



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

Vol. 13 No. 5, May 1990



All together now:

"the milk chocolate that ..."

Story on page four

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Bits and Pieces

Olympic Festival Tickets

Corps employees are able to purchase special discount tickets for the coming 1990 competition to be held in the Twin Cities July 6-15th. The events will be held at various locations in the cities and include archery, badminton, baseball, basketball, bowling, boxing, canoe/kayak, cycling, diving, equestrian, fencing, field hockey, figure skating, gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, ice hockey, judo, modern pentathlon, racquetball, roller skating, rowing, shooting, soccer, softball-fast pitch, softball-slow pitch, speedskating, swimming, synchronized swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, team handball, tennis, track and field, volleyball, water polo, weightlifting and wrestling. The entire schedule of events and ticket order form is available in the Public Affairs Office. Discounts range from \$.50 to 2.00 and must be ordered from the Festival office before June 15th.

Retiree's Luncheon

Wednesday, September 12th, is the day to remember for those planning on attending the 1990 Old-Timer's Luncheon. Kelley's Inn (formerly the Holiday Inn) at I-94 and Marion Street in St. Paul will host the group. Colonel Baldwin is scheduled to speak.

Jenny Sjobeck (EP) will be relocating to Seattle District as secretary for the Navigation and Plant Branch of Operations Division. Jenny worked for the St. Paul District for the last two years, primarily in Contracting Division. Good luck, Jenny!

S.A.M.E. Events

The Minneapolis-St. Paul Post of Society of American Military Engineers will meet May 17th for luncheon, the annual post election and a presentation on the construction of Fall Lake in the B.W.C.A., by Enviroscience and Barr Engineering.

Other upcoming events are a tour of the National Sports Complex in Blaine, Minn., on June 21st and the annual Scholarship Golf Tourney in July. Phone Stan Kumpula at x304 for more information.

Most of us missed "Don't Drive Day" on May 10th, which encouraged the populace to use buses, bikes, feet or roller blades to get around for the day. Well, we can still get in on "Bike to Work" Day, Wednesday May 15th! It's one day in a year when the U.S. can look a little like Amsterdam, where bikes tend to dominate the streets.

Of course if you have to use a car, then at least use it safely and make your passengers be safe, too, during "Buckle-Up America Week", May 21-28. The theme *Belts and Bags - A Winning Combination* will be illustrated in a display on the 12th floor starting May 25th.

Whether drivers want to also drive more safely by slowing down or not, they will be forced to from the effects of highway maintenance.

MNDOT informs us that there will be lane restrictions on I-94 between Marion and Cedar Streets through June, and on I-35E between Jackson and Pennsylvania through November. So plan ahead. For more information, call Ione Maus (MNDOT) at 612/779-1248.

Award Ceremony/Picnic

For the very first time, the annual Engineer's Day Awards Ceremony and Picnic will be held at scenic Afton State Park along the beautiful St. Croix River. This site offers a tremendous amount of recreational activities which include hiking, golfing, fishing, swimming, boating, bingoing, biking, and even camping.

There will be a wide range of games and activities for adults and children to partake in, or if you so desire, this will be a wonderful place to simply relax and watch the eagles soar. It is highly recommended that everyone wear a comfortable pair of walking shoes and enjoy the many miles of hiking trails through the riparian forests, the upland meadows, and the restored prairies.

A fabulous feast is being planned to feed the hungry hordes. There will be plenty of food and refreshments, and hopefully there will be a plethora of wonderful desserts (brought in by everyone for the Dessert Contest). For those who wish to prepare their own food there are plenty of grills and tables in the picnic area. The kids will be able to get their fill of popcorn, cotton candy and snowcones. A picnic newsletter will be published in the very near future containing a lot more information regarding the events planned and the cost for the picnic. Mark your calendars now and reschedule your vacations so that you'll be there for what could be the greatest event of the summer!

