



US Army Corps
of Engineers

St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

August 1987 Vol. 10 No. 8



On July 10, the Dredge William A. Thompson steamed by the St. Paul District office on its way to the St. Paul Riverfest/Maritime Days celebration. The dredge, which is marking its 50th birth-

day, was opened for tours by the public. More than 9,500 people toured the vessel during its two-day stay. Another 4,500 people visited the Thompson when it was opened to the public at Winona, Minn.

earlier in July. The dredge, which is 267 feet long, is the largest piece of equipment used by the St. Paul District and is the principal dredge used to maintain the Mississippi nine-foot channel.

Photo by Ken Gardner

Record attendance at Corps picnic

The 1987 Engineer's Day Award Ceremony and Picnic was held on June 25 with great weather and an equally great employee turnout. The attendance this year exceeded past picnics by about 200 people.

There were several competitions, with awards and prizes being handed out by Col. Briggs at the end of the day.

The winners of the contests are:

CORPORATE OLYMPICS:

Winner: Engineering (33 pts)—Members: John Bailen, ED-M; Al Kean, ED-M; Dave Raasch, ED-M; Pete Fischer; Bob Post, ED; Lee Berget, ED-GH; Neil Schwanz, ED-GH; Doug Hoy, ED-D; Rachel La Fauce, ED-M; Tom Sully, ED-D; Mike Dahlquist, ED-D. Alternates were Jeff Hanson, ED-GH, and Charles Johnson, ED-D.

VOLLEYBALL:

Winner: ED-M—Members: Chuck Rogers, John Bailen, Dave Raasch, Al Kean, Sue Foley, Sandy Olk. Alternates were Bob Peniman, Jim Peterson, Greg Schoeder, Mary Muraski, and Deb Foley.

HORSESHOES:

1st place: Chuck Christ, PD-FS.
2nd place: Kenton Spading, ED-GH.

DESSERT CONTEST:

Adult category
1st place: Sue Kean, EP-R.
2nd place: Nanette Spindler, ED-D.

Children

1st place: Alex Rooney
2nd place: Lori Larson



It was a long, seemingly endless food line of anxious picnickers, who, drawn by the aroma of barbecued chicken that had wafted through the air for at least an hour, teetered on the edge of mass hysteria, with food riot written in their

haunted, bleary eyes and stomachs growling like rolling thunder, but, through restraint and control, maintained a decorum of dignity and order that is befitting Corps' employees and their families.

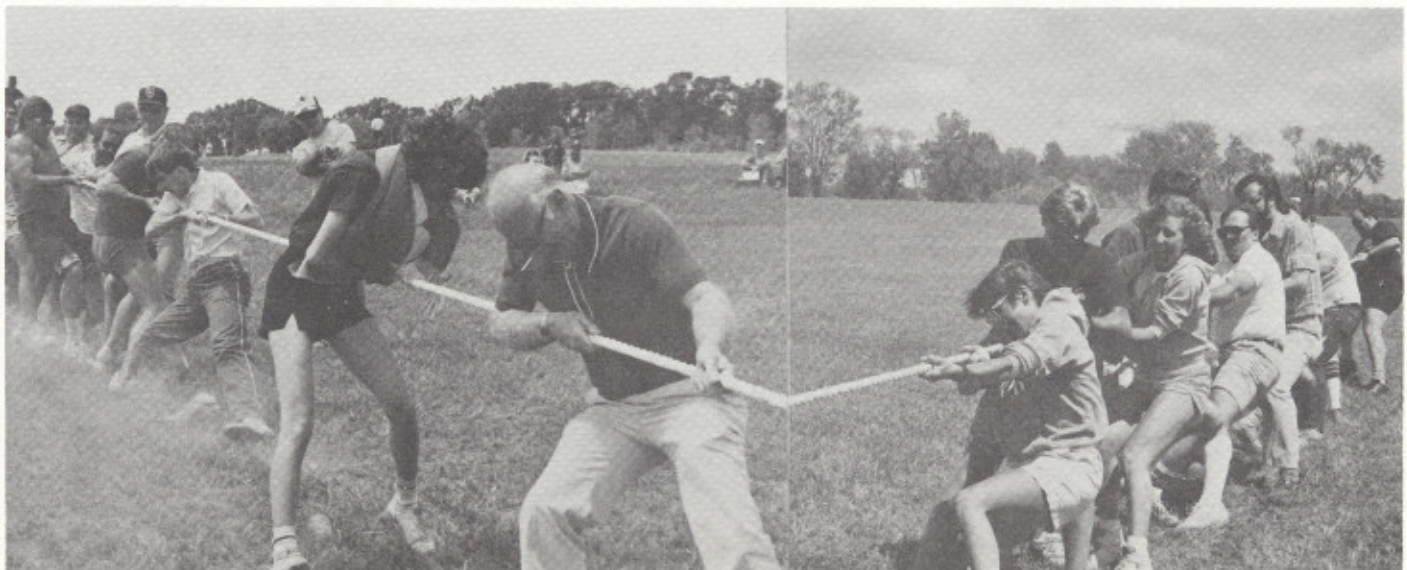
FISHING CONTEST:

