



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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## The St. Paul District parental leave policy strengthens the meaning of "Corps family"

by Peter Verstegen, Public Affairs specialist

A new parental leave policy in the St. Paul District has just added substance to the meaning of "Corps family."

Under a new parental leave policy, St. Paul District employees may work part-time for up to 26 weeks after a birth or adoption of a child. Or employees may

take 10 full weeks of parental leave, consisting of any combination of annual leave and leave without pay. And for women, this does not include the period of incapacitation, for which the mother may use sick, annual, or leave without pay.

"This makes parental leave equal across the board, no matter where you work or who you work for in the district," said

Joann Meier, a specialist in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). "This policy also applies to males. The father could ask for 26 weeks of part-time work after the birth or adoption of a child."

To qualify, employees must notify their supervisor of their intent to take leave at least 90 days in advance of the birth or adoption.

*See Leave, p. 6*

## Ten from St. Paul District work Hurricane Andrew relief duty

"Bombing the area couldn't have done a worse job. Hurricane Andrew completely leveled South Florida," said Greg Porycky, an engineering technician in Engineering Division (ED).

When Hurricane Andrew ripped through South Florida on August 24, it left behind \$20 billion in property damage, 82,000 destroyed or damaged businesses and 160,000 homeless people. It turned out to be the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history and the largest disaster recovery effort ever undertaken by the Corps.



Photo by Greg Porycky

The most costly (\$20 billion) natural disaster to hit the United States, Hurricane Andrew cut a swath across south Florida that left more than 160,000 people without a home. The Corps soon had 700 people assisting in recovery.

*See Andrew, p. 3*

## St. Paul District gives generously during the holidays

Within Human Resources, Lupe Santos and Mary Hendrickson, at right, were among 20 district employees who gave generously during the holiday season. Food and 26 gifts went to the Neighbor's Inc. for a needy family.



At left, Dave Berwick, archaeologist and chief of Cultural Resources Section, coordinated the Santa Anonymous Program. The St. Paul District and other federal agencies participate in the program through the Federal Executive Board. The Minneapolis Star Tribune sponsors the program, which provides new Christmas toys for needy children. The program is in its 44th year.

At right, employees from Construction-Operations (CO) donated food, money and gifts to a needy family through the Salvation Army. Left to right, Tim Fell, Denise Blackwell-Kraft, Char Hauger, and Henrik Strandskov, all from Regulatory Branch, took the gifts to Salvation Army on December 18. Roland Hamborg from Natural Resources Branch initiated the "Jim Nicholson Memorandum Dictionary" that raised over \$100 in private contributions for the effort. (CO Chief Nicholson's unique shorthand inspired the dictionary.)



*Andrew, cont. from page 1*

Porycky and nine others from St. Paul District worked relief duty, some as early as September 4.

Altogether, more than 1,150 Corps people from all over the country moved to South Florida. They worked to patch together the ravaged but once beautiful homeland to thousands of victims.

In assuming the challenge, the Corps was assigned more than \$380 million in recovery missions from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

FEMA tasked the Corps with two missions — temporary roofing and collecting storm debris. The majority of Corps people deployed in Southern Dade County oversaw these two tasks.

Besides Porycky, other St. Paul employees participating in the hurricane recovery effort included Robert Gossett, a ranger at Cross Lake; Steve Harmon,

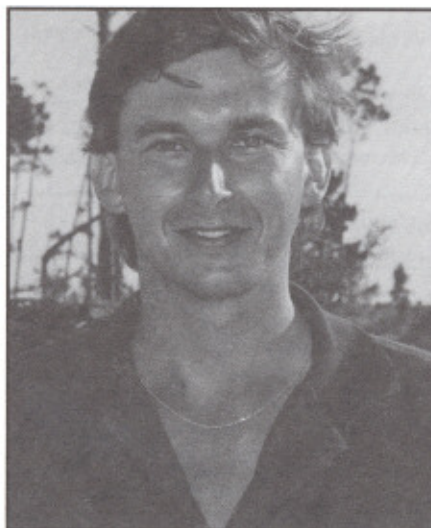


Photo courtesy Hurricane Andrew Recovery Office

### Greg Porycky

an equipment repairman, Lock and Dam No. 2; Terry Ladd, a ranger at Sandy Lake; Randy Melby, a ranger at Baldhill Dam; Timm Rennecke, a ranger at Leech Lake; Joe Skupa, a mechanical engineer, Treatment Works

Section of Construction-Operations (CO); Robert Turk, an equipment repairman at Lock and Dam 5A; Parveen Vij, a civil engineer, Treatment Works Section (CO) and David Wright from the Electronic Service Center.

