



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

Vol. 17, No. 11

October 1994

Lock & Dam No. 4 control station completed Dedication and open house held at Alma to christen new facility



Lock & Dam No. 4 at Alma, Wis. held two events to mark completion of its new control station and the end of major maintenance. One was an open house on Sept. 3 in conjunction with Mark Twain Days. The second was the dedication on Sept. 7. The new control station (left) provides an improved view of the river and the lock chamber.



From his perch in the new control station, Robert Serene, a lock and dam operator, locks through a recreational craft. In 1992, Lock & Dam No. 4 locked through more than 13,300 recreational craft and nearly 1,300 commercial tows.



St. Paul District photos

Char Hauger, supervisory environmental protection specialist, and Dick Otto, area resource manager, pause to read the new plaque at the dedication on Sept. 7.

Corps retirees renew friendships at 19th reunion

On September 8 more than 80 Corps of Engineers retirees and current employees gathered in St. Paul for their 19th reunion. District Commander Col. James Scott gave a presentation to update retirees about significant events since their last gathering. Left to right are Lou Kowalski, deputy district engineer for programs and project management, and retirees Roger Fast and Pete Fisher.



Photos by Ken Gardner



Left to right are Bill Darling, Wes Walters and Walt Stadelman.



Above are Dale Lynch and Delores Sudeth.



Photo by Peter Verstegen

VSIP session aids planning

More than 30 district employees attended a session on the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP) on September 8 at the IRS training center in St. Paul. The VSIP seminar offered employees information and education on long-term retirement planning. Dave Parsons (at right), chief of Construction Branch, discusses a technical issue with Dave Darkow, a consultant and one of the panelists. Lynn Harris of Human Resources moderated the seminar. Other panelists included Liz Sackett, Human Resources; Betty Schultz from the Social Security and Greg Oberg of the IRS.

CODB initiatives in Con-Ops save \$86,000

"Our Cost of Doing Business (CODB) process improvements are becoming second nature for us," said Tom Oksness, chief of Natural Resources in Construction-Operations (CO).

Twelve evaluations of business processes have resulted in savings of \$86,000 for the past fiscal year.

Oksness has coordinated many of the CODB initiatives that percolated up throughout CO. "The program gives us an opportunity to document what our people are saving through process changes and to identify those successes," said Oksness.

Pre-stressing mitre gates

Working with Engineering and Planning Division, CO changed the method of pre-stressing mitre gates at the locks. This saved \$50,000.

Similar to the difference between a piece of typing paper and sturdy cardboard, pre-stressing makes a gate stiffer. "Pre-stressing helps make the gates more rigid as they move through the water, without adding weight to the gate. Changing pre-stressing methods saved time, work

and improved safety over previous methods," said Jerry Cohen, Design Branch.

More than \$9,500 in savings resulted from changes in contracting methods. CO went from an annual firm fixed price contract for dredging to a contract with an option to renew. Exercising the option saves re-procurement expenses.

Inspection program

Changes in the annual completed project inspection program have brought savings of \$20,000. "Those flood projects with a history of excellent maintenance don't need to be inspected every year. We can do those with less frequency and focus on the projects that need attention. This change frees our limited resources and allows us to concentrate on other work," said Oksness.

Automating modifications

Automating administrative modifications in construction contracting has saved \$5,800. "The primary cost savings were in eliminating multiple entries of the

same data," said Bruce Boldon, Construction Branch. "Putting administrative modifications on the LAN (local area network) gave the resident offices, and people in Contracting and in Resource Management, access to monthly reports. They can call up the file on their computer to see if mods are signed by the contracting officer and get the report on the monthly status of construction. Linking the modifications to the monthly reports helps everyone meet their budgets."

CO has also parlayed computer technology into CODB savings. The district's new computer network allowed CO to put O&M (Operation and Maintenance) budget spreadsheets on network servers for wide access. The change has improved project planning for key individuals in Engineering and Planning Division who now share the same cost data as CO on a more timely basis.

For the new fiscal year, CO has scheduled an additional 18 CODB evaluations. Oksness expects savings to more than double.

Federal-state partnering agreement improves mission execution, protects land and water

by Peter Verstegen
public affairs specialist

A unique partnering agreement between the St. Paul District and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is keeping projects on schedule and protecting land and water resources.

The Partnering Agreement between the district and the MPCA identifies the missions that each agency has in common and constructs a framework "to resolve issues to meet joint agency goals."

"The real benefit is setting up lines of communication between the two agencies," said the MPCA's Ken Haberman. "Through negotiation and discussion, we now have a better understanding of each organization's objectives and goals. And many are really very similar."

