



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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St. Paul District tackles flooding at Breckenridge



St. Paul District photo

Dan Reinartz, a hydraulic engineer in Hydrology Section, walks the banks of the Red River of the North two miles north of Breckenridge, Minnesota. Reinartz and eight district staff formed a reconnaissance team. They checked for ice jams that would result in high water and flooding upstream at Breckenridge. In his reconnaissance, Reinartz relayed the location of the crest, and whether the river was rising or falling. He also read gages at key index stations, measured flow rates and calculated water travel times. Breckenridge is located in the headwaters of the Red River of the North in western Minnesota, across from Wahpeton, North Dakota. Other team members were Tim Bertschi, Jeff Love, Craig Hinton, Dick Sundberg, Loren Nishek, Jeff Huseby and Rich Pomerleau. Jon Lyman went as photographer. More on page 3.

Bits and Pieces

Corps sets up booth at Fargo show



St. Paul District photo

March 4-7 the St. Paul District took part in the Red River Valley Sportsman's Show at the newly built Fargo Dome in Fargo, North Dakota. Approximately 40,000 attended this year's show. Park Rangers Randy Melby and Jeff Kapaun from Baldhill Dam and Rangers Clint Fishel and Dean Skalbeck from the headwaters represented the district. The exhibit provided brochures, coloring books and stickers. Rangers also answered questions about Corps projects and campgrounds. Kapaun is pictured above.

Federal Women's Program announces new appointees

John Miller, LM, succeeds Mary Muraski as chair of the Federal Women's Program Committee (FWPC). Miller served as vice-chair during the past year. Doris Sullivan was nominated as vice-chair. New appointees to the FWPC are Cathy Greguson, CT-B; Doris Sullivan, ED-D; and Angie Peterson, PD. They replace Mary Muraski, RE-E; Gary Nelson, PD-ES; and Claire Freilinger, ED-D. Al Geisen, ED-C, whose two-year term also expired, has been reappointed to the committee. Jane Carroll, PD-ER, continues as recorder. Also continuing are David DePoint, CO-EM, and Dale Gross, CO-CT. Both Gross and DePoint had been appointed earlier this year to fill out unexpired terms.

Other members of the FWPC are Debra Bertrand, RE-FD; Michelle Shafer, CO-NR; Patricia Westfall, ED-GH, and Ed Bankston, OC.

Engineer store catalog released

The Army Engineer Association (AEA) store, located in the Engineer Museum at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, released its 1993 catalog of engineer-related merchandise. Sale items include jewelry, ties, blazer crests, pewter, paper, ceramics and glassware, flags, books, artwork and shirts. Many items make ideal presentation gifts for employees. Proceeds from the sale of merchandise help to support the non-profit objectives of the AEA. The St. Paul District library has the AEA 24-page catalog and price list. For more information, write or call: Business Manager, P.O. Box 634, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri 65473. Phone: 314-329-6678.

Two retire from district

Al Ellingson and Dave "Duff" Taylor retired from Engineering Division in April.

Ellingson began his 28-year career with the district in 1965 after a brief stint with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He worked as a materials engineer in the Geotechnical Design Section. He contributed in the areas of concrete and materials to practically all district projects, including Bassett Creek and lock and dam rehabilitations. Ellingson, who grew up in Montana, plans to travel during his retirement.

Taylor has worked as a civil engineering technician since 1965. Born in Eau Galle, Wisconsin, he began as a seasonal deck hand in 1957, and in 1958 worked as a draftsman. He became a technician in the Channels and Harbors Section of Construction-Operations in 1962, and joined Engineering Division's Geotechnical Section in 1965. Taylor plans to spend his summers boating on the St. Croix River.

Corps retiree funds scholarship

Four engineering students at the University of Minnesota Institute of Technology received scholarships to continue their engineering studies, thanks to the generosity of a former St. Paul District employee. Joe Taubr, a 25-year employee of the Army Corps of Engineers, donated \$5,000 to the university to establish a scholarship for engineering students. Taubr began his career with the St. Paul District in 1945 and retired as Section Chief of Structural Design in 1970. In 1974, he married Blossom Rosenberg, who worked in Finance for the district for nine years. Taubr immigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1907. He later attended St. Stanislav's grade school, Cretin High and graduated from the University of Minnesota.

St. Paul District tackles spring flooding

While Dan Reinartz and a flood team gathered reconnaissance on flooding at locations out in the field in the St. Paul District (cover photo), the headquarters office staff provided support and coordinated activities through the Emergency Operations Center in St. Paul. The Corps built emergency levees on the Red River of the North at Breckenridge, Minnesota and Fargo, North Dakota.