Upon arrival, Porycky spent 14-hour days working roof detail. "Every roof in Miami had substantial damage. With a temporary roof made of plastic sheeting on their house, people could move back in," said Porycky.

Of the projects assigned to the Corps, four are done: roofing, water supply, providing ice, and technical assistance. Eight additional tasks continue: debris removal, generating emergency power, and providing pumps, portable toilets, schools, garbage removal, showers and laundry services, temporary housing, and damage survey reporting.

Corps contractors and voluntary organizations covered 43,000 damaged roofs with plastic sheeting, and picked up and hauled away 13 million cubic yards of storm debris — enough to fill a football field 10 feet high, almost 650 times.

"The hundreds of Corps team members deployed to the disaster scene from throughout the Corps are the key to recovery efforts," said Col. Terence Salt, commander, Jacksonville District, and Hurricane Andrew Recovery Office (HARO). I never forget for a minute that the operation is an unqualified success because of the contributions of every part of the Corps team."

"It is amazing how the Corps of Engineers can organize," said Porycky. "In a time of crisis, the Corps has done excellently in its mission of Hurricane Andrew recovery. It doesn't matter what Corps district you're from. The camaraderie is unbelievable."

*(From information provided by the HARO and from St. Paul District sources.)*



Photo by Greg Porycky

To assist the recovery efforts of public safety officials and insurance adjusters, South Florida residents spray-painted their street address, insurance company name and policy number on the outside of their homes. Debris removal was a major effort, with removal of over 13 million cubic yards of debris.

## 1992 in Review

In case you wondered where your time went, here is a sampling of highlights of 1992.

### January

Winter Carnival Royalty, including Clare Friedmann, Human Resources staffing clerk, visit the district Headquarters. Last year, Clare was the St. Paul Winter Carnival's Princess of the South Wind.

Audrey Tilden comes from Camden, Arkansas to become Chief of Contracting Division.

The Federal Women's Program sponsors a program on setting and achieving personal goals, titled "Overcoming Barriers to Success."

District biologists confirm the presence of zebra mussels at Lock and Dam No. 8 during de-watering. By the end of the season, this exotic species is present at all locks and dams on the Upper Mississippi.

### February

Divers service the mitre gate at Lock and Dam No. 1 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Underwater visibility is less than one foot.

The St. Paul District recognizes the stewardship of public lands by honoring three volunteers in a "Take Pride in America" ceremony in Wabasha, Minnesota.

The Sandy Lake staff designs and remodels the office at Sandy Lake. They panel the walls and construct the reception counter "Corps Castle" inlay using native white ash wood.

### March

On March 5, commercial navigation begins in the district on the Mississippi River when the M/V Conti Nan, with 13 empty and three loaded barges, locks through Lock and Dam No. 10 at Guttenberg, Iowa.

Emergency Operations conducts a flood exercise based on the Red River of the North flood of 1989.

North Central Division Commander, Brigadier General Russell Fuhrman, presents employee awards, meets with office chiefs, and tours selected field sites during his visit to the district.

The St. Paul District conducts a press conference and open house at the Maritime Museum in Duluth, Minnesota, to provide public information about the search for 1437 barrels of scrap munitions dumped into Lake Superior. The project is part of the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP).

In Brainerd, Minnesota, the Gull Lake field office and visitor center interior restoration is completed. The remodeling makes room for a Regulatory field office. The Regulatory office in Bemidji closes.

Financial Consultant Erica Whittlinger discusses "Men & Women, Money & Power" at the Federal Women's Program brown bag lunch.

### April

The Weaver Bottoms project receives a Federal Design Achievement Award in the Presidential Design Award Program.

Four people from the St. Paul District help the Chicago District plug and drain a flooded freight tunnel system under the city.

Dale Ebner starts work as the new lockmaster, Lock and Dam No. 6, Trempealeau, Wisconsin.