Largest Bass: Bruce Norton, CO-RF
Largest Walleye: Robert Martinez.
Largest Panfish: John Kolb.

Largest Northern Pike: LaVane Dempsey, ED-GH.

Best catch: Dave Wright.

Most unusual catch: Tanya Hauger.



District employees put their all into the tug-of-war, which was one of the CORPORATE olympic activities. The engineering

team won this portion of the competition and went on to win the olympics with 33

points. The district staff team placed second with 29 points.

Photos by Bruce Heide

Deaths reported

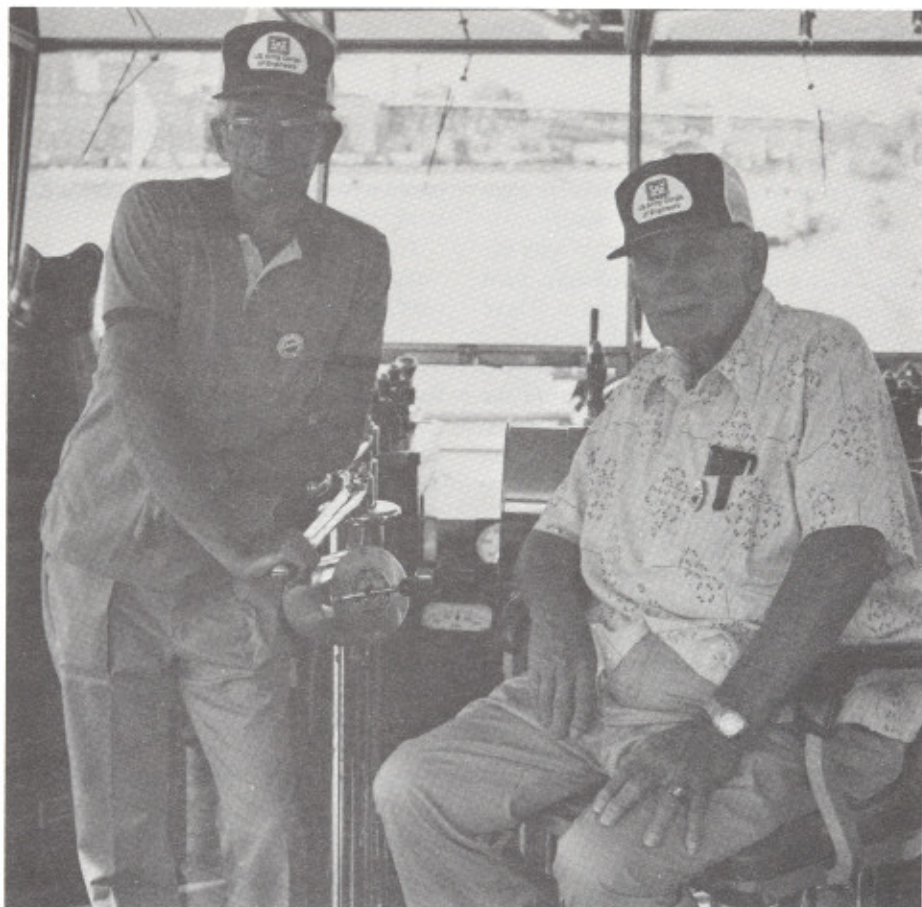
CAPTAIN ALLEN FIEDLER

Allen Fiedler of Fountain City, Wis., died of a heart attack on July 18 at the age of 79. Captain Fiedler was the captain of the Dredge Thompson for 13 years and was one of the original crew members in 1937. He began working on the river in 1924, hauling brush and rocks which were used to construct wing dams. From that point, he became a deckhand and worked his way up to a mate, then to a steersman and to a pilot in 1930. He was a pilot on the Thompson from 1937 to 1955, then served as captain until his retirement in 1968.

Captain Fiedler had recently returned to the Thompson as an honorary captain when the dredge was opened to the public in Winona, Wis. in July.