Mobilization Shelter Plans Still Active

In February 1990, Emergency Management Division presented employee awareness training to over one hundred district employees. This training is part of the district's annual commitment to share information about our ongoing mobilization planning, and specifically, shelter management planning. After these sessions, attendees were sent a questionnaire to be filled out, and returned to Chuck Workman, the District Shelter Management Coordinator. We appreciate the many responses already received and if you have not completed the questionnaire, please do so immediately. Any questions about the planning efforts may be directed to either **Chuck Workman**, x400 or **Dave De Point**, x205.

Obituaries

Gertrude (Harmuth) Schneider of North Hudson, Wisconsin, died April 5 at the age of 77. Mrs. Schneider worked in Procurement Branch from 1935 until after World War Two, when she married Vince Schneider, also a Corps employee.

George W. Skene of St. Anthony Village, Minnesota, died April 29 at the age of 75. Mr. Skene worked in the Planning Division beginning in the late 1950's until retirement in 1981 as chief of the Floodplain Management Section.

Letters to the Editor

Crosscurrents,

I wonder how many other retirees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers living in Minnesota think that something should be done about our retirement being taxed while other states are not. Maybe more letters to our senators and representatives and governors would help.

Respectfully,
Richard K. Ingle
Fergus Falls MN

Editor: Mr. Ingle's letter was accompanied by an article from Insight publication stating that federal retirees in approximately 20 states pay state tax on federal pension benefits, with many lawsuits pending for refunds of those taxes. The Supreme Court in Davis vs. Michigan held that a state may not tax the retirement benefits of former federal employees while exempting retirement benefits paid by the state and its political subdivisions. Minnesota taxes both federal and state retiree pension benefits. Therefore, there is no disparate treatment between state and federal retirees and Davis vs. Michigan is inapplicable.

Crosscurrents,

After reading the article in the April issue of *Crosscurrents* in the water safety tip section, I went away with the impression that the two factors that killed the fisherman who fell overboard were the cold water and his bulky clothes. While it is a well known fact that cold water is a major contributor in water related fatalities, the fact that his bulky clothes were also a contributor was misleading. In fact, bulky clothes such as snowmobile suits or waders will aid more in surviving a cold water immersion than impeding survival.

More often than not, spring or fall sportsmen or women succumb to the elements while trying to discard their bulky clothing when in fact it is their bulky clothing that could aid in their survival. Clothes and waders trap air between the layers and the victim's body. These air spaces will help keep the victim buoyant. The air spaces, trapped in between the body and clothing, are warmed from the body. This will keep the victim warm longer. If the victim's clothes are zipped, buttoned and belted properly, and all openings secured snugly, that trapped air will be retained longer. But the victim must lie still, with knees pulled towards the chest, arms crossed over the chest and if the hands are gloveless, place the hands alongside the neck to keep the fingers warm and movable. Struggling in the water will only release the trapped air faster, saturate the clothes with water and increase exhaustion.

The fisherman who drowned did not lose his life to bulky clothes. He lost his life to ignorance and not wearing a P.F.D. His struggle to reach a float cushion that probably would not have been able to save him cost him his life. Even if he would have been able to reach his float cushion, the debilitating effect of the cold water would have caused him to lose his grip

LETTERS Continued on page eight

The Deputy Responds

Planning for the move to a new facility is going well. The effort is ably led by Tom Novak and his primary assistants: Billy Cabe, Norm Hildrum, Mary Kay Linder, and Olivia Vavreck. That's not to say that they'll be doing all the work. They just coordinate the effort; they're going to need a lot of specialized, short-term help to get everything done.

If you haven't heard, they've plotted a network that has us moving in the fourth quarter of calendar year 1991. I believe there's an 80% assurance that we can meet that schedule, and about an even chance to beat it by a few months. There are several places in the network where we can act to shorten the schedule. The key will be getting the right people to do the right things at the right times. If you're asked to help with something, please do. Your help for a week or two may shorten the final schedule by several months.

I've gotten several comments about concerns our people have about the new building - free parking, access to day care, aesthetics of the location, etc.; all of these issues are being considered. Unfortunately, it's doubtful that any site will have all the positive attributes and no negatives. The committee is putting together a selection matrix to address all our needs and desires. The methodology will be that needs must be met, and we'll get the best mix of our "wishes" that we can. We will select the best overall product for the district; but I'm sure it won't be perfect.