Meanwhile, at Houston, Minnesota, the Corps offered technical advice on raising a levee at two points. In the St. Paul District's Emergency Operations Center (photo at right), Dave Himmerich, a civil engineer in Engineering Division's General Section, discusses Houston with Bob Post, the chief of Engineering Division.

Bottom photo, left to right, Jim Murphy, Bob Englestad, Ed Eaton, Wayne Koerner, Lt. Col. Chuck Rogers and Dave Christenson review area topography while they discuss the Houston levee.



Photo by Peter Versteegen



Photo by Ken Gardner

Three from the Corps receive civil service honors

By M.B. Braun, Public Affairs clerk

Al Geisen



On Wednesday, May 5 more than 100 outstanding Federal employees in the Twin Cities will be honored as part of the Civil Servant of the Year Awards Program. Within this elite group, Al Geisen, Jan Pream and Arne Thomsen, will represent the St. Paul District.

Al Geisen

Al Geisen has been with the Corps for 22 years. He started in the Construction Division for the Omaha District. He's been working in the St. Paul District for 14 years and three years ago came to his present position of chief of Cost Engineering, an Engineering Division branch that prepares construction cost estimates.

Al says, "Looking back, the best memories I have of the Corps are the many great people I have had the opportunity to work with — especially here in the St. Paul District. The Corps family is a bunch of 'can-doers' — people who have a clear sense of mission and who enjoy doing good work. Working with people like this is fun and that's what life is all about."

Al states that "one of the most positive changes I have seen since starting with the Corps is the movement of women into the more 'non-traditional roles' of engineering and into other technical areas. This has provided more diversity and balance to the organization."

People, and helping them to achieve and to build on their talents, is important to Al. He said that he feels fortunate to serve on the Federal Women's Program and on a special Gender Issues Task Force. Both appointments "enabled me to understand better the issues that are important to all of us such as leadership, parental leave and career enhancement."

Jan Pream

Jan Pream, who has also had a 22-year career with the Corps, is the administrative support assistant in Construction-Operations. Jan considers herself a sort of field person — a go-between among the staff — which affords her a pleasing variety of tasks. She thrives on the constant change, saying that "No two days are ever alike."

Asked how she empowers herself on the job, Jan said that she takes a lot of pride in her work and tries to see that it's done in the best way possible according to regulations. "You've got to know where people are coming from, but it's got to be done right. There's a tendency that when things need to be done last minute, there's an urge to rush through it, but it's got to be done right."

Harold Taggatz, assistant chief of Construction-Operations, and Jan's nominator, stated, "Her knowledge of administrative procedures, which she has continued to refine and build upon, has been invaluable through the past year. She is a vital team player and deserves credit for a major portion of our successful tasks."

At the end of the day Jan's hobbies take over and she devotes herself to numerous interests including crafts and ceramics, which she loves to work on at the family's lake home on Lake Nicaboyne in northwestern Wisconsin. While up in that area Jan periodically visits the local casino near her cabin. "I love to gamble!" she says. "My husband and I used to go to Las Vegas until our twins were born. We now find ourselves going to the casino here instead of Las Vegas. When asked if they win, Jan smiles and says, "Sometimes."

Jan Pream



Arne Thomsen



St. Paul District file photos

Arne Thomsen

The third awardee is the recent recipient of yet another award — the “Hard Hat of the Year” — Arne Thomsen, resident engineer for the St. Paul District at La Crosse, Wisconsin. Modestly, Arne says, “I like to think I’ve been doing a good job” while at the same time saying that he owes much of his success to a supportive supervisor. Says Arne, “He gives me enough room to do my job in the style I’ve developed and the style is compatible with the mission of the organization.”

The supportive supervisor is Dean Peterson, Eastern Area engineer, who has this to say: “Arne is an accomplished communicator, able to reduce complex issues to their basic components, and then resolve them one by one. His low-key style allows him to develop trust with all the contractor personnel on his jobs, from the laborer pushing the wheelbarrow to the company president.” Arne himself credits his ability to understand what motivates the contractor and the government and what the government is hoping to accomplish through the contracting effort as one of his keys to success on the job.

Asked what he would tell someone getting his job tomorrow, he laughs and says, “Good Luck!” Over the years he says he has come to realize that there are many ways of doing a job correctly and this again goes back to style. “I’d have difficulty coaching someone,” he says, “They’d have to learn on their own. Style is something they’d have to develop through time.”

And then in true Arne Thomsen style he says he wants to recognize his colleagues Curt Charles and Lon Mathis. “Without them I couldn’t perform the function I’m doing. They helped make it possible.”

St. Paul District savings bond drive lasts the month of May

The U.S. Savings Bond campaign in the St. Paul District begins May 1, with Danette Sammon and Theresa Thury as co-chairs of the month-long event. Each works in Programs and Project Management Division.