AMELIA EMEOTT

Amelia (Emily) Emeott of St. Paul, died on July 4. Emily worked for the Corps from 1942 to 1965. She worked for a short time in the record section and then was in charge of maps and structural drawings.



Vern Gunderson, present captain of the Dredge Thompson (left) and Allen W. Fiedler, former captain of the dredge, got together on the bridge of the Thompson

during its visit to St. Paul for Riverfest/Maritime days. Captain Fiedler was one of the speakers for the Thompson's dedication.

How much is that in Virginia dollars?

When a U.S. citizen visits a foreign country, even one as close as Canada or Mexico, he or she can expect to exchange U.S. dollars for the currency of that country. It's an inconvenience sometimes. And it can be a costly proposition if the rate of exchange is unfavorable to the American dollar.

Consider how chaotic it would be if a person going from one state to another had to exchange currency. Farfetched, you say? Today, it is farfetched, but in the time of the writing of the U.S. Constitution, in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787, each state had its own currency. One of the major accomplishments of the Constitution Convention was the establishment of a single U.S. currency.

The fact that each of the 13 states had its own method for printing currency was one of the major flaws in the Articles of Confederation. Each state having its own money, valued differently from that of its neighbor, caused major problems in interstate com-

merce. Since no one state was totally independent, there had to be some flow of goods across state borders. In fact, it became almost a contest among the states as to who could issue the most currency, resulting in most of the State-issues money being worth next to nothing.

Judge Roger Sherman, a Convention delegate from Connecticut was responsible for the resolution prohibiting the states from issuing their own currency. Like most other provisions of the new Constitution, the prohibition was opposed by many delegates. They felt if the states were prohibited from coining money—leaving it up to the Federal government only—that the state would oppose ratification of the whole Constitution. Following the debate, Judge Sherman's resolution was approved by eight state delegations, with Maryland's delegation evenly divided. Only Virginia, the most populous state at the time, and probably the richest, was opposed to the idea that only

the Federal government could make money. While the idea seems ludicrous today, the states having to give up their own money production was a major step toward a strong national government in 1787. For us in 1986, exchanging Maryland money for Virginia money seems ridiculous, but 200 years ago it was a state right that ended when the Constitution was ratified.

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Address: Editor, Crosscurrents, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1135 U.S. Post Office & Custom House, St. Paul, Minn. 55101-1479.

*District Engineer Col. Joseph Briggs
Chief, Public Affairs Ken Gardner
Editor Denise Yale*

Texas Guard Unit trains on board the Dredge Thompson

By Captain David Stoltz
125th Public Affairs Detachment

On a hot, humid windless summer day, a large vessel sits placidly on the Mississippi River near St. Paul, Minn.

You can almost picture Huckleberry Finn dangling his toes in the cool water.

But the decks of the vessel hum with activity. BDUs (battle dress uniform), hard hats and life jackets are the uniform. There are no fishing poles or cutoffs in sight.

The U.S. Army's only dredge unit—the 211th Engineer Dredge Detachment of the Texas National Guard—is conducting annual training aboard the 267-foot dredge, William A. Thompson, the only Corps of Engineers-operated hydraulic dredge still in service.

The "one of a kind" National Guard unit and the "one of a kind" Corps dredge worked together for nine days in July as the 211th conducted dredging operations on the upper Mississippi River near St. Paul.

The wartime mission of the 85-member detachment is "to provide dredging and support of theater operations in the combat zone," according to detachment commander and dredge master, Maj. Jimmy Leggett of Katy, Texas.

"We're the guys who go in early and keep the supply lines open," said Leggett. The unit's first priority, he said, is dredging ocean terminals and sea lane approaches to terminals.

The unit's annual training goal was to "improve our dredging skills for performance of our combat mission," he said.

The detachment, based in Port Neches, Texas, dredged sections of the Mississippi River under the watchful eye of the St. Paul District Corps of Engineers crew, who usually handle this dredging vessel.

"We do everything that they do here, except that our primary area is in the combat zone," explained Leggett.

This was the detachment's first time aboard the William A. Thompson, named for the Corps of Engineers assistant engineer who was responsible for improvements on a section of the upper Mississippi River around the turn of the century.

The William A. Thompson was christened in March, 1937. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the hydraulic dredge's help-

ing to maintain waterway navigation on the Mississippi River.

