



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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October 2004

Florida kids
back to class,
thanks to Corps



Fiscal prudence, regional budgeting benefit jobs, training

By Col. Mike Pfenning
District Commander

As we begin fiscal year 2005, I wanted to give you an assessment of our annual budget. There is good news – the district’s fiscal year 2005 budget is an increase over the fiscal year 2004 budget, and it is part of a history-making first step towards a Mississippi Valley Division regional budget. However, we must remain fiscally prudent and continue to look for regional efficiencies.



of our annual budget. There is good news – the district’s fiscal year 2005 budget is an increase over the fiscal year 2004 budget, and it is part of a history-making first step towards a Mississippi Valley Division regional budget. However, we must remain fiscally prudent and continue to look for regional efficiencies.

The fiscal year 2005 budget is

\$151 million, an increase from \$131 million in fiscal year 2004. We will increase spending this year in training, awards, labor and the purchases of new automation equipment – mostly new computers.

Both team and on-the-spot awards, which were cut last year, are back this year. Additionally, there is a 44 percent increase in the overall training budget this year, which includes a 63 percent increase of technical training opportunities. In terms of labor, the dewatering work at our locks will employ some of our seasonal employees this winter and the core positions not filled last year are being recruited for fill this year.

As I stated earlier, we must remain fiscally prudent. As the House and Senate were unable to agree on the president’s budget, we are starting off fiscal year 2005 under a continuing resolution from Congress. We expect there will not be an approved presidential budget until at least February or March 2005. The continuing resolution means we can’t start any new work or projects and that we can only spend a portion of our Corps’ - approved fiscal year 2005 budget until the president’s budget is approved. While the current continuing resolution expires on Nov. 20, we expect a series of continuing resolutions to be enacted that will allow the federal government to continue operating until Congress approves the presidential budget after the new calendar year.

Even though we are filling vacant positions, the position management committee will carefully evaluate each hiring action. The volunteer early retirement and volunteer

separation incentive programs will be used in certain areas in fiscal year 2005 to keep achieving organizational efficiency and reshaping the organization to meet future needs, as determined by the district’s organizational task force in fiscal year 2004.

I am convinced that the district’s fiscally prudent policies we executed in fiscal year 2004 will also help us get through the early part of fiscal year 2005. The fiscal year 2004 budget marked a cultural change in the way we


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Cover photo



Photo by Shannon Bauer

A second grade class at Pensacola Beach, Fla., Elementary School presented thank you cards to Army Corps of Engineers for putting up a temporary school after their school was damaged by Hurricane Ivan in October. Pictured are: Duane Wilson, quality insurance inspector; Scott Jutila, site engineer; and Eric Wittine, quality assurance inspector. All work in the St. Paul District.


US Army Corps of Engineers
 St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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Task force postures district for future success

By Peter Verstegen

An organizational task force of 16 members and advisors, representing all the technical divisions as well as the field and support offices, was formed to make recommendations on organization changes needed to manage the projected St. Paul District workload.

“The goal was to position the district for success looking out five years to the year 2010,” said Lt. Col. Tom O’Hara, deputy district commander.

The charter of the task force was to recommend changes to the district’s senior management, so the district could manage “a conservative future workload/funding level.”

The biggest change the task force recommended was the

consolidation of engineering division and construction branch to form engineering and construction division, abbreviated as EC, and the creation of a separate operations division. The task force also initiated follow-up studies to examine potential consolidations within the new operations division, as well as reviewing seasonal work force positions in both the locks and dams projects and the recreation projects.

“These follow-up studies will attempt to eliminate inconsistencies within various business lines and provide service into the future,” said O’Hara. “These study teams were formed and their membership expanded in order to make sure personnel in the field have adequate input to these critical decision.”

These follow-up studies are nearly completed. There will be more communications of the specific recommendations of these project delivery teams as the process develops.

Budgets, continued from Page 2

managed our work force and expenses.

This cultural change helped us as we developed the fiscal year 2005 budget, including the first regional Mississippi Valley Division budget. This regional budget is the collation of the six district budgets into a single regional budget that reflects the needs and capabilities of the entire region. This regional fiscal year 2005 budget will assist in moderating the “ups and downs” in the six district budgets by combining all the budgets into a single budget, as the region must reduce the regional fiscal year 2006 overhead expenses by 10 percent from the fiscal year 2004 budget. More importantly, this regional budget will assist us in achieving our goal to deliver our services more cost effectively to our regional customers.

