



US Army Corps
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St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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**Contracting
awards \$67 million**



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Photo by Shannon Bauer

Bill Hurley, one of eight personnel in contracting division, has been a contracting specialist with the St. Paul District nearly five years. Contracting division awarded 791 contracts worth \$67 million for fiscal 2005, \$40 million of which went to small businesses. Prior to working for the Corps, Hurley was a purchasing manager in the private sector.

Contracting in search of service-disabled veterans

by Col. Michael Pfenning

The district contracting division and the deputy for small business are looking for service-disabled veterans. They would like your help in finding these veterans who own small businesses.

The Corps of Engineers, as mandated by law, must award one-and-a-half to three percent of federal procurement dollars to service disabled, veteran owned small businesses.

In fiscal year 2006, the district plans to obligate \$71 million in contracts. About \$1-2.1 million of the \$71 million must be awarded to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses.

Here's how to determine the eligibility for this program:

1. A service disabled veteran served in the active duty military, was discharged under conditions

other than dishonorable and their disability was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

2. A service disabled veteran can "self certify" that they are a service disabled veteran. They do not need this proof when "self certifying" but may be required to provide proof at a later date if a contracting officer challenges their service disabled veteran status.

3. The Small Business Administration, or another federal agency's small business specialist, must determine that the service disabled veteran owns a small business.

There are some other rules and regulations that a service disabled veteran, who owns a small business, must adhere to in obtaining business from the Corps of Engineers. If you know someone that might fit this criteria, get their name and contact information to Tom Koopmeiners, the district's deputy for small business, and Jim Roloff, contracting chief. They will contact the veteran.

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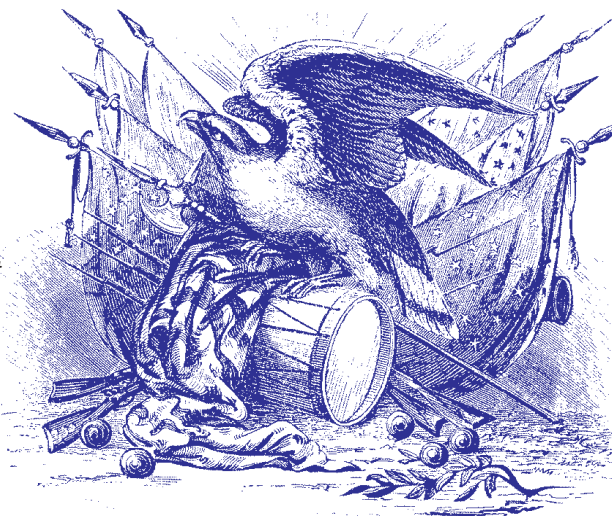
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Diversity Day comment

Cynthia Calhoun, Stevens Point Field Office, and Tammy Wick, Mississippi Headwaters Office, were among six from the district to attend Diversity Day, May 23, sponsored by the Federal Executive Board of the Twin Cities.



Diversity Day renews Army values

by Cynthia Calhoun
Stevens Point Field Office

Cynthia Calhoun lived in Germany in the late 1990s as a military dependent before she was hired by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Diversity Day panel that moved me the most was a question-and-answer session scheduled after lunch.

There was an activated National Guard lieutenant colonel, a reserve lieutenant colonel who had been to Iraq and a former captain who had served in Bosnia. The questions asked by the audience were answered by each member of the panel.

Many of the questions concerned the war in Iraq. What impressed me the most was how much our soldiers go through during war.

The captain and lieutenant colonel explained how what they had seen and experienced

overseas impacted the person they had become and how they had to deal with integrating back into society.

The lieutenant colonel was the commander for his unit while deployed in Iraq. His unit was sent to help Soldiers deal with the stresses of war. The Soldiers were very diverse in both occupations and individuals.

He expressed, from first hand experience, what a Soldier's life is like in war and how important contact from loved ones back home is. His personal story was very moving. The captain also expressed what he went through when he returned from his tour in Bosnia.

Having lived overseas for many years, especially during the Bosnia deployment, I remember how our soldiers came home different from when they left and how difficult it was getting back to a "normal" life. The plus for our active duty Soldiers is that support groups and reintegration classes are given to both the families and the soldiers upon return from their assignment.

The lieutenant colonel reminded

me that our reservists come back after war to their communities; and though they do have access to programs which will help them process what they experienced in war, they often feel if they use the employee assistance program services for mental health that they are stereotyped. He also emphasized that communication for soldiers serving in war is so important.