The 211th has trained in the Gulf of Mexico, the Alabama river system, and on the Illinois, Ohio and Arkansas, as well as the Mississippi. Most of their training over the past 10 years has been aboard the dredge, Genevieve, in the Corps of Engineers' St. Louis District. However, the Genevieve has since been decommissioned.

Although authorized a truck, bulldozer, barges and boats, the detachment isn't authorized a dredge. Rather, the unit is to use whatever dredging equipment is available, "so we have to be capable of handling whatever we might see," said Leggett.

Aboard the William A. Thompson, the crew is working in two eight-hour shifts. The Corps of Engineers crew is working the third shift.

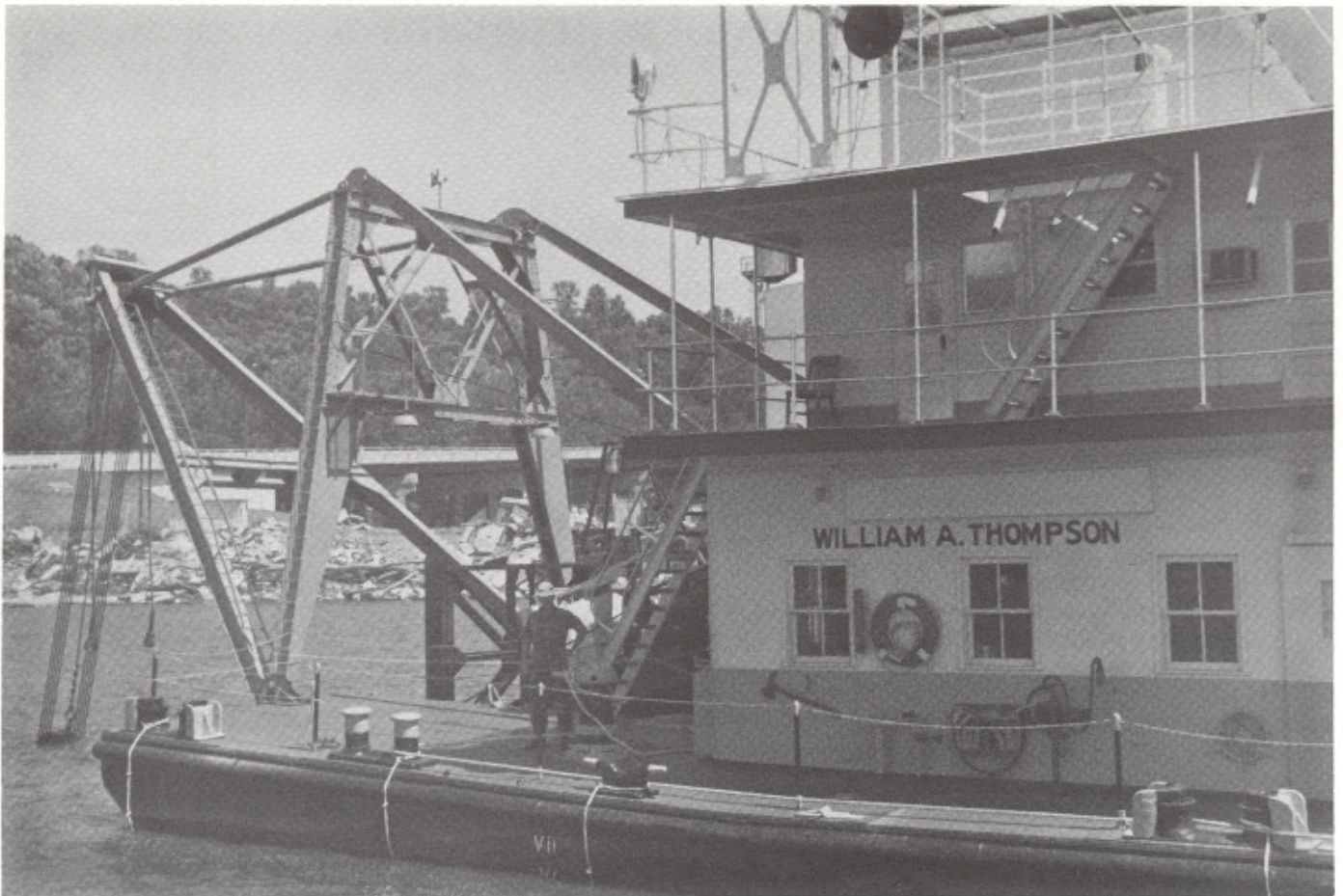
"For those 16 hours we're on board, we're basically doing everything," said Leggett.