Finally, there is an increased awareness amongst the region’s senior leadership of each other’s budgets and the need to understand how they compare to each other in the actual delivery of our services. All of us in the MVD must look beyond traditional boundaries to seek the best practices and most efficient and effective ways to be fiscally prudent on a daily basis. I know you will join me in that search.

Essayons!

Task force duties:

- Look at the district’s current, its minimum and most efficient organization structure by division and office;
- Review division most efficient organization to identify efficiencies that cross division boundaries;
- Use a future full-time equivalent study to project a workload baseline for each organization;
- Establish the support office staff needed to support the structure;
- Review suggested organizational changes from a budget task force survey.

Task force members and advisors:

- Construction-Operations: Bruce Boldon, Tom Oksness, John Zahalka;
- Engineering: Mike Dahlquist, Scott Jutila;
- Project management: Dave Raasch, Randy Devendorf;
- Support offices: Cathy Vanatta;
- Civilian personnel: Linda Krueger;
- Equal Employment Opportunity: Marianne Price;
- Union: Dean Otterson;
- Leadership development: Sue Robinson;
- Mark Nelson, real estate;
- Lt. Col. O’Hara, deputy district commander.

Corps takes 'lessons learned' to class

By Shannon Bauer

PENSACOLA, Fla. (Army News Service, Oct. 15, 2004) — U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' volunteers set up temporary facilities so that Pensacola school children could return to class after Hurricane Ivan struck.

Ivan completely destroyed Pensacola Beach Elementary Charter School, as well as 22 classrooms at Workman Middle School and 10 classrooms at Pensacola High School. The Corps' team Pensacola Emergency Response and Recovery Office acquired, delivered and set up 36 mobile homes for the Escambia County school district to use as temporary classrooms two weeks after receiving the task.

Scott Jutila, engineer for the project, said it took a huge cooperative effort between the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Corps of Engineers, the school district and the contractors to complete the project that quickly. "Everyone knew it was important to get the kids back to school, so they knew it was a priority," he said.

The team received the assignment Sept. 29 and had trailers arriving by Oct. 2. They arrived in modules and had to be pieced together, as well as hooked up to utilities, cleaned up, and, in some cases, repaired. Jutila said one fell off the delivery truck on its way and had to have a new ceiling and light fixtures installed.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

The Pensacola Beach, Fla., Elementary School was destroyed in Hurricane Ivan. The Corps of Engineers installed temporary trailers in the parking lot of a community church, so the children could go back to school. Florida Governor Jeb Bush visited the school Oct. 13 and thanked the Corps' employees who helped make it possible. Pictured (from left): Eric Wittine, quality assurance inspector from St. Paul District; Florida Governor Jeb Bush; Scott Jutila, site engineer; Duane Wilson, quality assurance inspector; and Mark Koenig, resident engineer. They are from the St. Paul District.

"Assisting the school district with the modular classroom units was an exciting, new challenge for the temporary housing team," said Eric Wittine, quality supervisor on the project. "To bring in the units, place them with utilities and have students in class in a two-week time period was a remarkable accomplishment. It was great to see the smiles on the kids' faces."

Florida Governor Jeb Bush visited the Pensacola Beach school Oct. 13 to thank the Corps and its partners for getting the school up and running in such a timely manner.



St. Paul District photo

Jon Sobiech, a forester at the natural resources office in LaCrescent, Minn., supported the temporary housing mission in Pensacola, Fla., after Hurricane Ivan.