The additional courses that I attended were educational and I appreciate having had the opportunity to have gone from the St. Paul District.

I can tell you this, after having attended this seminar, I went back to my church and am now more dedicated to letting our soldiers from my parish know that they truly are appreciated. I put an announcement in our bulletin and plan on sending the service members a "Thank You" card.

For me, this seminar reminded me that despite personal views regarding the war in Iraq, freedom isn't free and our soldiers are allowing us to continue to live the life-styles we are accustomed to.

The least we can do as a society is to thank a Soldier in uniform and appreciate and welcome those reservists back into our communities.

As the Army Civilian Creed says: "I am dedicated to the Army, its Soldiers and civilians. I will always support the mission."

Hearing the panel invigorated my commitment to living the creed and Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor integrity and personal courage.

Diversity Day comment

United we stand

by Tammy Wick

When the Federal Executive Board's Diversity Council offered its annual diversity training, May 23, I must admit that I really didn't think I needed additional training on this topic. I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of the speakers and what I learned.

This year, sessions were offered on such diverse topics as the evolving multigenerational work place, resume writing skills, job stress, emergency preparedness for employees with disabilities, demographics of today's workplace and more.

Because many of the sessions were run concurrently, I obviously was not able to attend every session; however, each session I

did attend was interesting, educational and fun.

Before attending this training, I tended to think of diversity in terms of the obvious differences among us, such as color, age, nationality or gender.

This training taught me that those are our surface differences but are

only a few of the traits used to categorize people.

Because each of us is unique, we are often categorized in many other and perhaps surprising ways. In fact, how and with whom we are categorized will likely change often. When looked at in this way, it just doesn't make sense to prejudge anyone. After all, beneath the surface we are far more alike than different.

All of the sessions were very good but my personal favorite was "United We Stand" depends on where you are standing" presented by Tex Ostvig, University of Minnesota's UConnects program coordinator. Ostvig said we spend too much time and effort finding our differences and not enough time looking for our similarities. He inspired us to go out and try things we have not tried before and talk to people we have not talked to before. We may be pleasantly surprised by what we learn.

Chief's Philosophy

Every Corps' civilian and Soldier has four individual responsibilities:

- Know your job;
- Be situationally aware;
- Be healthy;
- Treat every individual with dignity and respect.

Leaders set the example.

Live Army values.

Keep a sense of humor, enjoy your families and have fun.

Girl Scout troop collects cookies for troops in Gulf Region



Photo by Jon Lyman



U.S. Army photo

Girl Scout troops 779 and 839 helped contribute to the mission of nation building and returning Iraq to the Iraqi people. The above left photo is in St. Paul with Col. Mike Pfenning, district commander. The troop sent Girl Scout cookies to the Corps' Gulf Region office in March. In June, they received their thank you. "I cannot tell you how wonderful those cookies were for the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Defense Department civilians here," said Lt. Col. John G. Kunkle (right photo, first left), on assignment as deputy commander, Gulf Region North District. Kunkle is St. Paul District's deputy commander.

gone fishin'

by Jeff Kapaun

The Corps of Engineers' Mel Rieman Recreation Area on Lake Ashtabula, Valley City, N.D., hosted 35 kids at the 18th annual Take A Kid Fishing Day June 3. The event was held in conjunction with National Fishing Week.

Fishing day falls on the first weekend in June, when fishing is free throughout North Dakota.

The goal is to introduce children to fishing.

The kids, ages 6 to 10, live in the Barnes County area and participated in a variety of educational programs and hands-on fishing experience.

Twenty volunteers from three agencies helped to run the event. Participating agencies were the Corps, Barnes County Wildlife Federation and the Valley City Women of Today.

Volunteers divided the kids into groups with half the youngsters fishing and the rest going through the interpretive programs.

An hour-and-a-half later, the groups switched so everyone got to fish and participate in the programs.

Interpretative activities included a casting game to teach proper casting techniques. The most accurate casters in all five age groups received prizes.

Mike Stanley, a cooperative program ranger at Lake Ashtabula, displayed the portable model of a low-flow dam and



Photo by Jeff Kapaun

Mike Stanley, a Lake Ashtabula co-op student (center), and volunteer Eugene Pederson (left), show youngsters the model low-flow dam and how it works at the 18th annual Take A Kid Fishing Day at Lake Ashtabula, held June 3.

explained the dangers associated below these types of dams.