The kick-off for the campaign begins with service of coffee and donuts at 9:30 a.m. on May 4 and 5 in rooms 1219 and 1220.

The campaign moves over to Construction-Operations on May 6 with a presentation in the Conference Room at the Army Engineer Center beginning at 1:30 p.m. Cookies and punch will be available.

Field sites will receive a video, information and posters. Theresa is at extension 755. Danette is at 730.

Here are some frequently asked questions and answers about changes in the program.

Q. I’ve heard about a new guaranteed yield of four percent. What’s going on?

A. Series EE U.S. Savings Bonds that are held at least five years from issue pay a variable market-based rate or a guaranteed minimum yield, whichever is greater. For savings bonds issued on or after March 1, 1993, the guaranteed yield is four percent from issue through 18 years from issue. Interest is compounded semiannually from the date of issue.

Q. What is the new bond term? What if I hold my savings bonds longer than the term?

A. Series EE savings bonds issued on or after March 1, 1993, have an initial term of 18 years. All Series EE bonds earn interest until final maturity, 30 years from issue. New EE bonds will receive one 10-year and one two-year extended maturity, at the guaranteed rates in effect when those extensions begin, for a total of 30 years.

Q. What are Series HH bonds and how do they pay interest?

A. Series HH bonds are current-income bonds that earn interest by direct deposit to the bond owners bank account. They are issued only in exchange for Series EE and E bonds and U.S. Savings Notes. Interest on Series HH issued on or after March 1, 1993, is paid at a fixed four percent annual rate. Variable market-based interest does not apply.

Q. How does this new guaranteed rate affect my older savings bonds?

A. Series EE and E bonds and U.S. Savings Notes (Freedom Shares) issued before March 1, 1993, will be subject to a four percent guaranteed rate during extended maturity periods that begin on or after March 1, 1993. They will retain their previous guaranteed rates during the remainder of maturity periods that began before March 1, 1993.

Chief of Engineers visits Southwestern Division Williams discusses reorganization



Photo by Mark Valentino, Ft. Worth District

Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Arthur E. Williams discusses reorganization and answers questions from Southwestern Division office employees during a March 12 town-hall meeting in Dallas, Texas.

Reprinted with permission from Pacesetter

By Anne Keever Cannon, Southwestern Division

“In all honesty, I don’t think Secretary (of Defense) Les Aspin can approve the entire reorganization plan,” Lt. Gen. Arthur E. Williams, chief of engineers, told Southwestern Division office employees March 12. Because of congressional opposition to changes at the districts, Williams said, “The best we can hope for is that he’ll approve part of it.”

Williams talked to the Southwestern Division (SWD) work force for almost an hour last month about the reorganization and its effects. He acknowledged the pain the process is causing Corps workers, but stressed the need to restructure the 218-year-old organization. “I know it’s affecting you and your family,” the chief told the group. “It’s eating at the heart of all of us.”

Since taking command of the Corps of Engineers last summer, Williams noted, he’s spent about 95 percent of his time on reorganization-related issues. “I’m pushing for a decision so we can get on with it,” he said.

Personnel and staff cuts don’t reflect on the quality of Corps employees or their work, Williams said. “We have to make changes to fall in line with the requirements that have been placed upon us.”

Many factors are driving the need to reorganize, the general continued. The Corps was already struggling with the effects of a reduced military work load and the shrinking number of civil works planning studies. It also has to deal with President Clinton’s order to cut 100,000 civil service jobs and his push to cut the deficit.

And there’s no guarantee that the administration’s stress on improving infrastructure will drop work in the Corps of Engineers’ lap. “All I’ve seen is big bucks for roads and bridges,” Williams said. “They’ve been silent on water transportation.”

Clinton’s economic stimulus package, passed March 18 by the House of Representatives, contains money for Corps projects—about \$100 million a year for four or five years. But when one congressman asked Williams how many more people would be hired to handle the work, he answered, “None.”

The reorganization will prepare the Corps to take on new work, like infrastructure or Superfund tasks for the Environmental Protection Agency, the chief said.

“I’m standing before EPA with open arms,” he said. “I want to tell EPA, ‘We’ve done a good job for you, and we’d like to do more.’ “But there’s a rumor that EPA will give the work to private industry, not federal agencies.”

That’s only one rumored action that could affect the Corps, Williams said. Talk has come up once again about combining the Corps’ civil works areas with the Bureau of Reclamation. And some people are suggesting that the Navy take over as the

single construction agent for the Department of Defense. "It isn't over yet, folks," Williams told employees. "We just lost the ACE's (Assistant Chief of Engineers) office. There are lots of changes ongoing. "We've got some tough times ahead of us," he continued. "Don't panic. We have to hang together." The proposed reorganization plan is still the best way to go, the general said, even if Aspin makes some changes. "But my recommendation to him would be, 'Whatever you do, don't send it back for re-study.'"