More photos, Pages 5-6

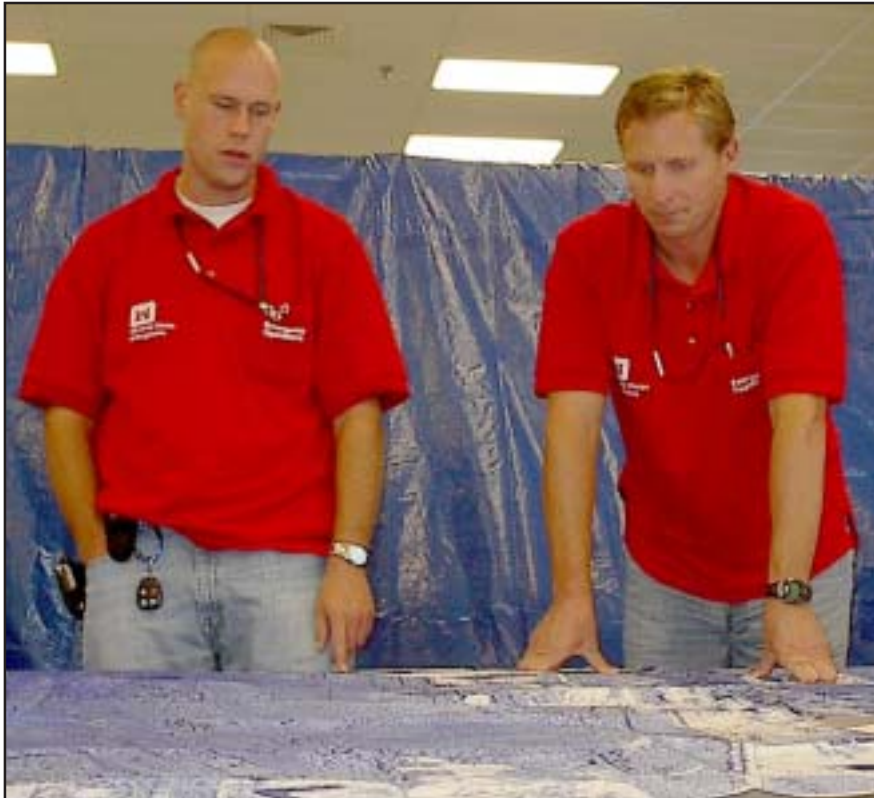


Photo by Shannon Bauer

Aaron Dunlop (left), site engineer, and Dan Kelner, environmental compliance manager, both from St. Paul District, served at the Pensacola, Fla., Emergency Response and Recovery Operations Center for Hurricane Ivan. They are looking at maps to find potential temporary housing sites.



St. Paul District photo



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Stephanie Dupey (above left) and Liz Nelson are part of the temporary housing team serving at the Pensacola, Fla., Emergency Response and Recovery Operations Center for Hurricane Ivan. Dupey normally works in the executive office, Nelson in engineering. Nelson said, "Our missions here are: indentifying existing mobile home or travel-trailer pads, clearing/rehooking up existing pads, building group sites; building emergency group sites; and connecting temporary school rooms to utilities."

Ken Beck (left) and Randy Melby looked for potential group sites suitable for development of mobile home parks. "We were in the helicopter looking for trailer parks with vacant pads suitable for placement of FEMA mobile homes," said Beck. The parks served as temporary housing for residents who lost homes during Hurricane Ivan. Beck and Melby were part of the Corps' temporary housing mission assigned by FEMA.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Kari Layman, engineering, and Richard Beatty, project management, worked the temporary housing mission in Pensacola. "I expect to be here for about three weeks," said Layman. "He [Beatty] is our NEPA compliance specialist and I am serving as mission manager on this tour," she said. "We generally work seven days a week, 12 hours per day." Beatty and Layman have previous experience working on temporary housing for Hurricane Charley.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Pat Trudel (right), engineer from St. Paul District, and Jeff Johnson, engineer from Savannah District, worked on temporary housing for victims of Hurricane Ivan in Pensacola. Trudel normally works at the St. Paul District Western Area Office, Grand Forks, N.D.

Volunteers support hurricane recovery

Forty two volunteers have deployed from the St. Paul District to support temporary housing, roofing and debris removal in September and October in the aftermath of hurricanes and tropical storms that battered Florida and the Caribbean this fall. Additional volunteers continue to deploy to support the mission.

- John Albrecht**, real estate;
- Thomas Barickman**, operations;
- Richard Beatty**, project management;
- Shannon Bauer**, public affairs;
- Lisa Brantner**, operations;
- Jay Bushy**, operations;
- Dave Christenson**, readiness;
- Patrick Duffney**, operations;
- Aaron Dunlop**, operations;
- Stephanie Dupey**, executive office;
- Greg Frankosky**, engineering and construction;
- Bonnie Greenleaf**, PM;
- Rebecca Gruber**, operations;
- Rick Hauck**, EC;
- Zeb Hemsworth**, operations;
- Roland Hamborg**, PM
- Corrine Hodapp**, operations;
- Paul Johnson**, EC;
- Scott Jutila**, EC;
- Kari Layman**, EC;
- Sue Lenski**, real estate;
- Paul Machajewski**, operations;
- Paul Madison**, EC;
- Jim Maybach**, operations;
- Ray Marinan**, operations;
- Darrell Morey**, EC;
- Joe Mose**, PM;
- Liz Nelson**, EC;
- Alda Ottley**, EC;
- Ryan Otto**, operations;
- Grant Riddick**, EC;
- Jim Sentz**, EC;
- Aaron Snyder**, PM;
- Jon Sobiech**, operations;
- Kenton Spading**, EC;
- Patrick Trudel**, operations;
- Jim Ulrick**, EC
- William Vennemann**, real estate;
- Duane Wilson**, operations;
- Eric Wittine**, EC;
- Gary Wolf**, EC;
- Terry Zien**, EC

