on the north, from Trempealeau to



**Cindy Samples, visitor services manager with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, holds a bird, a Baltimore Oriole, at the tip of her fingers.**

Winona, Minn.

This is the first year the event has been held concurrently at two locations. Sobiech, with Jennifer Lilla and Cindy Samples, both from USFWS, coordinated the Trempealeau event, while the Villa Louis event was coordinated by Tim Loose, USFWS.

The Upper Mississippi River Festival is an event that brings together river biologists, historians and others with knowledge of the river to teach school children about the river. Presenters typically come from Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

The educational event gives young students the opportunity to explore and investigate environmental issues, draw conclusions from their findings and consider how their actions or personal choices affect the environment. Many of the presentations emphasized hands-on experiences.

Each student in attendance experienced four different presentations, each with a unique emphasis. Presentation topics included forestry, prairie walk, netting and banding birds, wetlands, holistic nature, tree identification walk, nature walk, tug-a-suckle, birds-of-prey, river history, clam camps, river navigation, an environmental management program project tour, mussel propagation, fur trade, voyageur camp, lessons in conservation, migratory-bird game, build a refuge exercise, ducks-on-a stick, fish-shocking, invertebrates and the Grand Excursion.

With such a variety of topics the children were unable to see every presentation, allowing them to

*Education, continued Page 9*





**Sue Broten, Coulee Wildlife Rehab Center, holds up a Screech owl. The center is based in Chaseburg, Wis.**

*Education, continued from Page 8* share their experiences with their classmates by talking about what they learned at the different sessions.

Dry skies and warm temperatures facilitated the outdoor learning.

More than 650 students from nine counties in Minnesota and Wisconsin attended the sessions at the wildlife refuge in Trempealeau. More than 740 students and 80 teachers from four counties in Iowa and Wisconsin were at Prairie du Chien.

Sharing duties with the Corps and USFWS were: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Geological Survey, Friends of the Mississippi River, National Park Service, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Villa Louis personnel and many volunteers.

## P2 slowly begins deployment

By Mark Davidson

The P2 deployment phase in the St. Paul District is doing very well at this time, according to Bill Csajko, the district's P2 project manager.

P2 consists of a suite of automated commercial off-the-shelf project management, analysis and reporting tools, configured to support the Corps' project management business process.

P2 is to be used by the project delivery team, or PDT, and managers to plan, execute and report project and program information. P2 also allows people outside of the immediate PDT to review project information.

"The success we have had in St. Paul is mostly due to the enthusiasm and dedication of a significant number of individuals," said Csajko.

The P2 deployment phase, which started May 17, is scheduled to end Sept. 3. There is no guidance at this time to extend the end date, said Csajko, but there have been some discussions regarding a possible extension.

"Our district is significantly ahead of the other districts in the division in terms of the percentage of 'approved' projects," said Csajko. "However, there is no one measurement that adequately reflects the complexity of entering project information into P2. We still have a lot of work ahead of us to make P2 successful."

Training district employees to use P2 has been the other big challenge. "More than 200 district employees have been trained in one or more P2 courses," said Csajko. "These people are ready to start using P2, but there is still a significant amount of hands-on usage of the tool before they can become proficient in its use."

Once the district and the rest of the Corps learn how best to use P2, according to Csajko, more people will be trained in using it to view project information. The Corps is also currently scheduled to begin using P2 in February 2005 for managing non-project work in areas such as information management and logistics management.



Photo by Peter Versteegen

**In P2 training are (from left) Sue Robinson, Mark Krenelka, Diana Tschida, Theresa Thury and Bill Vennemann.**



Photo by Shannon Bauer

**Joe Dvorak, upper area lockmaster, answered questions about Corps' locks and dams and supported personnel at Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn. Locking through behind him is the Harriet Bishop, Port of St. Paul., Minn., July 3.**

## Locks add to enjoyment of Grand Excursion 2004

By Shannon Bauer

The recent events of Grand Excursion 2004 introduced people region-wide to the Corps of Engineers and its missions on the Upper Mississippi River.

In addition to thousands visiting the Corps' locks and dams throughout the event, millions more witnessed it through television and newspapers.

