



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

Vol. 13 No. 1, January 1990

Happy New Year!

from Colonel Roger Baldwin
District Commander

As we enter the decade of the 1990's, I am personally reaching the halfway point in my tour as your 53rd District Engineer. I have grown to admire who you are and how well you do your work. We have joined together in meeting challenges during this past year. You have continued to earn this region's trust and my deep admiration. As we look to the 1990's, let us remain excited and happy about our future. There are numerous initiatives underway and we are at the forefront of many of them. As we continue to nourish our values of integrity, quality, professionalism, and esprit de corps, may we enjoy each day's work in some special way. Jane and I wish you a most prosperous and happy new year.

Index

Bits and Pieces	Page 2
The Deputy responds	Page 3
Helpful hands	Page 4
Photos	Page 5
Commander's notes	Page 6
Barcoding hits the district	Page 7
Photos	Page 8



Lupe Santos (EP-D) cuddles some of the toys donated to the Santa Anonymous program before they are carted off for distribution to needy children. For details on this and other Christmas charity projects in the district, turn to Pages Four and Five.

Bits and Pieces

Congratulations to three district employees who served in the recovery effort following the Hurricane Hugo disaster in South Carolina. **Don Grover** (CO-CT), **Joe Skupa** (CO-CT) and **Phil Schweitzer** (CO-CC) were among those who participated in beach restoration, debris removal, damage surveys, home inspections and SBA assistance. A December 19th letter from Disaster Recovery Manager Paul Hall of the Federal Emergency Management Agency commended the three for an "outstanding performance" and thanked them for their support.

Hats off to **Paul Adams** of the Lac Qui Parle Lake Association. From May 1st to November 1st, Paul volunteered 75 hours and drove 2,645 miles in water-testing for the district. Three times a day the retired farmer used Corps equipment to test the lake for temperature, Ph level, dissolved oxygen, conductivity and algae content. According to **Dennis Holme** (ED-GH), Adams' volunteer work provides an invaluable service to understanding and improving lake conditions, particularly where winterkill is concerned.

Has your office been one of those visited by **John Mena** or **Mason LaFavor** (LM) and their thermometers in recent weeks? Responding to employee complaints that some offices were uncomfortable, Logistics dispatched them and their Star Trek-like device to offices on the 9th through 15th floors.

According to LM Chief **Olivia Vavreck**, there "have been complaints that some

rooms are too cool". One office on the 15th floor reported 64 degrees...below the federally-mandated minimum of 68. She said it's not uncommon for rooms to be cooler on the 9th and 15th floors.

Results of the temperature survey are being forwarded to the Post Office which regulates heat to Corps offices. A request has already been made for space heaters.

Major Chuck Rogers is serving as executive officer in the Executive Officer for the remainder of his tour in the St. Paul District. His next assignment will be Germany.

The **Holiday Party Committee** would like to thank everyone who participated in this year's event and hopes that everyone had a good time. A big thanks to the Minnesota Vikings, Minnesota North Stars, Guthrie Theater, Film In The Cities, Theatre In The Round, Chanhassen Dinner Theater, and Rudolph's Barbecue for their donations for door prizes.

Carol Opdahl is the new chief of Examination Section in the office of the comptroller. Her previous position was as an internal revenue agent with the Internal Revenue Service in Tucson, Arizona (how do you like your first Minnesota winter so far?). Opdahl was also a registered nurse for 20 years and has completed a bachelor's degree in business administration. She recently received earned the status of Certified Public Accountant. Welcome to the District.

John Blackstone (ED-M) received the Distinguished Toastmaster Award at ceremonies held November 21 in the district conference room. Among several requirements John fulfilled in attaining the honor were presenting at least 25 Toastmaster speeches per year within his club and five speeches to other groups, coordinating at least one educational "speechcraft" program, coordinating at least one youth leadership program and serving as an elected club officer.

Blackstone is a past president of the Heritage Club, a Toastmasters chapter consisting of about 20 members from the St. Paul District and the downtown St. Paul Post Office. He is the first one of the group to be awarded the Distinguished Toastmaster's honor.

Presentation of the award was made by **George Deliduka**, Administrative Lt. Governor of District Six, Toastmasters International.

Captain Bruce Bolden (Chaska Project Office) and the district received honors recently as a result of Bolden's work in completing the district's entry to the Army Communities of Excellence Award Program. Bolden received the Army Achievement Medal for his efforts. The district's entry was ranked 7th out of all Corps entries.