I have to address the issue of smoking in our new facility. I don't mean to denigrate our smoking employees; they are valuable members of our team. Smoking is their choice, but second-hand smoke is dangerous to all employees. In recognition of those dangers, the Army has established a policy that all facilities will be "smoke free". If we move to a facility as the sole occupant, there will be not designated smoking areas. If it is a joint use building with established smoking areas, those areas will be available to our employees on their breaks. We will not lease space for designated smoking areas.

I'm seeing a tendency in the District to focus on some minor problems. Let's not lose sight of all the good work that's going on. Our construction program has increased dramatically because we've skillfully moved projects through planning and design and out to contract for construction. We've weathered the hiring freeze extremely well. We're doing a good job of incorporating LCPM into the way we do business. Most importantly, every week I see us address difficult issues professionally and without rancor. The touchstone of an excellent organization is its ability to resolve conflict without being destructive. We do that well.

Keep up the good work!

LTC Mike Mahoney
Deputy Commander
St. Paul District

Chocolate fit to fight for nearly fifty years

By Gregory Thomas, TROSCOM Public Affairs

Chocolate, it melts in your mouth and in your hands. At least that's the way it was for soldiers stationed in the balmy South Pacific prior to World War II. Soldiers wanted chocolate, so Army food engineers tried many things to make it more heat resistant. This included coating chocolate with oatmeal.

'Oatmeal-chocolate' failed miserably. It still melted in the hot weather and made a real mess in uniform pockets. The oatmeal also ruined the taste and smooth feel of chocolate.

Army legend says that this and many other feeble attempts to create non-melting chocolate were prompted by the Army Inspector General. The legend begins with the IG on an inspection in the South Pacific. When asked for comments on C rations, one soldier told the IG he wanted chocolate that 'melts in your mouth, not in your hands.' - Sounds familiar? So is the solution.

That solution was pan-coated chocolates, introduced to civilian consumers in 1940 by the M&M/MARS Corporation. Under the trade name of 'M&M's Plain Chocolate Candies,' they sold well almost from the start.

When World War II broke out, the Army placed large orders for the new candy. Navy procurements followed and soldiers around the world soon enjoyed this new candy packed in small tubes.

"M&M's" were the first mass-produced pan-coated chocolates. They satisfied the legendary IG requirement because their thin, colorful, sugar shell shielded soldiers from the effects of melted chocolate. The M&M/MARS Corporation developed them to close a gap in the civilian candy market created by the melting heat of summer. (Keep in mind that this was in the days before the modern conveniences of refrigerators and air conditioning.)

In the 1940's, "M&M's" slogan was "the family treat that's neat to eat." It was changed to "the milk chocolate melts in your mouth, not in your hand," in the early 1950's.

Legend claim that the IG report from the South Pacific originated the now famous slogan used by the M&M/MARS Corporation. However, no one really knows for sure.

"Much of what we have prior to 1950 is oral history," said Hans Fiuczynski, director of external relations for M&M/MARS. "Young companies usually concentrate on getting started and becoming successful rather than 'establishing libraries.'"

The effects of World War II provided a boost for the young company. Sugar was one of many commodities rationed during the war and as a result, "M&M's" were one of the very few candies manufactured in the United States. They were made exclusively for the Armed Forces and quickly became very popular among soldiers.

Since their first use, pan-coated chocolates have enjoyed a lengthy relationship with the military and other government agencies. They have come a long way since their early days in the Army. "M&M's" brand of pan-coated chocolates were included in the food supply of the first space shuttle astronauts. The new Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) rations, developed by the U.S. Army Troop Support Command (TROSCOM) - 'The Soldiers' Command,' currently include "M&M's" brand pan-coated chocolates. MREs are available with different entrees, and include a variety of candies other than pan-coated chocolates.