October 2004

Grimsled keeps project on track through heat and mortar attacks

By Mark Davidson

Jay Grimsled spent his summer in the 100-degree plus heat of Baghdad, helping to build an Army Corps of Engineers project there. A little different location and climate compared to his head lock and dam operator job at Lock and Dam 8 in Genoa, Wis.

The 13-year employee of the Corps was in Iraq at Camp Victory in Baghdad from May 9 to Sept. 6. He was the quality assurance representative overseeing the construction for the new Corps' Gulf Region Division Headquarters.

The \$4 million project Grimsled oversaw consisted of building four barracks buildings and a three-building office complex for the Gulf Region Division, which would need permanent residences after it leaves the Green Zone.

"This is a rare, new Corps' construction project in Iraq," said Grimsled. "Most prior projects there were repair and remodeling of existing structures."

The project was being constructed by a contractor with little experience, SAS Contracting and Construction, part of the Hamrabi Palace Group, with offices in Beirut, Lebanon, and Baghdad, Iraq. But Grimsled took on the challenge without hesitation, according to Lt. Col. Randy Westfall, the Central District commander for the Gulf Region Division.

"Grimsled kept construction



St. Paul District photo

Jay Grimsled (left) was the quality assurance representative overseeing the construction for the new Gulf Region Division Headquarters in Iraq for the Corps. The barracks under construction in the background are at the GRD headquarters construction site at Camp Victory, August 2004. At right are Lt. Col. Randy Westfall, Central District commander for the Gulf Region Division, and the contractor.

moving along in spite of nearby mortar attacks and the civil unrest that prevented workers from getting to the job site," said Westfall. "He always kept the mission in mind and did what the mission required, regardless of the very dangerous and life threatening distractions around him."

Grimsled also served as the coordinator for access and entry of nearly 400 laborers and materials deliveries daily to Camp Victory.

"It was Grimsled's calm nature and experience as a former U.S. Army military policeman that made him the perfect fit for this task," said Westfall. "His outstanding technical abilities, combined with his ever-positive attitude and excellent people skills were key to the successful mission

accomplishment for this district."

Grimsled spent every day for four months on the job site in the summer heat of Baghdad. The average temperature was between 110-115 degrees with highest temperature being 124 degrees.

Westfall said Grimsled's willingness to work 14-16 hour days to assure the completion of the missions and earned Grimsled the respect among his peers, the Iraqi work force and the prime contractor on the project.

"Grimsled worked and lived under austere and dangerous conditions to complete the project," he continued. "Grimsled quickly adapted to the tasks assigned and provided the technical guidance necessary for the accomplishment of the mission."

Cost savings pull district through fiscal year

By Peter Verstegen

A district-wide effort at cost savings has pulled district through fiscal year 2004. "The district achieved its goal by not having to take drastic action through reductions in force," said Gary Nelson, resource management.

In mid-year progress review in March, former district commander, Col. Robert Ball, said, "...last January, the district was looking for a way to save approximately \$10 million before the end of the fiscal year." Employee suggestions and management actions identified about \$6 million of that goal by fiscal mid-year. "Additional initiatives have been identified that can be undertaken throughout the remainder of the fiscal year that will continue to increase our savings," Ball said.

"Individuals submitted ideas for cost savings and even took leave without pay – everything helped up make it through the fiscal year," said Nelson.

How did the collective effort produce \$4 million in savings by fiscal year end? The guidance came from a budget task force, led by Lisa Hedin, project management, which defined priorities, produced recommendations and plotted a time line for the district's top management. Some priorities were implemented immediately or in a short time. Others were delayed for mid-year budget reviews to assess impacts.