Speaking of **Bruce Bolden**, he will be returning to the district office in the near future, prior to separating from active duty in June.

A happy and safe new year!

Tom Novak, project manager in charge of the office renovation project, reports that the District met with the General Services Administration (GSA) in December to review the preliminary design from the Post Office's Architect/Engineer consultant.

As a result of that meeting, and concerns we expressed, we have GSA's full support to insure a "first class" facility. This will include a major renovation of the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, electrical and fire protection systems. The skyway access which will link the Post Office building to the TeleCenter building across the street remains in the program.

The previous schedule for a Summer 1990 construction start appears doubtful. The Corps will meet in February with GSA and Postal Service to resolve scheduling differences.

Karin Greeman is the new assistant district council in the Office of Counsel. Greeman has been in the district since September. Greeman was in private practice before joining the District.

Obituary

Frank M. Whitmore of Bella Vista, Arizona, died December 2 at his home at the age of 70. Mr. Whitmore served 23 years with the U.S. Navy and the Army Corps of Engineers. For 18 years he was Assistant Lockmaster at Lock & Dam #1.

The Deputy Responds...

By Lieutenant Colonel Mike Mahoney

I received several comments in the first week my comment boxes were up. Thank you for your interest and confidence in the program. I need to research some of the questions, and I just didn't have time before the deadline for this issue. I promise I'll address them next time.

Someone asked about the status of the skyway connection between KTCA and the Post Office. Tom Novak has been working that issue diligently in his post as "guru" for the building renovation project. The good news is that both the city and the Post Office assure us that the project is a "go". The bad news is they don't have a firm construction date. The last proposed date they gave us was a construction start late in 1990, with completion in the spring of 1991. However, the agreement between the city and Post Office isn't final yet, and the city council hasn't approved the project.

I can't be effective
without your support.

Two people took the time to disagree with me about the state of morale in the District. They both thought my luncheons and comment boxes were steps in the right direction, and that we are sincere about trying to identify morale detractors and fix them; I appreciate that.

However, neither signed their comment, nor did they give me any specific details about what's wrong — just vague accusations that some supervisors don't care. That doesn't help me. If you don't tell me what you think is wrong, don't blame me for not fixing it. I can't be effective without your support.

We need to address
specific deficiencies,
and I can't find them
alone.

We may disagree; that's healthy. I still believe we have a vibrant effective district with solid personnel and good morale. Some people don't agree with me. We may have different experience bases. I've been in other organizations that did have significant morale problems. The challenges we face in St. Paul pale by comparison. That doesn't mean we should be complacent. We need to aggressively attack even small morale problems, but we also need to recognize that we work in a solid organization full of good, honest people.

The bottom line is that sniping doesn't help. We need to address specific deficiencies, and I can't find them alone. My door is open, stop me in the hall, come to my next luncheon, or put a note in my comment box; but be specific. If you want me to confront difficult issues you must be willing to confront them, too.

Helpful Hands



Above left:

62 persons consumed 16 dozen "special-recipe" tacos prepared by Lupe Santos (shown here with Dave DePoint, EM) at the Taco Party December 12. The price of admission was a toy for Santa Anonymous and a food-shelf item, and a buck a taco. Extra money, after taco makings were bought, was spent on more toys.

Those assisting Lupe included Depoint, Bill Venneman, RE-P; Herb Nelson, PD-PF; Lori Jo Lonien, EP-D; Jan Pream, CO; Joann Meier, EEO; Jean Turcotte, IM-S; Carol Johnson, RM-M and Chris Sterrenberg, EP-R.

Above right:

A check in the amount of \$200 was presented on behalf of the Environmental Resources Branch to the Hallie Q. Brown food shelf in St. Paul's Selby-Dale district. Jeff McGrath (PD-ES) holds the check.

Right:

Dave Berwick at left, and Dick Beatty (both of PD-ER) are shown with some of the more than \$200 in toys purchased for the Santa Anonymous program. The groups also participated in the "Adopt-A-Family" program sponsored by Catholic Charities. Members of the two branches purchased clothing, toys and personal needs for the anonymous family as requested by the family.



Several employee groups added to their personal Christmas shopping and errand lists by choosing to help others in special, tangible ways. Photos here tell happy stories about how Environmental Resources & Economic-Social-Recreation Branches of Planning Division spent their "pop fund" monies, and how Lupe Santos (EP-D) spread her holiday spirit around with a second annual Taco Party, designed to help the Santa Anonymous toy drive and the Food Shelf Program.