TROSCOM, headquartered in St. Louis, Mo., is a major subordinate command of the Army Material Command, and is the armed services focal point for operational rations. It develops rations for the Navy, Marines, and Air Force as well as the Army at its Natick Research Development and Engineering Center near Boston, Mass.

MREs replaced the old stool-canned C rations and are very flexible by nature and content.

Food that goes in MREs must meet a shelf life requirement of three years as well as specifications concerning quality, uniformity and availability at an acceptable price, says Philip Brandler, director of food engineering at Natick.

Meeting a lot of space-age technical requirements alone isn't good enough for TROSCOM. It also has to be palatable.

CHOCOLATE continued on page ten

Bridge collapse closes navigation channel

By Ken Gardner
Public Affairs Officer

A bridge under construction over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis collapsed April 24, closing the navigation channel above Lock and Dam No. 1.

The central portion of an arch in the new Lake Street Bridge collapsed, killing one construction worker. Debris from the collapse, including concrete, reinforcing steel, wooden forms, scaffolding, and a large steel box beam completely blocked the navigation channel at the construction site.

The towboat *Viking*, operated by Upper River Services in St. Paul, had just passed under the bridge heading downstream when it collapsed. No one on the boat was injured.

Minnesota Commissioner of Transportation Leonard Levine formally requested the Corps assistance in drawing down the pool at the accident site. Lowering the water level would assist in the investigation of the collapse and removal of the debris blocking the channel.

In coordination with the Ford hydroelectric plant the pool was lowered approximately 6 feet by April 27. Increased discharges through the Ford hydro plant, two auxiliary sluiceways, and the fill tunnels in the main lock were required to draw down the water level.

A schedule for removal of the debris and reopening the channel had not been determined when this issue of *Crosscurrents* went to press.

garbage, garbage, garbage

By weight, 37% of Minnesota's garbage is made up of paper, 18% is yard waste, 10% is glass, 10% is metal, 8% is made up of food waste, 7% is plastic and 10% is made up of other miscellaneous items. Up to 3% of the state's garbage (about 100,000 tons a year) could be eliminated by using waste reduction techniques such as reusing office paper as scratch paper, leaving grass clippings on the lawn and by not purchasing disposable products. *Editor: Anyone know about Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota or Iowa?*

Earth Day Every Day

HOW WE CELEBRATED

Eau Galle Lake

Shelly Schafer gave Earth Day interpretive programs to over 400 kids in several programs. She talked to each grade and every class from kindergarten thru 8th grade. 300 seedlings were planted last week.

Cross Lake

Area schools came in to attend the Wetland presentation held at the site on April 20th.

Headwaters Management Office

Jim Ruyak spoke to students at Remer schools on drought conditions and water quality conservation on April 20th.

Gull Lake

Water safety programs were given to the 4th grade students at Baxter grade School. **In photo below**, Jeff Kuschak (left) and Greg Struss "man" the Corps display at an Environmental Fair in the Brainerd Mall, in Brainerd Minnesota, on March 31st. Greg and Jeff worked with the Environmental Protection Agency to produce this joint display, which highlighted information on the vital importance of wetlands and the permit process.