Grand Excursion 2004, held June 25 to July 5, featured the largest riverboat steamboat flotilla in more than a century, recreating the original Grand Excursion of 1854.

Both journeys began on rail in Chicago to Rock Island, Ill., then by steamboat upriver to St. Paul, Minn., with several stops in riverfront communities along the way.

According to the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation, in June 1854, the original Grand Excursion was to be the catalyst for the explosive development of the Upper Mississippi. The Chicago and Rock Island Railroad was the first railroad to reach the Mississippi and to celebrate, Henry Farnum Company, contractors for the railroad, proposed an excursion

upriver. More than 1,200 dignitaries, politicians, media, business leaders and artists, including the 13th U.S. President Millard Fillmore, boarded rail cars to Rock Island and then five steamboats to St. Paul.

In 2004, the goal of the Grand Excursion was to honor years of community redevelopment work by 40 cities in four states, as well as to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the original event that brought national and international attention to the region.

This time, seven steamboats, including the Anson Northrup, the Celebration Belle, the Delta Queen, the Harriet Bishop, the Julia Belle Swain, the Mississippi Queen and the Spirit of Peoria, carried around 37,000 passengers throughout the journey. According to Rob Pruden, Grand Excursion executive director, around 750,000 individuals lined the riverbanks from Rock Island to St. Paul.

The flotilla began its journey in the St. Paul District June 29, when it arrived at Lock and Dam 10 in Guttenberg, Iowa, and ended the event with a celebration July 3 that drew 250,000 to Harriet Island in St. Paul. Around 11,000 people visited the district's locks and dams to view the flotilla. At the same time, around 5,000 recreational boats locked through during what is usually an already busy time of year for the operators, the July 4 weekend.

"The Grand Excursion was a great opportunity for the staff at the lock sites to showcase the excellent job the St. Paul District does maintaining and operating our locks and dams," said Dean Peterson, chief of the district's

*Excursion, continued Page 11*



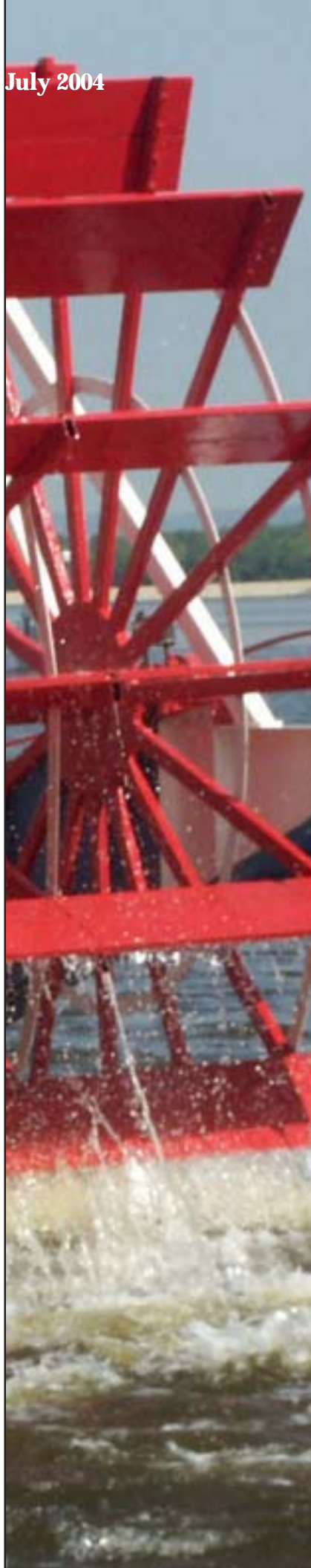


Photo by Shannon Bauer

**Al Seipel, lock operator, assists the Celebration Belle through Lock and Dam 5 in Minnesota City, Minn., July 1.**

*Excursion, continued from Page 10* lock operations. “The pride of ownership that all the lock personnel bring to work every day was demonstrated by the immaculate condition of the facilities.

“The extra effort they put forth created a very positive image of the Corps of Engineers in the eyes of the thousands of people that visited the lock sites during the five days the Grand Excursion traveled through the district,” he continued. “Plain and simple — they did a fantastic job.”