The district honors Civil Servants of the Year Melissa Shortridge, Winona; Barbara Reckinger and Chuck Spitzack, St. Paul; and Students of the Year Pamela Kenyon and Julia Washenberger, St. Paul.

The Federal Women's Program elects new officers. Mary Muraski is named chairwoman.

### May

Arne Thomsen, La Crosse, Wisconsin, is recognized as Hard Hat of the Year by the Chief of Engineers in a formal awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. At left, Thomsen hosts a media day on a Corps-created island in Pool 8, south of La Crosse.



The Dredge Thompson comes home to Fountain

City, Wisconsin, and spends most of the summer in the St. Paul District.

A counterculture group, the Rainbow people, meet at La Farge, Wisconsin for their Midwest gathering.

The Women's Army Corps celebrates its 50th anniversary. Today, women serve in over 90 percent of the Army's career fields.

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office holds Diversity Appreciation Day for field offices in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Fifty seven people attend the program.

## June

The district holds its Summer Awards Picnic and Engineers' Day at Como Park. An estimated 400 attend.

Elwin Yoder arrives from Omaha District to become chief of Real Estate Division.

District Commander Col. Richard Craig honors Mike Mahoney, Stan Kumpula, Chuck Spitzack, Al Geisen, Greg Frankosky for EEO their efforts.

## July

The St. Paul District sponsors an exhibit at National Camping and Hiking Association "Campvention" in Brainerd, Minnesota. An estimated 10,000 visit the natural resources tent, the location of the Corps' exhibit.

An outbreak of Newcastle disease kills 1,960 pelicans, 620 cormorants, 7 gulls and 8 terns at Marsh Lake, just upstream of Lac Qui Parle Reservoir, Watson, Minnesota.

## August

**Lock and Dam No. 1 celebrates its 75th anniversary with an open house, attended by 2,500 visitors.**

Ending 20 years of distinguished military service, Deputy District

Commander Lt. Col. Mike Mahoney retires. He came to St. Paul District in 1989.

The St. Paul District sets up an exhibit, titled "Making a Better Tomorrow," for the Minnesota State Fair.

Terry Birkenstock is named Planner of the Year.

John Anfinson receives the Army Achievement Medal.

## September

The St. Paul District makes it official. Headquarters plans to move its operations to the Sibley Building. The move is set to occur between April and June.

Over 100 retirees gather for 17th Annual Retiree Reunion at the Kelly Inn, St. Paul, Minnesota. Col. Richard Craig announces the induction of Wally Voss, retired Central Area Lockmaster, to the district's Hall of Fame.

The Sheyenne River Flood Control Project is dedicated in West Fargo, North Dakota. More than 50 attend.

The district set up an exhibit at the open house for Newton's Apple to celebrate the program's 10th anniversary.

Audrey Tilden transfers out as chief of Contracting Division. She goes to New Orleans.

## October

The Lock and Dam No. 10 open house attracts 2,100 people as part of German Fest at Guttenberg, Iowa.

Diversity Appreciation Week opens at Headquarters. Over 60 percent of the St. Paul Headquarters staff attend.

In preparation for the move to the Sibley Building, Headquarters employees view models of new modular furniture.

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) exceeds fund-raising goal of \$30,200.

## November

The Army Corps of Engineers announces nationwide reorganization. The reorganization plan slates St. Paul District for one of 15 technical centers under reorganization.

## December

An estimated 275 people, including employees and retirees, attend the district Awards Ceremony at the Southview Country Club.

Lock and Dam No. 9, Eastman, Wisconsin, is de-watered for major maintenance and major rehabilitation.

New lock operating machinery is installed at Lock and Dam No. 6, Trempealeau, Wisconsin.

Major Charles Rogers arrives from Germany to serve as the district's deputy commander. Curtis Meeder arrives from Chicago to become the new chief for Planning Division's Economic-Social-Recreation Branch.



*Leave, cont. from p. 1*

### "A win-win for the district"

"This policy makes it a win-win for the district and for each employee," said Jan Schwalbe, co-chair of the Parental Leave Task Force and environmental protection assistant, Regulatory Branch.

"The part-time provision eases the transition from home to work, helps provide a pay check, and gives each person some time to bond with their baby," said Librarian Jean Schmidt, a member of the task force.