"...my recommendation to (Les Aspin) would be, 'Whatever you do, don't send it back for re-study.'" — Lt. Gen. Williams

Williams reminded the audience that former Army Secretary Michael P. W. Stone had approved the plan. Acting Secretary John Shannon has recommended that Aspin OK Phase I (closing six division headquarters) except for establishment of administrative and technical centers.

"My reading is that there's more congressional concern about the districts than divisions," he said. It's not likely that Aspin will make any decision soon, Williams noted.

"Because of the lack of senior staff, those holding down the fort are reluctant to make decisions," he said. And many senior officials will be focusing on the recently announced Base Realignment and Closure list for weeks or months. Because of the delay, the Corps won't be able to implement all of Phase I in fiscal 1993, the general said. "We'll have to do something about that," he said, but he didn't specify what would happen. Congressional resistance to Phase II of the reorganization has affected plans to offer district or tech and administrative center jobs to division workers, Williams told the SWD staff. "We can't do anything to the districts — add or subtract," he said. "Then you're backed up to what you can accomplish and still have a functional organization. "So you won't see job opportunities for all division office people."

The chief said he hoped district actions in areas like human resources and finance and accounting could go on. "We have to have some ability to make managerial decisions," he said.

Williams also talked about staffing at Corps headquarters. "We're having a RIF (reduction in force)," he said. "I asked when we'd had the last one. The historians checked, and their best information was — never." The headquarters reduction comes to about 14 percent, affecting up to 140 positions in both general expense and operations and maintenance, Army funding, he noted. "I don't know where we'll be in 1994," he added. "I anticipate more reductions. "I know I haven't put your minds at ease," Williams said in conclusion. "I don't know the answers."

Eau Galle reserved for Engineer Awards Day

By Rosemarie Braatz

The Corps of Engineers Eau Galle Recreation Area in Spring Valley, Wisconsin has been reserved for the June 18 Engineer Awards Day and Picnic. Along with a full day of picnic fun, food and games, the site offers such activities as fishing, swimming, hiking, horseback riding, and camping.

Spring Valley is 50 miles east of St. Paul. Busses will carry those who want to ride from the office to the picnic site. Those who prefer to drive themselves will find ample free parking.

Food, including grilled hamburgers, bratwurst, hotdogs and condiments will be prepared on the spot by volunteers from Construction-Operations. Free popcorn, snowcones, and pop will be available.

A wide range of games for adults and children has been planned. Volleyball, golf, and bingo will be offered. Playground facilities for the children are available.

Comfortable camping facilities are available at either the backpack or drive-in sites; fishing docks and boat launches are also available.

Interpretative information on nearly five miles of nature trails overlooking the lake and river describes unique rock formations, plant life, birds and wildlife.

For further information about the awards day arrangements, contact the following members of the planning committee:

Co-chairs: Al Rosenberg and Tom Oksness

Food: Tom Oksness

Games: Paul Machajewski

Project tours: Frank Star, Dan Seemon

Publicity: Rosemarie Braatz

Prizes: Stephanie Dupey

Finance: Craig Hinton

Treats: Jan Pream

Meeder receives Army award



Photo by Georgia Stanonik

On April 15, Curt Meeder, chief of Economic Social Recreation Branch (right), received the Army Achievement Medal from John D'Aniello, director of Engineering and Planning at the North Central Division in Chicago. The medal recognizes Meeder's work on the International Joint Commission (IJC) Reference Levels Study from May 1990 to November 1992. Meeder acted as coordinator for Working Committee 4, which prepared the methodology for a study of fluctuating water levels on the Great Lakes.

Hello

Construction-Operations Division

- Larry P. Albrightson, laborer
- Mary E. Braun, EPA assistant student trainee
- Mark L. Hillyer, lock and dam operator
- Neal L. Knutson, lock and dam operator
- Michael S. Ott, lock and dam operator
- Robert W. Serene, lock and dam operator
- Sven G. Telander, lock and dam operator
- Michael L. Werlein, lock and dam operator
- Bruce W. Young, lock and dam operator

Engineering Division

- Noeun Kol, civil engineering tech

EEO Office

- Demesha L. Tatum, clerk-typist

Resource Management Office

- Theodore B. Anderson, Jr. voucher examiner

Good-bye

Construction-Operations Division

- Ruth W. Danford, secretary
- Patricia A. Hogle, budget analyst
- Roger S. Stewart, lock and dam operator

Contracting Division

- Juliana D. Hernandez-Friske, contract specialist

Engineering Division

- Randal A. Hills, hydraulic engineer



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