Around 2,000 spectators greeted the flotilla at Lock and Dam 10. Marvin Althoff, lockmaster there, said the Delta Queen went through about three hours early, though, so there was some disappointment.

**At left, paddlewheel of the Julia Belle Swain, as it exits Lock and Dam 5, Minnesota City, Minn., July 1.**

Photo by Shannon Bauer



St. Paul District photo

**Kurt Brownell (in uniform) presented interpretative programs about the Mississippi River and Corps’ missions to passengers on the Spirit of Peoria when it was in Pool 8, near LaCrosse, Wis., July 1.**

Lock and Dam 8 in Genoa, Wis., held an open house and gave tours to around 700 visitors. Another 300 stopped by to watch the flotilla. “It was great having so many people interested in our operation,” said lockmaster Ted Engelen. “It was time well spent and a great day for all.”

Lock and Dam 6 in Trempealeau, Wis., held three open houses, drawing around 950 people. An additional 4,500 came just to see the flotilla. Local citizens dressed up in period costumes and a jazz band was commissioned by the city to provide the excursionists a ‘grand’ welcome as they entered the lock. An actor dressed up as Former President Fillmore to reenact the president’s 1854 speech in Trempealeau, and another played his daughter, Abby, to reenact her horseback ride up the river bluff.

The crowds at Lock and Dam 6 were 10 to 15 people deep along the entire fence, said Terry Jessesky, central area

*Excursion, continued Page 12*



*Excursion, continued from Page 11*

lockmaster. “The Grand Excursion activities in Trempealeau produced outstanding results.”

Lock and Dam 4 in Alma, Wis., saw 850 people during its open house and another 1,000 to watch the flotilla. The staff there set up historical displays on the history of Lock and Dam 4.

Throughout Grand Excursion 2004, the natural resources staff from La Crescent, Minn., also got involved in publicizing the Corps’ missions. Kurt Brownell, Jonathon Sobiech and Randy Urich took flotilla rides, talking about the Corps and the Mississippi River with around 1,200 excursionists. Gerald Lee and Brownell additionally set up a Corps’ exhibit in Genoa, Wis., during the city’s Grand Excursion celebration and talked to 300 more people.

Brownell, natural resources, said, “I had a lot of people stop by and express interest in what the Corps does. It was fun, just walking around and talking to people about the Corps. It was a very positive experience. I thoroughly enjoyed it.”

*Excursion, continued Page 13*



Photo by Shannon Bauer

**Ivette Garrett, office of counsel, and Dean Peterson, chief of the district’s lock operations, assisted visitors at Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn., July 3. The Celebration Belle is locking through.**



St. Paul District photo

**Above: Tom Novak (center), Blackhawk Park manager, worked with officials with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in Prairie du Chien, Wis., to staff an information booth June 29. “We had many contacts with young and old alike,” said Novak. “I gave away a good number of Corps Water Safety Activity coloring books plus other brochures.” Blackhawk Park is three miles north of DeSoto, Wis.**



Photo by Denise Lepke

**At left: Ted Engelien, lockmaster at Lock and Dam 8, Genoa, Wis. (center), met the public during the open house held during Grand Excursion.**



*Excursion, continued from Page 12*

Bryan Peterson, physical support, and Kevin Berg, natural resources, coordinated a public outreach effort. Berg, Lee and Sobiech patrolled the approaches to locks 10 through 2 to provide assistance and information to public boaters as they approached the locks, as well as sightseers. Kevin Ressie, Steve Sing, Mark Scholl and Alan Van Guilder, all channels and harbors, aided them in their efforts. Additionally, Lee and Sobiech escorted the Grand Excursion camera crew, as they filmed the excursion entering the district at Guttenberg.

“It was an excellent opportunity to introduce all of the great things the Corps does to the public,” said Sobiech, a forester. “Many folks were very impressed with projects we have completed, as well as our ongoing projects.”



Photo by Jane Groth

**Above, nearly 4,500 individuals lined up to see the flotillas at Lock and Dam 6 in Trempealeau, Wis., June 30. Below, the public visited a Corps’ designed project along the banks of the Mississippi River in St. Paul, Minn., to see the Delta Queen arrive July 4.**

Photo by Marc Krumholz



# Johnston helps to jump start Iraqi power grid

By Mark Davidson

Joel Johnston went to Iraq “because it was a chance to serve my country again.”