"The working program budget advisory committee urged that, in addition to short-term cost-savings measures, a unified look at the organizational structure, assuring we are appropriately sized and structured to address the mission requirement of the future in an efficient and effective manner, be undertaken immediately," said Lisa Hedin, project management and team leader. "The more quickly the district can get to a sustainable, affordable structure, the sooner we can get back into investing into the future of our organization, people and operations through adequate training, supplies, equipment and awards," Hedin said.

The working PBAC recommended district leadership manage change proactively through meaningful participation in 2012, division regionalization and district strategic planning. The intention is to continue the conversation about change and savings in hopes of mitigating district personnel potential fears and anxiety.

Fiscal mid-year initiatives saved \$6 million of \$10 million goal

Here is a general list of initiatives that saved about \$6 million of a \$10 million goal by mid-year 2004:

- Reduce participation in public outreach, such as Government on Display at the Mall of America and Motor Vessel Mississippi low-water tours;
- Cancel non-mission critical training;
- Freeze external hiring;
- Defer operations and maintenance work, resulting in longer than usual seasonal employee release periods;
- Severely restrict overtime;
- Freeze non-critical supply and information technology purchases;
- Reduce fleet size;
- Reduce use of cell phones and Blackberry® brand personal digital assistants;
- Reduce non-training travel by 50 percent, including project travel;
- Scale back the Leadership Development Program, consolidate training, and defer remaining developmental assignments;
- Implement a voluntary leave without pay, as well as a liberal-leave policy;
- Re-evaluate work to be done by private sector contractors, and do additional work with in-house staff where it makes sense and it is legal
- Eliminate On-the-Spot performance awards and team awards;
- Implement those VSIPs/VERAs allocated us, plan for and request more;
- Reduce recreation site maintenance projects;
- Accept additional risk on the mechanical dredging contract (reduces size of contract);
- Cancel the Summer Awards Picnic;
- Reduce the remaining library budget by 37.5 percent;
- Postpone the Lock and Dam 8 dedication into fiscal year 2005;
- No further YMCA membership contract additions;
- Reduce printing costs within district by encouraging conservation;
- Eliminate paper version of the CrossCurrents;
- Reduce long distance phone charges without impacting the mission;
- Halt Special Emphasis Program Committee activities requiring external expenditures, such as travel, contracts, supplies.

Safety Commentary

'Just a second'

By Virginia Regorrah
East Grand Forks Resident Office



“This tragedy was a reminder not to let one’s guard down and not to relax basic safety standards for convenience.”

“It’ll just take a second.” How many of us have said this? How many of us have made that quick trip to the grocery store for milk or chips or hamburger for the evening meal and not buckled up because “It’ll just take a second.”

How many of us have run the garbage out to the curb without throwing on a coat or snow boots, through the blizzard in the howling Minnesota wind because, after all, “It’ll just take a second.”

How many of us have turned on the circular saw to cut that one 2- inch by 4- inch board without putting on the safety goggles because “It’ll just take a second.”

How many times a week or a month do we do something potentially dangerous because “It’ll just take a second?”

Often, it’s the small lapses which may be the most deadly.

Individuals who are ordinarily very safety conscience may believe they can fix, grab or move something without making a fuss or bother – without taking the full measure of safety precautions necessary.

This October, a contractor who has worked with the district lost a man to such a small event – retrieving a mud-flap.

A bulldozer operator was working in the Crookston, Minn., landfill; dump trucks rolled in, dumped sand and the bulldozer would push it into place.

What investigators think happened (since no one saw it happen) is that a mud-flap fell off one of the dump trucks

and the dozer operator jumped off his dozer to grab the mud-flap before a load of sand buried it.

The bulldozer operator didn’t get the attention of the driver, who didn’t see him and dumped his load. The next truck came in, no dozer guy around, and dumped more sand. Three or four trucks continued to dump sand before someone said, “Hey, where’s the bulldozer operator?” Workers searched the site, called the home office to locate the operator, then began excavating the pile of sand. They found the mud-flap first.

Basically, the operator was just trying to help – grab the mud-flap before it was lost. If he had gotten someone’s attention, before going behind the truck, nothing would have happened.

It wasn’t a Corps’ job, but the loss of a good man in a small community like East Grand Forks, Minn., touches all of us.

This tragedy was a reminder not to let one’s guard down and not to relax basic safety standards for convenience. In that “second,” you may accomplish your goal; but you may unleash a tragedy that will not only affect you but those who know you.

You don’t need to be George Bailey from “It’s a Wonderful Life” to know that your absence will be felt and mourned not just by your family but by your friends and co-workers or even the people at the grocery store with whom you have a nodding acquaintance.