The policy grew out of a Gender Issue Workshop that the district held in December 1991. The following January, the district commander established a task force to deal with the issue of parental leave.

Schwalbe and Bob Post, chief, Engineering Division, acted as co-chairs. Other contributors included Judy DesHamais, Engineering Management Branch; Kris Fairbanks, Environmental Resources; Pat Foley, chief, Hydraulics Section; Sheryl Hurley, chief, Recruitment Branch; Gary Nelson, Economic Social Recreation Branch; Marianne Price, EEO officer; and Kent Spading, Hydrology Section.

### District lacked set policy

The issue was a lack of set policy in the St. Paul District regarding approved leave options and work alternatives for parental and maternity purposes.

"Employees believed there were real or perceived inequities in the way parental leave was handled throughout the district," said Foley. "With the old policy, the perception was that parental leave depended on who you worked for. The district commander told us to come up with a solution."

The objective of the task force was to develop a policy that met the needs of

both management and employees of the district.

"The district had to balance employee needs with mission development and mission accomplishment," said Post. "Employees and management had no way of planning absences, which was uncomfortable for both. They had to negotiate parental leave, resulting in widespread differences throughout the district. This pointed to a need to develop a base plan. The big winners with our new policy are the family and especially the children. The district accrues benefits from being able to plan the absences and from improved morale."

### Objectives and solutions

The first objective for the task force was to identify how parental leave responsibility impacts the work place and careers. Next, the group had six months to develop possible solutions to minimize impacts on management and employees.

The task force looked at existing literature on parental leave, surveyed other employers, reviewed the Federal Women's Program proposal on parental leave and tapped focus groups for input.

In formulating its recommendation, the group considered what the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, the Families and Work Institute, *EEOC Review*, *Working Mother*, *Federal Times*, *American Psychologist*, *Harvard Business Review*, and other sources said about parental leave.

The task force surveyed the public and private sectors to see where others were on the issue of parental leave. Hurley talked to Corps Headquarters, the North Central Division (NCD) office and all the Corps districts within NCD. In the Twin Cities, she surveyed engineering firms, federal and state agencies, and major private employers.

"Most districts followed Office of Personnel Management guidelines," said Hurley. "When we formulated the policy, this district was the only one with a written policy — a policy which put us on middle ground compared to the private sector."

The task force gathered quantitative and qualitative data from six focus groups. The focus groups helped to identify issues and concerns associated with parental leave. The groups considered whether the proposal was broad enough, whether the policy should apply to men and women, and for birth or adoption. The focus groups also discussed alternate work schedules and education and training issues. Gary Nelson, a sociologist in Planning Division, established an objective method to assess the groups' input.

"The mandate of the task force was parental and maternity leave," said Schwalbe. "Additional issues, such as elderly care and sick child care, will be left for another task force. Including these additional issues at this time would have adversely affected the progress already obtained on parental leave."

"Establishing a parental leave policy makes it clear that this is an entitlement and not a discretionary matter," said Foley. "The worst part was that it took so long."

### Security reminder

Lock all valuable items in a desk drawer or a cabinet. Keep the office doors locked when nobody is in your office. Do not store cash or valuable items in office areas. If you notice any unusual actions or disturbances, please call Dave Christenson in Emergency Management, extension 206.

## Event and meetings well attended

Retirees Stephan Tysowsky, left, Irving Kendall, center, and Art Pera were among the 275 people who attended the district's awards ceremony, December 18, at the Southview Country Club, West St. Paul, Minnesota. The awards event recognized employee contributions under the Army Ideas for Excellence program. Recognized were Suggester of the Year, Thomas J. Caya, a lock and dam operator, Lock and Dam No. 9; Evaluator of the Year, Mark Edlund, civil engineering technician, Navigation Branch; and Implementer of the Year, Dennis Erickson, chief, Locks and Dams Section.