Construction-Operations Division sponsored two families through the St. Paul Salvation Army, making their holiday season warmer, sweeter and healthier. Organizer Denise Blackwell-Kraft says folks donated money for food baskets and purchased gifts, clothing and personal need items as requested by the two families.

These efforts have inspired discussion among various other employee groups as to how more of us could get involved next

year, perhaps in new and different ways. The District office's Santa Anonymous bin collected many, many toys this year, so many that we had to arrange for a special pick-up.

May these examples make all of us feel warmer, in the spot where it really counts (and we don't mean toes!)



Wisconsin honors Lock 8 Staff

LaVerne Horstman, lockmaster of Lock and Dam 8, and his crew received special recognition from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The wooden plaque was awarded for the team's cooperation with the DNR in law enforcement and safety. They were commended for informing boaters about boat safety, reporting safety violations and promoting safety education.

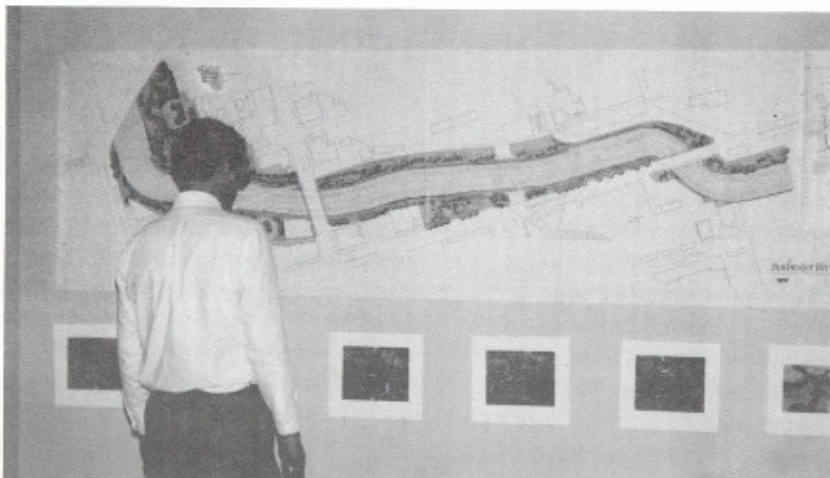
"I was really surprised," Horstman commented, "We were just doing our jobs."

The award was presented November 15th by John Wilbur, at right, the conservation warden at Genoa. Congratulations to Lock and Dam 8 employees on a job well done!

Commander's Award given for drowning prevention

During that busy July day when Baldhill Dam hosted the North Dakota state centennial celebration, it would have been easy to overlook one of the 50 kids splashing and thrashing about at the Mel Reiman Rec Area beach. After all, the 2000+ crowd was a bit larger than usual and took a bit of handling.

Fortunately for one small boy, Kim Kelly from Valley City, North Dakota, was watching when his progress toward the floating raft faltered half-way out. Her rescue of this little fella earned her one of the highest awards a civilian can receive. NCD Commander BG Jude Patin (left) and DE Colonel Baldwin presented Kelly with the Commander's Award.



Rochester Project illustrated in Art Center exhibit

Last October, the Rochester Art Center hosted two exhibitions entitled "Passages" and "Concrete, Glass & Steel on Paper" that traced the history of development of both the riverfront and the downtown area during the month of October. Information on the Rochester Flood Control Project, including photographs, drawings and text, were incorporated into the exhibit.

At left, Ross Fredenburg, Public Affairs Officer at NCD views the exhibit.

Safeguarding government property...take it personally!

By Colonel Roger Baldwin
District Commander

I want to take this space to share some thoughts with you on safeguarding government property. There are a series of Army regulations and Engineer regulations which speak to the matter. The spirit of these regs is that we must exercise the same degree of care for government property entrusted to us as we would our own personal property.

All government employees are responsible for safeguarding government property and ensuring it is not lost, damaged, stolen or destroyed. Hand receipt holders are responsible to ensure that the property for which they are responsible is accounted for in accordance with USACE and Army regulations. The easiest means of doing this is by sub-hand receipting property to the immediate user. If this is not always practical, the hand receipt holder must use his/her best judgment. As supervisors, we must take reasonable steps to secure property located in common areas and do so in a way that does not hamper our mission. This can be very difficult sometimes and, admittedly, there are situations where the cost of security exceeds the cost of anticipated loss. Common sense must prevail.