The next time you say to yourself that it’ll take longer to grab the safety equipment or put on the winter clothing or buckle the car seat belts than it will take to actually get the job done, stop and think. Safety is always worth that little bit of extra time. So be careful and stay careful in your personal life and on the job.

District volunteers in Iraqi Freedom

Matt Emmons, operations;
Michael Emmons, operations;
Dave Kitzman, operations;
Eric Lockington, operations;
Delene "D.J." Moser, operations;
Jeff Pfannes, safety;
David Sheryak, operations;
Byron Weichel, operations.

Completed tours -

Afghanistan, Iraq or other:

Bert Bateman, operations;
Chris Beaman, safety;
Bruce Boldon, engineering and construction;
Al Canfield, information management;
Dave Christenson, readiness;
Ron Corey, operations;
Lanny Cyr, EC;
Robert Dempsey, EC;
Patrick Duffney, operations;
Stephanie Ehnstrom, resource management;
Tim Fell, operations;
Cathy Frederickson, contracting;
Jay Girmsled, operations;
Kurt Heckendorf, EC;
Michael Hlady, EC;
Paul Johnson, EC;
Joel Johnson, operations;
Mark Koenig, EC and safety;
Mark Krenelka, EC;
Roy Lawson, EC;
Steve Lenhart, operations;
Chris Lennon, operations;
Randy Melby, EC;
Darrell Morey, EC;
Steve Muller, logistics;
Jim Peak, EC;
David Raasch, project management;
Marlin Ranum, EC;
Robert Roffler, operations;
Mike Seibel, operations;
Robert Sikkila, operations;
Don Speulda, EC;
Henrik Strandskov, operations;
Theresa Teed, project management;
William Vennemann, real estate.

Middle-school students see water at work



St. Paul District photo

Michelle J. Schneider, engineering division, took students at Washington Technology Middle School, St. Paul, Minn., through a lesson in soils and water May 14.

By Michelle J. Schneider
 Hydraulic engineer

Nearly 45 students at Washington Technology Middle School, St. Paul, Minn., learned about soils and groundwater May 14. That's when I had the opportunity to demonstrate to two classes that water can permeate or flow through soil at different rates by showing how gravel, sand, clay and compost differed in their degree of permeability.

Class lessons included placing each soil type in separate cylinders and students timed how long it took for a specific amount of water to flow through each.

The students said they had fun getting a little dirty and they discovered that gravel and sand are much more permeable than clay and compost.

This presentation was one of nearly a dozen conducted at the school by engineers from the St. Paul District this year.

Wanted: Your news!

PAO seeks information about special events in your life (e.g., births, deaths, marriages, engagements). If you would like to share these items, please contact Public Affairs at 651-290-5202, -5108 or 5201 or send an e-mail to: cemvp-pa@mvp02.usace.army.mil.

News and Notes



Photo by Al Pallas

About 120 students from the Coon Rapids Middle School, Coon Rapids, Minn., visited Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, Minneapolis, Oct. 15. Lockmaster Steve Lenhart (above right) briefly described the facility, the history of the area and how the lock operates. Students endured a temperature of 42 degrees Fahrenheit and rain to observe a pleasure craft lock through.

Visitor Center closes

The Visitor Center at Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, Minneapolis, will be closed from Dec. 1, 2004, to approximately April 1, 2005 during de-watering and repairs to the lock structure.

Mark Dec. 10 for Holiday Awards

The St. Paul District will hold its Holiday Awards Ceremony at The Prom Center, I-94 and Inwood Ave., Oakdale, Minn., Dec. 10.

Contact Marge Thompson at 651-290-5354 or Brenda Miller at

651-290-5375, regulatory branch, for further information. Retirees are to contact Jan Pream, regulatory, at 651-290-5312.

Announcements

Kraig Berberich has been selected as the six-month permanent seasonal lock and dam operator at Lock and Dam 6, Trempealeau, Wis., beginning Nov. 15, 2004. He has been working as a temporary lock and dam operator at Lock and Dam 5A, Fountain City, Wis.

Mark Koenig, construction branch, will fill in as the district's safety and security officer, beginning Oct. 25, while Jeff

Pfannes serves a tour of duty in Iraq. **Chris Beaman**, who had been selected to serve as the acting safety and security manager until July 2005, has taken a safety officer position in Huntsville, Ala.