Fountain City

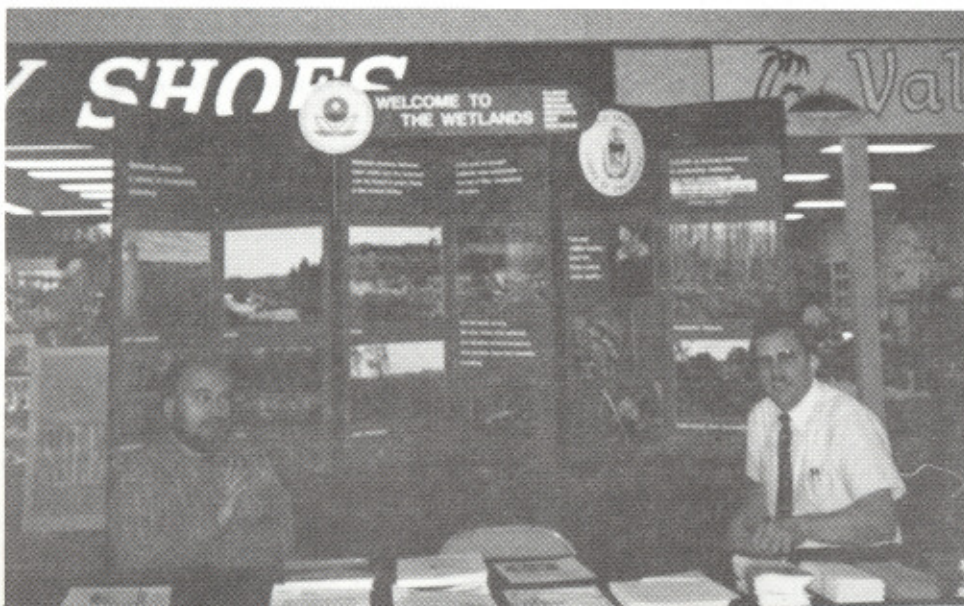
A number of employees have taken the Green Pledge and have participated in local activities.

On April 19, Dan Krumholz participated in an Earth Day related informal discussion sponsored by the Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission. The public was invited to participate in the series of roundtable discussions featuring Federal and State river management and water quality officials. Dan addressed the issue of environmental measures involved in channel maintenance dredging. The meeting was held at the Waterman's Restaurant in Lake City, MN.

Earth Day activities, concepts and general environmental awareness were a topic of discussion at a Navigation Section staff meeting held on April 20.

Pokegama Lake

Pat Duffney and Tim Rennecke spoke to two 5th grade classes at Warba School in Grand Rapids on April 25. The topics covered in their presentation included water quality, conservation, wildlife on the reservoir and a demonstration of how the dam and reservoir system work.



HOW DID YOU CELEBRATE?

Inquiring *Crosscurrents* wants to know... What did you and your family do to celebrate Earth Day 1990? Do you remember the first Earth Day 20 years ago? or any other Earth Day? What changes have you made in your lifestyle to help, not harm, your planet? Jot them down and send them to Public Affairs. We will be printing items about environmentally sustaining lifestyle choices in coming issues, anonymously if you wish. What are you doing? Think about it, and then let us know.

Crosslake's new shower room focuses on needs of mobility impaired campers

By Ray Nelson, Park Ranger

Annually, the Ronald L. Cloutier Recreation Area at Crosslake attracts an average of 40,000 overnight campers to the area. Among these visitors are wheelchair or mobility impaired youngsters, adults and elderly citizens.

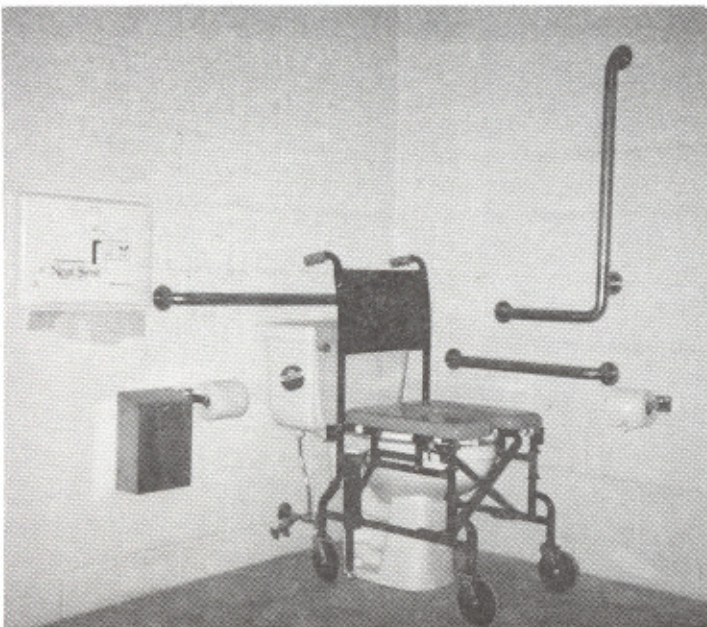
Several years ago, the Headwaters Project began to zero in on providing necessary facilities to accommodate this segment of our public. Among recent additions is a 14' x 16' Uni-Sex shower/change/bath?room, specifically designed for the wheelchair user. It is outfitted to permit a person with walking disabilities the independence to wash, shower, dress and use a commode without the barriers so often confronted at most campgrounds.