If property is lost or damaged, an investigator must determine who was responsible for the property at the time of the loss. This is usually the person who had personal custody of the property at the time of loss. If you are in possession of the property, you are responsible even if the property was not formally sub-hand receipted. The standard to which you will be held is: "What would a 'reasonable prudent person' have done in the situation to avoid loss or damage?" You will be required to pay for the loss if you did not take 'reasonably prudent' measures to safeguard property for which you were responsible. This is certainly something we want to avoid. It is a matter of being as concerned about government property as you are about your own personal property. If our standard for care is the same, we will avoid liability for losses to government property.

I charge each of you to rekindle this spirit into your daily work. We have enough to do without having to spend time and effort on investigations of lost or damaged property and reordering property to replace it. Good property accountability starts with all of us - personally.

Combined Federal Campaign -- a big thank you

By Colonel Roger Baldwin
District Commander

This year's Combined Federal Campaign ended in October with the St. Paul District raising a total of \$21,816 to support worthwhile programs locally, nationally and around the world. About 60 percent of our employees participated in this year's campaign. That's a higher dollar value and a higher participation rate than last year.

Your contributions help thousands of people throughout the year and add significantly to the quality of life in this region. You can be proud of your achievements in this important cause. Your willingness to participate in the CFC demonstrates once again that you, as individuals, and the St. Paul District, as an agency, care and are a part of the community.

Finally, those of you who worked on the campaign deserve all of our thanks and a sincere "Job well done!" Your efforts were key to this year's successful campaign.

Again, my personal thanks to workers and contributors alike.

Zap...zing...ping

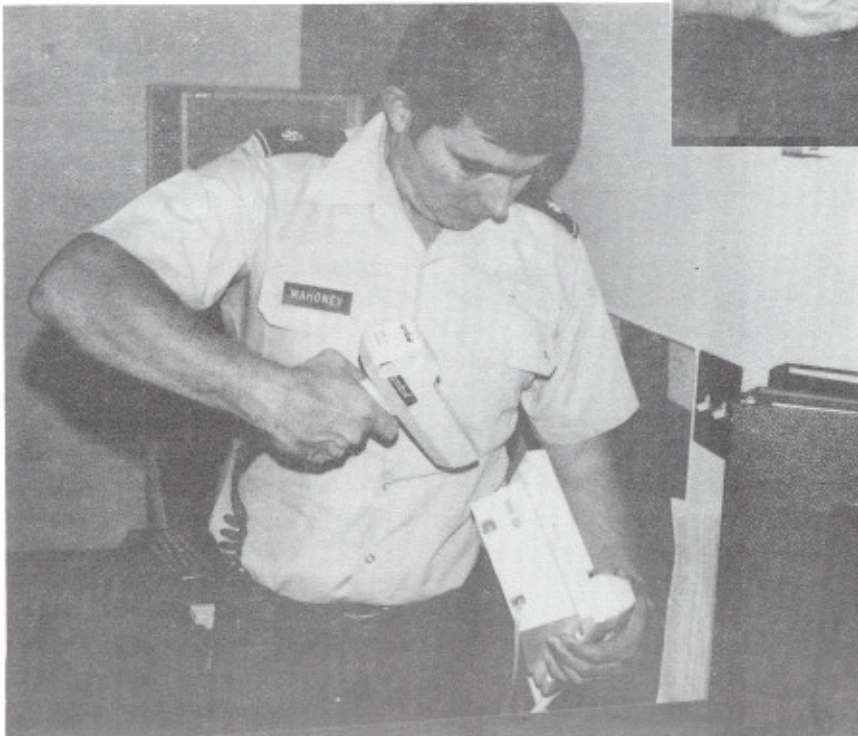
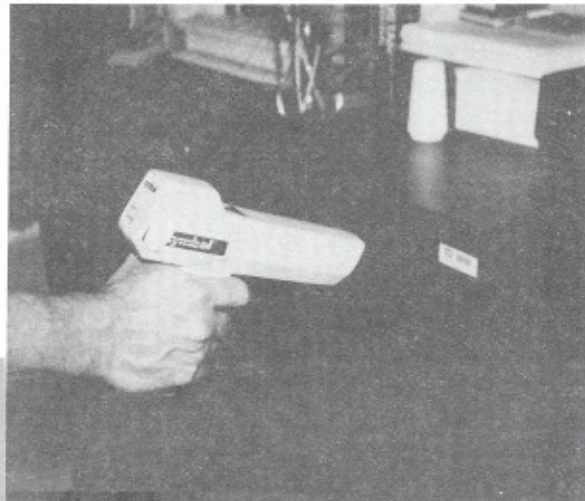
or how the world of lasers finally hits the government

By Marianna Brown, Public Affairs

Lately in the St. Paul District, we've really been keeping 'tabs' on things. Technology that hit the supermarket checkout lanes a few years ago has finally hit us - bar coding! With a bar coding property inventory system, all property of value exceeding \$50.00 in the district is given a product code sticker like the UPC symbol on the can of tuna at your grocery store. In the district's Harris computer, the bar code number is matched with a description of the item and the name of the employee responsible for that item.