Also, kids learned to tie a fishing spinner – made from scratch – to show their parents.

“This was the best fishing year we have had in a long time,” said Stanley, watching the kids catch numerous smallmouth bass, a few perch, crappies, bluegills, and as always some bullheads. The kids also learned to release fish back into the lake so another person could enjoy catching them some day.

For many of the youngsters, it was their first time to cast a line into the water or bait a hook.

“With the help of the volunteers

they were getting pretty good at it by days end,” said Stanley.

Barnes County Wildlife Federation sponsored the event and provided volunteers and funding to make this event an annual success. Volunteers provided hot dogs, chips, pop and ice cream.

All participants received a combination rod and reel to take home, as well as a bag containing coloring books describing different fish provided by the Corps and North Dakota Game and Fish Department. Each kid also took home their own tackle box with various tackle included.

Two cities to have better water, sewer

by Peter Verstegen

Have a drink of fresh water in Keewatin, Minn. Then, drive to Tower, Minn., to flush.

The St. Paul District and the city of Keewatin, Minn., broke ground for a new water supply well in Keewatin June 2.

The same day, the district and officials from the City of Tower signed a project cooperation agreement to assist the city with renovating 2,165 linear feet of its 100-year old sanitary sewer line.

Tower's original sewer pipes are made of clay and many are now broken or misaligned. For the past 15 years, the city has been working to replace these sewer lines.

Keewatin, a small town west of Hibbing, supplies residents with potable water using two pumps. Pump No. 2 is declining in water production. City officials expect it to become an unreliable source of water in the next few years.

The federal funding for both projects comes under the Northeastern Minnesota Section 569 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999. The primary objective of this program is to provide design and construction assistance to non-federal public interests for carrying out water-related environmental infrastructure and resource projects in the 17 counties of northeastern Minnesota.

U.S. Representative James L. Oberstar was instrumental in the federal approval and funding of this Minnesota project.



Photo by Roland Hamborg

Col. Mike Pfenning, St. Paul district commander (center), signs a section 569 project cooperation agreement with the City of Tower, Minn. U.S. Representative Jim Oberstar (right) and Tower Mayor Stephen Abrahamson, participated in the signing ceremony June 2.



Photo by Roland Hamborg

Col. Mike Pfenning, St. Paul district commander (left), Keewatin city officials and Jim Oberstar, member of congress, break ground for the new municipal water well in Keewatin. From the left Pfenning; Marty Halverson, Benchmark Engineering, Inc.; Jim Oberstar, member of congress; Clayton Liend, mayor of Keewatin; Helen Grayhek, city council member; and Mike LaBinc, utilities superintendent.

Corps conducts class at Ridgeway School

Five operations personnel educated nearly 150 students on environmental conservation practices at the Ridgeway Community School in Winona, Minn., May 12.

Each presenter had 20 minutes to give his or her presentation. The audience ranged from kindergartners to fifth graders. Six sessions were held, containing about 20 children.

Mark Beseler and Judy Harris, Lock and Dam 5A, taught about lock and dam operations.

Steve Tapp, channels and harbors made a presentation on



St. Paul District photo

Judy Harris, Lock and Dam 5A, visits a Ridgeway Community School classroom in Winona, Minn., to talk about how a lock and dam operates. She is one of five presenters from the district.

how dredging on the Mississippi River helps the environment.

Dan Cottrell, Blackhawk Park, taught a program on water safety, mainly instructing on the

importance of using life jacket.

Ray Marinan, natural resources staff based out of Lacrescent, Minn., presented a show called "Furbearers of Minnesota."

As summer boating season begins, boaters urged to be cautious near Mississippi River locks and dams, tow boats

by Shannon Bauer

The boating season is in full swing, and the St. Paul District urges boaters to be safe.

At a lock and dam, vessels should approach carefully, avoid the restricted areas above and below the dams and obey the signals and directions of lock attendants. Radio communications may be very heavy at times, so the Corps asks boaters to minimize radio and phone calls and monitor radio channels 14 and 16 for locking information.

Boaters should be patient during increased locking times. Commercial vessels with passengers will take precedent, followed by commercial tows then recreational vessels. Additionally, smaller boats should maintain a safe distance from commercial boats and

barges. Larger vessels have less maneuverability and can generate large waves and turbulence.