Connie Brantner, office automation clerk at Lock and Dam 4 in Alma, Wis., and Lock and Dam 5 in Minneapolis, Minn., began a new job with the Buffalo County, Wis., sheriff's department as communications/correctional officer. Her last day with the district was Oct. 19. She worked for the district for nine years.

Steve Muyskens began as contract specialist in contracting division Oct. 4. Muyskens is the team leader for architecture-engineer and simplified purchasing contracting. He previously worked at the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, St. Paul.

Brigadier General Crear, commander, Mississippi Valley Division, selected **Jim Krumm** to be the next chief engineer on the Dredge Thompson, and to help transition the dredging operations to the new Dredge Goetz upon its arrival this spring. Col. Mike Pfenning, district commander and chairman of a panel of Corps' dredging experts, made the recommendation.

Krumm, a long-time employee of the Thompson, has the highest Coast Guard engineer license possible and was head lock operator at Lock and Dam 5A, Fountain City, Wis. He has 31 years experience with the district. He learned of the selection Oct. 20.

Marinan goes 'above and beyond' to achieve August Employee of the Month

Two co-workers, who requested they remain anonymous, nominated Ray Marinan, a ranger at the St. Paul District's Sandy Lake Recreation Area, McGregor, Minn., for August Employee of the Month for going above and beyond his normal duties. In doing so, he has inspired both co-workers and campers. His approach worked to mentor and coach other employees.



Photo by Jeff Steere

Ray Marinan

"A few weeks ago he escorted Jini Ryan, an Army news reporter, around the headwaters area for a week, setting aside his daily duties," said one nomination entry. The outcome was coverage of the Corps' Sandy Lake recreation site throughout the Army and for the troops in Iraq.

In the absence of his supervisor, a number of last-minute budgetary duties for the fiscal year closeout required action. Marinan completed the budget actions.

"He competently handled himself in phone conferences and then quickly found a replacement refrigerator when the one here [at the Sandy Lake office] decided to stop working," wrote another co-worker on a separate entry.

Marinan has come in on his days off to finish water quality testing for Big Sandy Lake and has traded shifts to help out other rangers.

His interpretative presentations demonstrated dedication to customers and engaged both campers and classes. One weekend this summer, he exceeded his usual effort to put on a quality medallion hunt for campers at Sandy Lake. The activity encouraged team building and learning of the lake's history. Those who participated expressed their enjoyment during their search for the medallion.

His creative approaches to interpretive programming have generated positive responses from children, their parents, teachers and students and at trade shows. He welcomes never-ending questions from inquisitive students and has presented information in a manner targeted to his audience. "His photo ability, video and still shots, which he has assembled telling the recreation story for the Headwaters, has been presented at trade shows, for career and recruitment efforts and many other forums," said John O'Leary, Headwaters operations manager. "Ray has great communication skills. He makes our customers feel welcome and comfortable at the Park"

"He always strives to keep the work environment enjoyable and occasionally brings in homemade baked goods for the rest of the staff to enjoy," said another of his nominators. Added O'Leary, "Ray is a liked, trusted and respected by his co-workers. He is a valued member of the Headwaters team.

Retiree news

Retiree **Delores Sudeith** and friends, during a visit to LaCrosse, Wis., dropped in for a brief tour of Lock and Dam 8, Genoa, Wis., Sept. 25. "Mr. [Allan] Stahl explained how things were done and was so helpful and informative..." wrote Sudeith. "Also, the site was totally spotless." She and her friends left impressed with Stahl and the lock and dam.

Andy Sandberg, who retired in 1966, writes "I will have reached 97, feel good eat a lot of fruit and vegetables, stay away from a lot of fatty foods," he wrote. "I have many friends who I keep in touch with."

He lost his wife of 63 years, at age 98, in July.

Combined Federal Campaign drive

The 2004 Combined Federal Campaign in the St. Paul District will run from Nov. 1- 19. Mark Davidson, public affairs chief is the this year's CFC coordinator.

District employees in the Grand Forks N.D. area and western Minnesota will be contacted by the Grand Forks CFC campaign. Other field site employees will receive pledge information from the district office.

Contributions, either cash or payroll deduction, must be sent to the PA Office by Nov. 17, 2004. Employees in the district office may drop off contribution at the fifth floor public affairs office in the box marked "2004 CFC," or send it through mail distribution to PAO. Individuals at field sites may send their forms to PAO.