Johnston, a U.S. Navy retiree, and the equipment repair person at Lock and Dam 6 in Trempealeau, Wis., was in Iraq from March 1 to June 23 at Victory Base area office in Baghdad.

He spent one week in training, prior to going to Iraq, in Vicksburg, Miss., learning about threat conditions, first aid, gas mask training, U.S. Army culture, Iraqi culture brief, pays and allowances.

Johnston was a quality assurance representative and the electrical expert for the Victory area office. “I screened and answered any electrical questions on projects out of the Victory Area Office,” said Johnston.

He was assigned as the quality assurance representative for three major projects and numerous smaller projects.

- Contractor Village: placement and setting up of 53 trailers as a living area for third world nationals and contractors.

- Replacement of number-12 feeder cable: installation of a dual run of 11,000 volt underground electrical cable from the main feeder distribution station to a substation 3,000 meters in distance.

- Installation of underground 11,000 volt: electrical cable and the

placement of substations to put several hundred U. S. Army troop trailers on the main power grid and remove them from local generator power.

- Acted as a quality assurance representative for electrical areas of projects, such as building renovations, generator installations, etc.

Johnston was also assigned as one of the quality assurance representatives for the Al Faw palace joint operations center, which is the largest, most technologically advanced, military headquarters in the world, said Lt. Col. Stephen Jeselink, deputy Central District commander, Gulf Region Division. This \$5.6 million project was designed, contracted and built in less than six months.

“This is truly an amazing accomplishment given the austere conditions, construction and contracting challenges that were present in this war torn country, and the severely damaged and neglected infrastructure systems,” said Jeselink.

Johnston’s family, friends and fellow workers were happy to see him back in the USA in July.

“This trip only reinforced what I already knew from previous experiences – that the USA is the best country in the world,” said Johnston. “We have the finest military in the world, staffed with the best-trained and most professional Americans I have ever met. The Iraqi people are glad we are there and only want a stable, free country to live in.”



St. Paul District photo

**Joel Johnston (above) was a quality assurance representative and the electrical expert for the Victory area office in Iraq. He screened and answered electrical questions on projects. He was assigned as the quality assurance representative for three major projects and numerous smaller projects.**



# News and Notes

## Lock 8 personnel prevent mishap

By Ted Engeliem  
Lockmaster

During an open house at Lock and Dam 8, Genoa, Wis., June 30, a pleasure craft lost power up-river of the dam. The occupants of the pleasure craft were waiting their turn to lock through, following a northbound towboat and barges.

**Denise Lepke**, head lock operator, was conducting a tour on the dam about 11 a.m., when she noticed the pleasure craft drifting towards the tainter gates downstream of the restricted area above the dam. She immediately called to alert lock operators at the control station.

**Ken Fleshner**, head operator at Lock and Dam 9, Lynxville, Wis., and Russ Bolton, electrician at Lock and Dam 8, launched the upper lifeboat while Lepke lowered the three tainter gates that the boat was drifting into. (Lowering the gates reduces the flow of water through the dam.) Fleshner and Bolton were able to reach the powerless boat before it reached the gates. They towed the boat upstream and brought it behind the upper guide wall.

This happened in view of a couple hundred visitors on site during the open house. Many of them thought this had been staged for their benefit. (Not so.)

No one was hurt as a result of this mishap.

## Geisen selected for Hall of Fame

**Al Geisen**, retired chief of design branch, was selected for the St. Paul District Hall of Fame. Geisen will receive the award at the 29th annual retirees' reunion in St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 9.

## 29th annual retirees' reunion scheduled

The retirees' reunion has changed locations. The 29th annual St. Paul District retirees' reunion is scheduled at the City View/Lost Spur Banquet and Conference Center, 2750 Sibley Memorial Hwy. (Hwy 13), Eagan, Minn., Sept. 9. The reunion begins at 11:30 a.m., lunch served at 1 p.m.

The banquet menu offers chef salad for \$13, an open-faced steak sandwich with mushrooms for \$15, and chicken breast served with rice for \$16.50.

Reservations must be received by Margaret (Peggy) Peterson by Sept. 3.