If there are fast currents, there will be a lot of debris floating down the river. Hitting a tree while moving at high speeds can cause a serious accident. Floating debris may be partially submerged and not visible from the surface. In addition, if boaters are moving too fast in rough waters, accident response time can be reduced to seconds.

Any time individuals boat on federal waters, which includes the Mississippi River, federal law requires that an approved, wearable personal floatation device, or PFD, be on board for each person, as well as a throwable life rings for boats more than 16 feet. Children under 13 are required to wear a PFD at all times on federal waters.

Lock and Dam 9 hosts Upper Mississippi River festival

by Dan Cottrell, Blackhawk Park

Lock and Dam 9, Lynxville, Wis., was the site used for the sixth annual Upper Mississippi River Festival, held May 16-17. More than 900 sixth-, seventh- and eight-grade students attended the event.

The festival is a collaborative effort spearheaded by Tim Loose, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Upper Mississippi Wildlife Refuge, McGregor District.

The planning began in January and the presenters included professionals from many different federal agencies, states, counties, nonprofit organizations and volunteer organizations.

This year's event had students moving to four different stations *River Resources Field Trip*, *Aquatic Resources*, *Watersheds* and *River History & Navigation*.

The field trip consisted of getting on average 110 students, teachers and chaperones in 10 boats for a 50-minute tour of a nearby heron and cormorant rookery.

The trip also passed by an eagle's nest that had three eaglets in it. The boat field trip was a complicated logistical feat in and of itself but was also a great experience for many. Some students said they had never been in a boat before; and of those that had, many had never been on the Mississippi. Kurt Brownell, La Crescent, Minn., natural resources office, helped coordinate and participated in this station.



Photo by Dan Cottrell

Jay Grimsled, Lock and Dam 9, educates students about operations of lock gates at locks and dams operated by the Corps of Engineers.

The aquatic resources station included information on fish and mussel identification, aquatic plants and turtles. All programs had hands-on opportunities for the students and covered different aspects from habitat to food sources.

The watersheds station was held on the Iowa side of the dam and students were able to walk on the dike to attend the presentations. The presentations centered on bluff land protection, stream tables, sedimentation and aquatic insects

The River History & Navigation station consisted of two parts: a local speaker talking about history of the river and people in the area and a lock and dam tour. The lock and dam tours were done by many Corps' employees.

The two-day event was a success. Many students, chaperones, teachers and presenters walked away with smiles. One student said after coming off of the boats, "That was real cool!" referring to both his experience and the fact that he

was splashed repeatedly during his tour with cold river water. An adult with one group said, "I am so glad we get to see the dam. I have driven past here many times and always wanted to see how it worked."

The success of this event is owed in large part to all of the lock and dam personnel that participated in this event. All the people listed below had important roles in talking to the groups, escorting the groups and making sure all participants were kept in safe areas during both days.

Lock and Dam 7: Chad Caya and Mary DeFlorian;

Lock and Dam 8: Denise Lepke, Joe Hefner, Connie McCullick and Bill Stute;

Lock Dam 9: Larry Becwar, LuAnne Bearbower, Rick Boller, John Brunet, Christine Craig, Brian Ewing, Ken Fleshner and Jay Grimsled;

Lock Dam 10: Bradley Miller and Barbara Hooper; and

Lower Area Lockmaster Darrel Oldenburg.

News and Notes



Photo by Jon Lyman

Nanette Bischoff, right, is the first person in the district to achieve two Employee of the Month awards. With her is Col. Mike Pfenning, St. Paul District commander.

March employee of the month featured

Nanette Bischoff, project management, is the second person to earn Employee of Month twice. She received her first award in April 2005.

Prior to his retirement, Bob Silvagni, readiness branch, nominated Bischoff for her volunteer work and leadership as an officer in the Heritage Toastmasters Club.

Bischoff has served in various club leadership positions and is now club president. Due to her hard work and leadership, the club has flourished in the training of district employees. Her management skills and leadership has increased the quality of training which has resulted in professional growth to all club

members. She reaches out to encourage growth and development to all members and provides assistance whenever required.

Members of Toastmasters grow professionally by speaking to groups and working with others in a supportive environment. A typical club is made up of about 20 to people who meet once a week for about an hour, said the organization's web site.