It's kind of like the laser tag game your children play, only the stickers don't move around or zap you back!

It used to be that at property inventory time, the responsible employee would walk around the office with reams of computer printout and check off each item on their property list individually. Now all you need is a laser scanner gun (borrowed from the Logistics Office) and you can zap all of those bar code stickers. (It's kind of like the laser tag game your children play, only the stickers don't move around or zap you back!) The "pack" attached to your laser gun then stores the numbers of the items and sends them to the computer. A reconciliation report is then printed stating what you have that you own, what you have that belongs to some one else and what you should have but don't because John down the hall borrowed it last May.



Now you will think twice when Mary wants to trade chairs with you.

This system was directed by HQUSACE in Washington to keep better track of each districts' inventory. It is faster, easier, more accurate and makes employees more responsible for their own inventory. Now you will think twice when Mary wants to trade chairs with you.

In February of last year, a contractor began bar coding all accountable property in the district, including field sites. The job was finished in July. Inventory will be taken once each year by the employee responsible for each office's property and every three years in conjunction with the officer in charge of property and books from the Logistics Office.

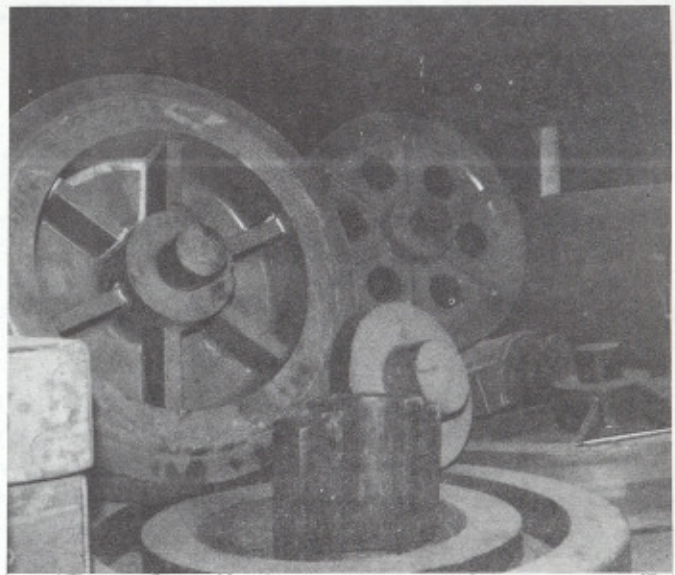
Hi-tech is here to stay. Now if I could only use this system to keep track of my socks!!

At left, Lt. Col. Mahoney "zaps" a telephone with a "laser gun". Even larger items like desks, above, have received their own bar-code.

News Shorts



John Anfinson (PD-ER) examines a book of drawings and maps done by Captain Charles H. Thode who worked for the St. Paul District from 1924-1929. The book contains maps of flood control projects in Yellowstone Park and urban planning documents done in 1929 and 1930. John has passed the book on to Mike Vice, curator of the Corps museum under construction at Ft. Belvoir, Washington.



"It was just like the warehouse in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (Indiana Jones movie)!" So said John Anfinson (PD-ES) of his recent visit to the storage building at the Fountain City Boatyard. Hundreds of wooden molds, like those pictured above, were once used to make metal parts for the dredge and the locks and dams. With the advent of the lock and dam rehabilitation program, these artifacts from the past may no longer be needed. Anfinson has notified HQUSACE of their availability for possible inclusion in the new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers museum at Fort Belvoir.



Members of the Odessa Rod & Gun Club and the Minn-Kota Sportsman's Club of Nassau, Minnesota volunteered 54 hours at Lac Qui Parle's Highway 75 Dam on December 9th.

Using equipment donated by the Bellingham, Minnesota Fire Department, volunteers erected railings on the stairs and placed chipstone on the pool's rip rap side. Park Manager Curt Hanson directed the volunteer effort.