"They're standing back and letting us do (the training)," said Leggett. "So far, we have pretty much been doing this by



A Texas National Guard member checks the expanse of floating pipeline, which carries the excavated material and water

mixture from the dredge to a placement site.



The hydraulic cutter-head Dredge Thompson is the largest of the Corps of Engineers St. Paul District's three

primary dredging units. A 211th Engineer Dredge Detachment member stands on

the deck near the front of the dredge vessel.

ourselves.”

Before any dredging begins, surveys must be completed to determine the need for dredging, and environmental concerns must be addressed, he said.

Dredging projects must be coordinated with several state agencies, permits received, and an Environmental Impact Statement prepared, he said.

There is pride on belonging to this unique unit, recipient of the Eisenhower Trophy for five consecutive years.

“There’s a lot of pride in the state about the unit, too,” said Capt. Monte Losey, the detachment’s First Mate.

The 211th was proclaimed as the “official navy of the State of Texas” by the Texas State Senate a few years ago, Losey said.

“I think this unit is ready,” he added. “We could get in an airplane and fly overseas right now. That’s how ready we are.”



Sergeant First Class Gerald Varing operates the cutterhead controls aboard the Dredge Thompson during the 211th

Engineer Dredge Detachment’s annual training on the upper Mississippi River near St. Paul, Minn.

District begins oral history program

by Denise Yale
Public Affairs Office

During the winter of 1986, the St. Paul District began its pilot oral history program. The Corps' engineering regulations now mandate that districts conduct oral histories with past employees or employees who have been with the Corps for a long time.

The district's initial interviews were done with former headwaters employees. The purpose of the histories was to document important aspects of the headwater's history that isn't in the written records. One example is the perceptions of the dam tenders on the change from water control to recreation from the 1950's to the present.

"A big part of the history of the headwaters is the perceptions of the people who worked there," John Anfinson, district historian said. "We want to find out how their roles and lives changed; what it meant to the relationship between the Corps and the community; how it changed the relationship between the area office and the district office and how the headwater's staff perceived what the district office was saying and how they carried it out."

The principal use of the data gathered from the interviews will be in writing future histories of the Corps for both the district and the division. "When I write the district history updates," John said, "I will draw on these interviews as part of my evidence. The next district history will be on the Mississippi River and I'll use Mississippi River oral histories as a big part of my data, to give a more candid perspective than the written records give."

There are other possible uses for the interviews. They will be made accessible to researchers from outside the Corps who want to write histories of the headwaters or of the Mississippi River. The Minnesota Historical Society has a large collection of oral histories and an arrangement may be worked out with them. Copies will also be sent to OCE. Some of the research and contract work may be used to develop brochures that can be distributed to the public at the the headwaters and locks and dams.

"Oral histories also have a use beyond just documenting Corps of Engineers history in the district," Dave Berwick, district archaeologist said. "One of the issues is the Corps trust responsibilities to Indians within our district and the significance of wild rice in the Indian culture. Today, wild rice has both an economic and a religious role in the daily lives of the community. The level of importance of each of these roles and how they

have changed through time can be determined by conducting oral histories. Understanding the significance of wild rice and the changes which may be taking place are important to the district in assessing the impacts our projects or permits have on wild rice and Indian culture."

"An added benefit of the oral histories," Dave said, "is the pride it gives to the Corps as an agency. For example, the development of the locks and dams was a significant part of the St. Paul District in the 1930's. Documenting the trials and tribulations that the district went through at the time through an oral history program, makes present employees proud of what the district has done in the past."

Oral history is a precise method of history and has to be done carefully to be useful. The interview technique is similar to a courtroom cross-examination. "To make sure that you're getting accurate data," John said, "you need a very clear series of questions that circle around to check a person on what they've said so you can verify data."

"When you do an oral history, you decide specifically what you want to know from that person, otherwise you wind up with a series of reminiscences that aren't coherent and a bunch of anecdotes about a person's life which may not be very useful. But if you have some specific questions in mind, and you can keep the person on those subjects and questions, you can fill in gaps in the written record that otherwise would not be filled," John said.

Oral histories are time consuming. Background document research is done first to determine important questions that oral histories may answer and where the gaps are in the written records that an oral interview will help fill. After those areas are targeted, questions are formulated, the interviews are done, transcribed and edited. They are then given back to the person who was interviewed, who reviews it and edits it. After it is returned, it is transcribed again, edited and printed.

Selecting the people who will be interviewed also takes time and preparation. A pool of interviewees is specified, such as dam tenders, and then it is narrowed down to a more manageable size. "We talk to people who worked there or in the office and find out who would be the best people to interview in that pool," John said. "Then we have to find out which ones are available in the region."