Meetings give participants an opportunity to conduct efficient meetings, practice public speaking and develop leadership talent.

"The mission of a Toastmasters club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth," said the web site.

Bischoff's strong leadership skills and desire to help people succeed through Toastmasters and leadership development has set high standards for district employees.

February employee of the month announced

Computers and cameras. Travel vouchers. Wiley housing subcontractors. Lisa Lund mastered these and more during hurricane recovery operations in



St. Paul District photo

Lisa Lund, channels and harbors unit, Fountain City, Wis., receives Employee of the Month honors from St. Paul District Commander Col. Mike Pfenning.

Louisiana, November 2005 to March 2006.

Most important, "She was a big part of providing temporary housing to 5,000 people," said Kevin Ressie, channels and harbors unit, Fountain City, Wis.

Along the way, she taught her lessons learned to coworkers. Four months at a hotel and holidays without her family was a hardship but it provided the mission continuity for those rotating on shorter tours of duty.

Jim Mosner, engineering and construction division, nominated Lund for her comprehensive support of many of the quality assurance representatives working out of the New Orleans area on the Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.

Mosner was the temporary-

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housing mission manager at the Louisiana Recovery Field Office in Baton Rouge.

Lund showed her fellow quality assurance representatives tips to improve productivity with their computers and digital cameras, to efficiently submit their travel vouchers and time sheets and to coach them in preparing daily reports.

“In many cases, she assisted with these matters on her own time after her normal 12-hour work day,” said Mosner. “Most noteworthy had to do with her upbeat and friendly nature – she always has a smile on her face and a cheerful greeting.”

Said Mark Paschke, eastern area office, Winona, Minn., “Lund answered many questions in regards to inspections. She has shown me what to look for and what the contractor might try and get away with. She also has been very helpful in giving directions to get around New Orleans. She also set up my laptop, which I could not have done.”

Said Jeff Kapaun, western area office, Fargo, N.D., “Lund has taken the time to help with my travel vouchers in New Orleans. Because everything is so expensive and because of the long turnaround time involved to reimburse our travel card, I had to do a travel voucher every 10 to 14 days. Without access to the Corps’ financial management system, I was not able to do vouchers. Lund was more than willing to complete each voucher for me.” Kapaun works as a ranger at Lake Ashtabula, Valley City, N.D.

Added Ressie “She insured that travelers were given the

appropriate documentation from various vendors. She prepared and sent the paperwork to home station time keepers Her support, often times during non-duty hours, meant less travel time to the recovery field office. I was able to spend more time on quality inspection duties. She also had a good working relationship with contractors.”

Announcements:

Lock and Dam 1 announces the arrival of two new residents. Peregrine falcon parents Scotty and Amelia, who make their home on the cliffs above the lock chamber, gave birth to two chicks this spring. This makes the third brood the falcons have raised since moving in.



Photo by Mike De Rusha

Peregrine falcon chick Jean, a new resident of Lock and Dam 1

Heritage Toastmasters Club members selected both **Nan Bischoff**, project management, and **Anna Wetterling**, information management, as its ‘Toastmaster of the Year’ last month.

Heritage Toastmasters meets Tuesdays, from noon to 1 p.m. in the emergency operations center, or room 5B. For more information, contact Tom Novak, project management, at 651-290-5524.

Newcomers

Adele Braun, engineering and construction.

James F. Collins, Lock and Dam 3.

Brian Gray, student at Lock and Dam 2.

Kevin Hoeltzle, student at Lock and Dam 9.

Jeremiah Lee Hokeness, student at Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam.

Benjamin Horn, natural resources student at La Crescent, Minn.

Sarah Lang, Lock and Dam 6.

Frederic Magee, construction operations.

Kristin Moe, natural resources at La Crescent, Minn.

Vincent Ngov, student at Lock and Dam 5A.

Eric Thiese, student at Lock and Dam 10.

Joseph Titus, Jr., regulatory student.

Der Vang, real estate student.

Arturo Moises Veloz, Lock and Dam 4.

William Alfred Winesberry, student at Lock and Dam 7.

Retirements:

Dave Hawkenson, Lock and Dam 3, with more than 36 years federal service

James Krumm, Dredge Thompson, with more than 34 years federal service

Weddings:

Craig Johnson, construction and engineering in the western area office, will marry Sheila Hanson of Grand Forks, N.D., July 1, at Walle Lutheran Church, south of Grand Forks.