Photo by Peter Versteegen

## Hello

### Planning Division

Curtis N. Meeder, supervisory regional economist  
Bryan A. Rieger, biological aid

### Real Estate

Jacalynn M. Hudalla, clerk-typist  
Latrice D. Jackson, clerk-typist

## Good-bye

### Construction-Operations

Larry P. Albrightson, laborer  
James F. Hastings, lock and dam operator  
Mark L. Hillyer, lock and dam operator  
Paul O. Johnson, surveying technician  
Raymond T. Larson, laborer  
Rodney M. Pederson, laborer  
Robert W. Serene, lock and dam operator  
Michael L. Werlein, lock and dam operator  
Duane W. Wilson, laborer

### Engineering Division

Michael T. Beaupre, civil engineer

### Information Management Office

Reginald F. Wilson, computer clerk

### Resource Management

Theodore B. Anderson, Jr., voucher examiner  
Heather L. Gomez, clerk-typist  
Ruthanne M. Lo, student trainee  
Scott E. Miller, student trainee



Photo by Georgia Stanorik

In December, District Commander Richard Craig, at far right, held a series of three informal meetings with employees. He discussed the Corps-wide reorganization, the move of district Headquarters to the Sibley Building, and the new parental leave policy.

## Ed Dahlin

Edward Thor Dahlin, a classification specialist in Human Resources, died December 9, 1992 from complications resulting from major heart surgery.

He was born July 16, 1936 in St. Paul, Minnesota, and graduated from Monroe High School in St. Paul and Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota. After graduation from Carleton, he

taught English for a number of years in Bogota, Colombia, where he met and married Clara Ines Gartan Garzon in May 1963. He began his career with the Department of Army in April 1966 as a personnel trainee and subsequently was trained as a classification specialist. His Army career included overseas assignments in Japan and Europe. He returned to the St. Paul District in 1977 and served as the district's senior classifier until his death.

## Bits and Pieces

### District contributes to Corps' history

John Anfinson, a St. Paul District historian, contributed a chapter to the newest Army Corps of Engineers' history. Called *Builders and Fighters: U.S. Army Engineers in World War II*, the 529-page soft cover book describes the significant accomplishments of the Corps during World War II.

In the foreword to the book, Lt. Gen. Henry J. Hatch, former chief of engineers, writes that the book is "a series of essays on some of the hectic engineer activity during World War II. Veterans of that war should read this book and point with pride to their accomplishments. In it, today's engineers will find further reasons to be proud of their heritage."

Anfinson contributed a chapter titled, "War in the Heartland: The St. Paul District." A limited supply of the book is available from Anfinson at 220-0260.

### Bosse exhibit opens

The photographs of Henry A. Bosse, a 19th century Corps of Engineers draughtsman, will be the major feature of an exhibit opening February 9 at Landmark Center, 75 W. 5th St., St. Paul. The event is open to the public and begins at 7 p.m. Titled "Mississippi River Exhibit," the display is sponsored by the Ramsey County Historical Society and continues through July.

### Workshop features Corps speakers

John Anfinson, a historian, and Dennis Anderson, a fisheries biologist, will participate in a workshop titled "The Ever Changing Mississippi," which begins February 8 at the new Minnesota History Center. Anfinson will present a keynote address titled "10,000 years on the Mississippi" at 7 p.m. at the history center's 3M Auditorium.

On February 9 at the Fort Snelling History Center, Anderson will participate in a panel discussion titled, "Mississippi River Water Quality—Are We Really Making Progress?"

As part of the workshop Anfinson will guide participants on a February 10 "Behind the Barricades" field trip to Lock and Dam No. 1. For more information, call Ron Erickson or Ann Sarnecki at the National Park Service, phone 290-4160.

### Speak easy

You can learn to speak with ease in public, in a true "no fault" fashion, by joining the Heritage Toastmasters Club. The Heritage Toastmasters were formed here over 10 years ago.

In Toastmasters, you learn from others and you help others. The Heritage Club gives you the opportunity to practice and gain speaking skills, refine speaking techniques, and to learn organizational skills.

The usual length of remarks in a club meeting is five to seven minutes, with subjects ranging from abortion to reorganization.

Walk by a meeting and you'll hear lots of clapping. The purpose of the applause is to encourage members to speak. With applause, members say, "We want to hear you and what you have to say."

Participation allows you to enhance your native ability to speak in both public and private. You will learn how to convey your point clearly and concisely without boring your audience — whether the opportunity comes from your boss in a section meeting or in a team meeting.

To learn more about Heritage Toastmasters, contact Steve Sandquist, in Engineering Division at extension 657; Tom Raster in Planning Division at 238 or Dave Christenson in Emergency Management at 204.



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## Crosscurrents

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