The interviews are contracted out to people who are trained and experienced in conducting oral histories. "The headwater's interviews were really a pilot project for us," John said. "We learned a lot about oral interviews and the contractors—how much you can expect out of them and how long it takes."

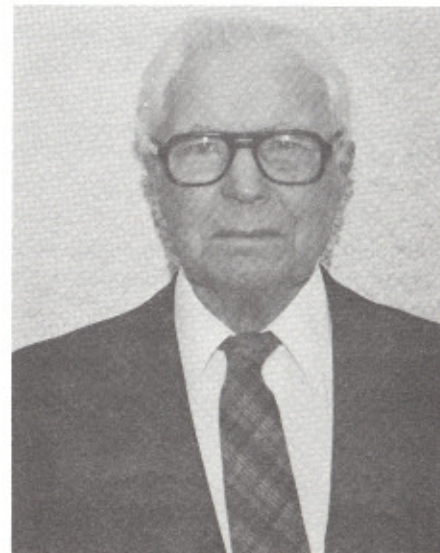
An organization's history is an important foundation for its future. Oral histories are a valuable part of that foundation and are necessary in preserving areas of institutional history that might otherwise be lost.

Retiree Nelson dies

Martin E. Nelson of Minneapolis, died in July at the age of 89. Martin worked for the Corps from 1929-65 and was in charge of the Hydraulic Laboratory at St. Anthony Falls. He also supervised lock model and navigation studies on the Mississippi River and other major inland waterways.

In 1964, he was appointed to the State Department to the U.S. AID program and he served as an advisor on hydraulics to the United Arab Republic in Cairo. He also worked as an international consultant on waterways projects in Canada, South Korea, Japan and Argentina.

He is survived by a son, Karl and brother, Paul.



Sun exposure may give you more than a tan

by Evelyn D. Harris

American Forces Information Service

Planning to catch some rays this weekend? Go ahead—but be careful.

More than 90 percent of the 450,000 new cases of skin cancer that will be diagnosed this year will develop in parts of the body directly exposed to the sun. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer, and the number of cases increases every year.

Fortunately, most new cases are either squamous cell or basal cell cancer. These cancers are easy to treat if caught early, often with a simple outpatient procedure similar to having a wart removed.

But a third kind of cancer, melanoma, is potentially fatal. About 22,000 new cases of melanoma are reported every year, resulting in as many as 5,500 deaths. The rate of melanoma cases is almost three times what it was 10 years ago. The disease is also affecting a younger age group than before.

Perhaps the growing number of skin cancer cases does have something to do with the depletion of the ozone layer, as some scientists believe. But it could also be attributed to the fact that tanning has become fashionable in this century. Before, ladies took care to avoid so much as a freckle.

Fair-skinned people, particularly blondes and redheads, are at more risk for skin cancer than others. They lack sufficient melanin, a pigment substance that filters out the sun's rays. People who work outdoors and those who live in sunny latitudes are also more at risk. However, no one, no matter how dark their skin, is immune.

Since overexposure to the sun is the main cause of basal and squamous cell cancer and is believed to be the cause of melanoma, skin protection so important.

In addition to protection against cancer, career protection against cancer, career protection can be an incentive to respect the sun. Military members are subject to disciplinary action for reporting to duty with a incapacitating sunburn. According to Army Lt. Col. (Dr.) George Winton, assistant chief dermatologist at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C., some early research to develop modern sunscreens was sponsored by the military.

Here are some of Winton's tips for saving your skin:

—If you feel you must get a tan, do so gradually, giving yourself a little more exposure every day. This allows your skin to thicken, providing more protection.

—If possible, avoid, or limit yourself to 15 minutes exposure during the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Ultraviolet rays are strongest during these hours.

—Use a sunscreen. Para-aminobenzoic acid—PABA—is the most common effective ingredient in sunscreens, but a few people are allergic to it. Winton recommends sunscreens containing cinnamate is you're allergic to it. Both sunscreens are available in popular brands. Most of these products carry a number indicating the degree of protection they afford. The higher the number, the more the protection. Fair-skinned people and very young children should use No. 15. Lifeguards and others who are out in the strong sun a lot should use an opaque sunscreen on their noses and lips.