Haberman works as a supervisor in the Ground Water Solid Waste Division. He was a key player from the start.



Chuck Crist

"The agreement is working well," said Chuck Crist, chief of the district's Planning Branch.

Expediting a permit from MPCA

"Recently, we were able to expedite a certification from the MPCA for our work at Read's Landing — an O&M (Operations and Maintenance) project near Wabasha, Minn. Before, for such a complex issue, it would take us months to complete negotiations. This time, we assembled the key people and resolved ground water and wetland issues quickly. As a result, we were able to award the contract on time." Crist played a key role in formulating the agreement for the Corps.

Read's Landing is a dredge disposal project on the Mississippi River. The project pipes dredged material under the river from Wisconsin to a quarry near Wabasha. The City of Wabasha draws its groundwater from sources near the quarry. The project required that the district do an environmental assessment and develop a monitoring plan for MPCA approval before construction.

Process improvements

"A partnering agreement was important," said Crist, "because the MPCA was involved in projects involving contaminated material, permits, and no net-loss wetlands policies. Plus, we needed information in MPCA files."

Using techniques similar to Quality Process Management, individuals from the MPCA and the district set

out to improve the processes and structures that hindered the accomplishment of the missions they had in common.

In language as clear as the water in Minnesota's pristine northern lakes, the seven-page agreement outlines the purpose, goals, agency responsibilities, areas of agreement, problem resolution process and creates review procedures.

"The agreement was formulated with a lot of give and take," said Project Manager Deb Foley. "Each and every point was jointly written and negotiated. It took over two years to complete."

The MPCA and the district signed the agreement last April. In May, at a ceremony at the State Capitol, Partnership Minnesota recognized the agreement as an outstanding example of federal-state agency cooperation for the benefit of the public in Minnesota. (Partnership Minnesota fosters cooperative working relationships among federal, state and local government agencies for the benefit of quality service to the public.)

Five partnering goals

Five partnering goals provide the quick resolution of shared concerns:

- Improve interagency coordination for efficient accomplishment of agency missions.
- Promote a cooperative relationship

Partnering, continued on page 5

Chinese officials study Mississippi River Project

by Randy Urich, forester
Mississippi River Area Office

A delegation of government officials from a province in China recently visited the Mississippi River Project near La Crosse, Wis. The officials represented Conservation, Forestry and Agriculture agencies from Heilongjiang Province.

The purpose of the visit was to provide the officials an opportunity to view management and development practices on large floodplain rivers.

The officials oversee and coordinate the management activities of several provincial agencies in an area known as Sanjiang Plain, China's largest wetland. The Amur River, a major

watercourse running through that area, has many parallels with the Upper Mississippi River (UMR).

The visit included a briefing on UMR management, a visit to Lock and Dam No. 7, and a field tour of Pool 8 islands. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Biological Survey participated in the visit.

Partnering, continued from page 4

for achievement of mutual and beneficial goals.

- Encourage interagency data exchange to facilitate identification and remediation of contaminated sites and to identify and resolve ground water and surface water concerns by allowing COE access to MPCA data and allowing MPCA access to COE data.
- Provide for fair and equitable treatment of each agency's concerns involving or affected by a COE project.
- Create a more thorough understanding of each agency's functions, responsibilities and mission.

Contaminated soil

The partnering goals arose out an unexpected find of contaminated soil on Stage 1B3 of the Rochester Project and other projects in the early 90s. It was Foley who managed the project from which the agreement grew.



Deb Foley

"The district hadn't had to deal extensively with the MPCA on a civil works project up to that time," said Foley. "When we found the contaminated material, we ran into an awful lot of coordination problems."

Haberman said, "Our challenge was to deliver technical assistance to the Corps within the time frames they needed to keep their projects on schedule."

The state also billed the district for fees and other Clean Water Act costs. "We had no mechanism to pay for MPCA costs," said Foley. The

partnering agreement assigns local sponsors and contractors responsibility for such fees.

Bartering data

In the absence of a local sponsor or contractor, the two agencies more or less barter. "The MPCA keeps data on containment sites and water quality that is helpful to us," said Foley. "We had data on geotechnical borings, environmental studies, water quality analyses, and topographic data that's useful to the MPCA."

"Among other things, the district is providing the MPCA a list of our projects," said Crist. "We are giving the MPCA access to our project data at no cost, and we will use their Voluntary Investigation Cleanup (VIC) guidance to conduct our studies of contaminated projects. Overall, with the partnering agreement our working relationship has improved dramatically," concluded Crist.