For further information, contact **Peggy Peterson** at 651-486-0390 or mail payment and reservations to Margaret Peterson, 2522 Adele St., Maplewood, MN 55109.

**Jim Kursu**, an alternate contact, may be reached at 651-224-0053.

## Hedin has girl

**Lisa Hedin**, project management, gave birth to a healthy baby girl, Linnea Ester, 8 lbs., 11 oz. and 21 inches, July 25.

## Pearcy becomes board member of historical group

**Matt Pearcy**, St. Paul District historian, strengthened the Corps' affiliation with the American Public Works Association and its chartered Public Works Historical Society.

This March, the PWHS asked Pearcy to join its awards review committee for the Michael C. Robinson award. The late Dr. Robinson worked for the Corps of Engineers as the Mississippi River Commission/Lower Mississippi Valley Division historian and, later, division public affairs chief.

In April, Todd Shallat, Ph.D., of Boise State University, Boise, Idaho, and author of *Structures in the Stream: Water, Science, and the Rise of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*, nominated Pearcy to serve on the PWHS board of trustees. Pearcy received notice by PWHS staff that he was elected to the board of trustees this July.

The APWA is an international educational and professional association of public agencies, private sector companies and individuals dedicated to providing high quality public works goods and services.

Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, previous chief of engineers, attended the 2003 congress and pledged support for working closely with APWA and members on common issues and local projects.

# Care for Kosovo

By Virginia Regorrah  
East Grand Forks Resident Office

While Marvin Regorrah, a contract specialist at the Western Area Office in Grand Forks, N.D., has been deployed to Kosovo with the Minnesota National Guard, the Western Area Office has played a part in mission accomplishment for the KFOR (Kosovo Forces).

Rather than send him care packages filled with candy and cookies and beef jerky, Regorrah's co-workers sent boxes filled with new and used children's clothing, shoes and personal care items.

Recently, the office received a thank-you note for their contributions from Lt. Col. James Moran, who leads Operation American Family. Operation American Family is a humanitarian aid project that collects donations from the families of the American soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and civilians deployed to Kosovo and distributes the packages to communities in the province of Kosovo. Moran wrote to thank the office for its participation, saying the packages were distributed June 27 as part of a shipment of 80 boxes of aid.

The boxes were presented to a children's home for the mentally handicapped in the town of Gracanica, Kosovo, about 20 minutes from the KFOR Headquarters in Pristina. Moran's letter went on to say "because there was such a generous supply of clothing, shoes, personal care products and school supplies, the

## Lyman works long hours and adjusts to last-minute requests

*Shannon Bauer, public affairs, nominated Jon Lyman for the May Employee of the Month.*

Since I've been at the district, I've been very impressed with the extra effort Lyman puts into his job. As an example, he was supposed to be on vacation all week; however, he ended up working Monday and Tuesday to finish up preparations for Mary Kay Linder's retirement celebration.

He is constantly barraged with last minute requests that are always considered an emergency by the requester. Lyman handles it with good humor. He always tries to

accommodate these requests and does the best he can to get all jobs done on time, even if it involves working long hours well into the night. And although often overloaded with more

projects than is humanly possible for one person, he is always friendly and helpful and willing to go the extra mile to make the product even better and to display the best public image for the Corps.

He goes out of

his way to make the district a good place to work for the rest of us. Some examples, not required but he does them anyway, include making collages and yearbooks for retirees and videotaping and/or photographing special employee events.



Photo by Peter Verstegen

**Jon Lyman, left, and Col. Robert Ball, former St. Paul District commander.**

items that are not directly needed by the home will be shared with the needy citizens of Gracanica."

Continued Moran, "But, the success of this program has been based on the help from family and friends throughout the United States and Europe."

Jay Bushy, the project engineer for English Coulee Diversion and Grand Forks phase three, was one of the contributors to the care packages. "It's nice to give the kids of that country something to

show we care," said Bushy. "Our own children don't know how good we have it, and it's nice to be able to share."

Tricia Liggett, project engineer for Crookston stage two and East Grand Forks phase three, echoed that sentiment, saying, "It's very rewarding to be able to help not only our deployed servicemen and women, but also do something to help those less fortunate than us."