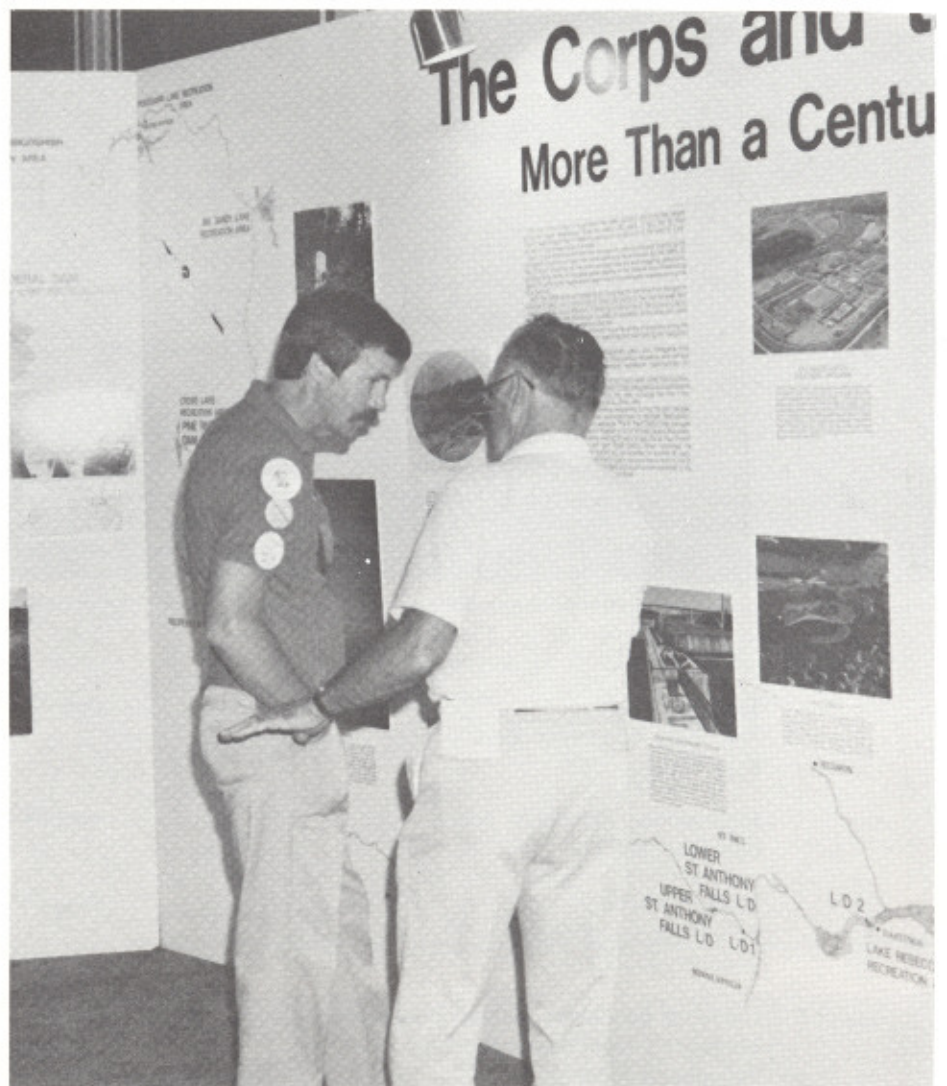
—Be extremely careful about using tanning salons. Winton said the American

Academy of Dermatology recommends against using tanning salons at all. Researchers aren't yet sure, but they believe repeated use of the salons may also lead to skin cancer.

—Be careful, even if it's cloudy—ultraviolet rays can get through clouds.

—Certain drugs, such as tetracycline, can make you skin more susceptible to burns.

Finally, get to know your skin and your own pattern of moles, freckles and beauty marks. Once a month, after you shower, give yourself a onceover. If you spot any change in the size, color, texture or shape of your marks, see a doctor.



Two members of the Izaak Walton League look at the district's exhibit during the League's national convention held in St. Paul in mid-July. Brig. Gen. Joseph Pratt,

division engineer, briefed the convention on Corps programs along the Upper Mississippi River and participated in a panel discussion during the three-day meeting.

Around the district

by Ken Gardner
Public Affairs Office

It seems that there are lots of anniversaries and birthdays being celebrated these days. You probably have heard of some of them. Others may not be so well known. I'll start with an important but largely uncelebrated historical date.

One hundred and twenty-one years ago this month, Major Gouverneur Warren opened the first Army engineering office in St. Paul. He is now listed as the St. Paul District's first district engineer.

Some anniversaries just passed but worth mentioning include the Dredge William A. Thompson's fiftieth year of service; the 51st anniversary of the passage of the Flood Control Act of 1936; and of course, the 212th anniversary of the founding of both the Army and the Corps of Engineers.