The interior walls are a pleasant, light colored sealed concrete block with attractive tile for the shower stall area. There are two mirrors (one full length) mounted at convenient heights. A sink, hand dryer and several wall hooks for hanging clothing are also provided within this facility.

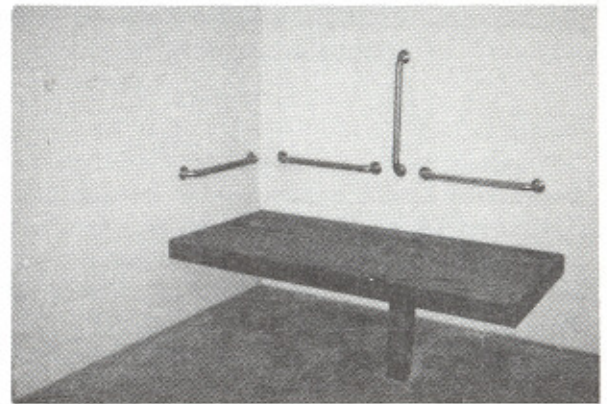
Great pains have been taken to provide an appropriate entrance door that allows easy opening and swing clearance to provide a smooth entry through the doorway, thus eliminating the possibility of any squeeze entrapments. The door opener is a special handle that accommodates any lack of strength limitations by the user. Also, it is equipped with a small occupancy indicator that verifies usage when the door is locked by someone from the inside.

The new facility was planned, constructed and finished with every possible need taken into consideration. Countless hours were spent reviewing design possibilities and many discussions were held with several mobile impaired individuals before final approval was sought.

This facility is a welcome addition to the campground and will provide the necessary basic bathroom accommodations so dearly needed by the mobility impaired visitor to Crosslake.



Right A wall mounted shower seat is conveniently placed near a flexible hose multi-position shower hose/head and provides maximum flexibility for the user by also folding up and out of the way when not being used.



Below A special drying table has been installed in one corner and is the same height as a wheelchair in order to provide a self-use roll on "dress and dry" area for the independent user.

Left The commode and shower has double rails on the nearby walls to accommodate any age user, with one set of bars several inches below the other for added leverage. The idea for this came from a day care operator with handicapped children, who said the higher bars were too difficult for them to effectively utilize.

A fiberglass shower/commode wheelchair that is specifically designed for shower usage is available inside the new building. It consists of special corrosion resistant materials, detachable arms to allow easy transfer, swingaway footrests, and a 4 position rotating seat that allows perineal cleaning and manual assistance. A bedpan with height adjustment capability for self-care or attendant care is available for use with the chair and/or the chair can also be used over a stationary toilet. This chair also folds up for storing or transporting to other locations.

Civil Servants of the Year



Vicki Demo

The position of chief of Technical Services Branch in Personnel is a demanding one with many difficult responsibilities and pressure to "get the work out". As chief, Vicki has molded her staff into a real team, and is never too busy to help, explain or just listen. A reflection of her high standard of performance is the selection of the St. Paul District program as one of three sites for consideration as a regional personnel processing center. Our District is consistently among the best in the accuracy and timeliness of personnel actions.

During 1989, Steve accomplished several special projects, received a sustained superior performance award and is a recipient of a district EEO Award for efforts in furthering evacuation plans for mobility impaired employees. Two of Steve's cases as Assistant District Counsel are being used as models for other districts by headquarters. Steve also assists fellow employees through timely and accurate legal advice and donating annual leave to those in need. Overall, his work performance in 1989 has been exemplary.