Finally, one still to be celebrated is the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution in September.

Anniversaries of things are nice but people are important. So here we go. **Al Bjorkquist**, Floodplain and Small Projects Branch in Planning, has returned from a year in the Planning Associates Program at Ft. Belvoir. Another planner, **Bob Westgate**, left the district the end of July for a job in the airline industry in Dallas. Bob was a economist in the Economics-Social-Recreation Analysis Branch.

In another "Analysis Branch," the people changes are coming faster than we can report them. I am referring to Management Analysis Branch in the Comptroller Office. Branch Chief **Barbara Johnson** leaves the district for a job with the Immigration and

Naturalization Service at Fort Snelling. Meanwhile, one of her key assistants, management analyst **Fred Humphreys** left the district and the Twin Cities in mid-July for a job with the Veteran's Administration in Washington, D.C.

In Fred and Barbara's absence, **Nick Carter** will take over responsibilities for running the branch on an acting basis until September 13th. At that time, **Fred Voegel**, chief of Finance and Accounting Branch, will replace Barbara as chief of Management Analysis. Then, to complete the picture, **Earl Christofferson**, who recently returned to St. Paul as the internal auditor, will move over to F&A to replace Fred.

In Information Management, **Rick Gorr** is filling in as chief of the Information Planning and Implementation Branch, replacing **Scott Jutila**. Scott has returned to Engineering Division and is working in Hydraulics Section of ED-GH.

Now that I have come to Engineering Division, I'll try and straighten out the confusion. It seems that all of a sudden Engineering has too many Foleys. There were two Foleys—**Deb** in Project Management and **Pat** in GH Branch. Now, there are two Foleys in Project Management—**Deb Foley** and **Sue Foley**. Seems that **Sue**, who used to be known as **Sue Howe**, went off and married a fellow named **Foley**. And that's how there came to be two Foleys where there was one.

While we are on Project Management Branch, I should mention the new branch chief. **Dale Mazar** has been named as permanent replacement for former branch chief **John Plump** who left several months ago for Portland, Ore. Another change in ED-M

is the addition of **Walter Sternke**, who came to St. Paul from Korea.

Speaking of Foleys, **Pat Foley** has earned his own mention in this space. He was recently selected to replace **Stan Kumpula** as chief of the Hydraulics Section. Stan, of course, has moved up the corporate ladder to Assistant Chief of Engineering Division.

Finally, Engineering's **Marie Niesen**, a mechanical engineer in Design Branch, has been named the new chief of the Plant Section in Maintenance Branch (CO-M). She fills the job vacated when **Harlan Johnson** was named branch chief.

In news from our field offices, **Marv Pedretti**, lockmaster at Lock and Dam 10, reports that they had a very successful open house on July 11. More than 1,200 people visited and toured the lock and dam. Speaking of our only field site in Iowa, **Marv** and equipment repairman **John Christianson** continue to demonstrate that the "Corps really cares" in Guttenberg by giving blood in the Badger Blood drive.

And that's what is happening around the district this month.

Retirees luncheon planned for September

The annual retirees luncheon will be held September 16, 1987. Enclosed in this issue of Crosscurrents, you should find a flyer that will give you the details of the luncheon. If you did not get this flyer, contact the Public Affairs Office at 725-7505 and we will send one to you.

Corps Calendar

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|-----------|--|-----------|--|
| Aug 1 | Trailer exhibit
Red Wing River City Cays
Rose Braatz, 7552 | Aug 17-24 | NCD Quality Assurance Review
F & A office
Fred Voegel, 7528 |
| Aug 3-13 | Engineering Efficiency Team
Bob Post, 7506 | Aug 24-27 | BG Vander Els visit;
M.K. Linder, 7501 |
| Aug 8 | Trailer exhibit
Remer Harvest Festival
Rose Braatz, 7552 | Aug 26 | Women's Equality Day |
| Aug 11-12 | Corps of Engineers Career Program Manager's Conference for Engr. & Scientist/ Chicago
Bob Post, 7506 | Aug 26-29 | Trailer exhibit
Ottertail County Fair/Fergus Falls
Rose Braatz, 7552 |
| Aug 17-19 | Trailer exhibit
Chippewa County Fair/Montevideo
Rose Braatz, 7552 | Aug 27-28 | Channel Maintenance Forum Mtg.
Guttenberg, Ia.
Dan Krumholz, (608) 687-3011 |