Steve Adamski



Nancy Sanchez

Nancy started with the Corps as a Stay-in-School student and has been in a permanent position in Finance and Accounting Branch since 1985. During periods of heavy workload and reduced staff, she consistently made the right choices in allotting time to best meet mission requirements. Her contribution made the difference between temporary vacancy inconveniences and the collapse of a vital and valuable employee service - prompt reimbursement of travel expenses. Nancy also helps in community programs for children, while studying for her accounting degree. A friendly attitude, enthusiasm and pursuit of excellence are her hallmarks.

CHOCOLATE

continued from page four

"If the food doesn't taste good and isn't eaten, it serves no purpose," Brandler said.

Though Army researchers did not develop pan-coated chocolates, much of the food inside MREs was developed by TROSCOM. In fact, many TROSCOM developed items have found their way into a variety of civilian markets. Included are improved convenience foods, clothing, footwear and outdoor equipment. An estimated 30 percent of the products in America's supermarkets had their beginnings as Army food research and development projects.

Some food products that developed as a result of Army technology include powdered beverages, chicken nuggets, restructured meat patties, instant puddings, cake mixes, freeze-dried and instant groups, and freeze-dried coffee. Other Army technology has led to improved winter clothing, boots and gloves, shelters and camping equipment.

This means twice the value for every hard-earned tax dollar spent on these and other TROSCOM products.

To further increase the MRE's soldier acceptability, TROSCOM included new entrees with larger servings, commercial candies, hot pepper sauce and cold beverages.

"M&M's" are still a favorite. "Soldiers like seeing something from home when they stop work to eat," Brandler said.

They're even praised in writing as one soldier wrote:

Dear Sirs,

I'm a soldier in the Army and I'm in Panama to help protect the Americans and their property in the Canal Zone. Since we've just deployed here they haven't set up any kind of dining facilities so at least one meal per day is an MRE (Meal Ready to Eat).

Today I was sitting in the jungle trying to get used to the new climate - which is neither pleasant nor easy. I took out my MRE and opened it and to my surprise, out fell a bag of M&M's. They were just what I needed to help me get through the day. I was so pleased I had to thank you—so thanks!

Thanks again for putting M&M's in our MREs, they're greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, James

Each year, the M&M/MARS corporation receives letters from soldiers around the world, says Fiuczynski. "Most of the letters express an appreciation of "M&M's presence in their meal."

Whether in the heat of the jungle or the heat of battle, soldiers can be certain that chocolates found in today's MREs will continue to melt in their mouth, not in their hands.

LETTERS

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in a matter of minutes. In his situation and depending on how quickly rescue came, the float cushions the fisherman had in his boat would not have saved him. Float cushions are not recommended for non to poor swimmers. They should never be relied on as the only life saving device available. Float cushions are not coast guard approved life saving devices. Basically, the only thing a float cushion is good for is to sit on.

Barb LaPierre
Park Ranger, Lake
Ashtabula

Editor: Thanks for the input. I have forwarded your letter to the U.S Army Safety Center, the "author", for their comments. With the recreation season upon us, water safety issues are important. If you know of additional sources of written articles that could be used in Crosscurrents, please let us know.

Crosscurrents, Sunday, April 22, I attended "Earth Day" at the Wilder National Forest. Here is some interesting literature that I received and would like to share with my friends at the Corps through the *Crosscurrents*, if you agree.

Loretta Lipke
Revolving Fund
Accounting Section
F&A Branch

Editor: Yes, we agree! Thanks for the idea and for making it easy to implement. We'll use them wherever we can. Thanks.

Nasty Fact

Minnesotans produce an average of 2.5 to 4 pounds of garbage each day. In the not-so-distant future, your garbage pick-up bill could go up 4-5 times what you now pay. This increase is due to the rising costs of collecting, hauling and burying the garbage properly as well as long-term monitoring and clean-up of ground water.

What can you do?

Start with recycling your glass, aluminum and newspapers. It's amazing how much smaller the rest of the trash becomes. What else can people do? If you have some ideas or knowledge on this topic, send them to *Crosscurrents*. We'd like to hear from you.



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