Says Haberman, "The real benefit has been setting up specific contacts to help people through the system. People and their projects shouldn't get lost anymore."

District submits bid for ACOE honors

This time, the St. Paul District sits on the other side of a bid opening.

In a turnabout for a district accustomed to receiving contractor bids, the district sent in a 25-page bid of its own to win honors in the Army Communities of Excellence (ACOE) program.

Bid opening, so to speak, happened throughout September. That's when judges evaluated submissions sent in by the Engineer Districts and Army bases.

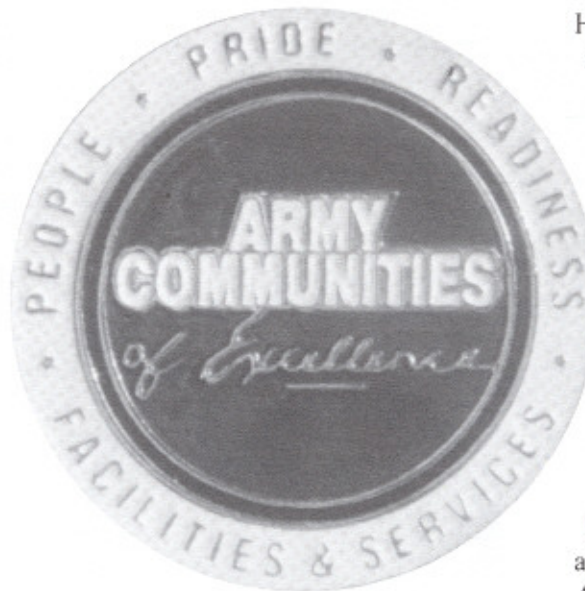
Judges visit in mid-October

Corps districts compete in a separate "Special Category." Judges rank submissions the first week of October and visit the finalists in mid-October.

Our submission begins with the Commander's Vision for Excellence. This is followed by a Fact Sheet and sections on Human Resource Services, Internal Organization Services and Processes, External Community Relations and Facilities and Environmental Enhancements.

The package was put together with the feedback provided by district employees. The district's 15-member ACOE committee forwarded the nomination package in mid-August.

Winning installations receive trophies and cash awards to further improve their work environment and enhance their ACOE programs. The installation, or district in the Corps' case, judged to have the best ACOE program receives \$80,000. Two



runners-up receive \$50,000 each, and three honorable mentions receive \$25,000 each.

ACOE's objective

ACOE's objective is to improve the quality of the working environment in the district. To promote the program, the Army holds an annual competition. This year's competition emphasizes servicing our internal customers—our employees.

The ACOE committee has facilitated improvements since April, when the committee had received over 30 suggestion forms from employees. The members acted upon these suggestions—building on many existing facility and service improvements already in place.

A few improvements

Here are just a few of the many improvements outlined in the district's bid: a bike rack in the garage; shelves on which to place documents while people use bathrooms; the consolidation of government vehicle parking; access for Unix workstations to CCMail; voicemail enhancements; and service improvements in Logistics Management.

How we are judged

Districts are judged on general awareness of the ACOE program, ACOE education and services and facilities guidelines. The program measures excellence in the processes, the programs and results. Key ingredients for services are customer service, a commitment to courtesy, and promptness of delivery.

Maj. Bill Waugh of the Chaska Resident Office heads up the district's ACOE initiative. Other members are: from Construction-Operations, Tim Bertschi in Fargo, John Bohler at Upper and Lower Saint Anthony Falls, Dave DePoint in Emergency Management, Jeffrey Kleinert at Pokegama, Shelly Shafer at Eau Galle, and Bob Stone of Lock and Dam No. 3; from Engineering and Planning Division, Brian Johnson, Marilyn Kruchten, Jim Mosner, Christine Schultz; from Information Management, Susan Quinn; from Human Resources, Linda Krueger; from Logistics Management, Olivia Vavreck; and Peter Versteegen in Public Affairs.

Bits and Pieces

Hello: August

Construction-Operations Division

Dennis H. Boardman, deckhand
Curtis Knospe, deckhand
Darrel D. LaFleur, laborer
Shawn M. Schneider, laborer
Randy L. Wheeler, laborer
Deanna Wick, office automation clerk

Good-bye

Construction-Operations Division

Brian P. Bigaouette, student trainee
Beverly J. Lewis, office automation clerk
Ray D. Maxson II, summer aid
Eric J. Payne, office automation clerk
Shane M. Stenzel, student trainee

Engineering and Planning Division

Steven A. Schmidt, student trainee
Lorine L. Williams, office automation clerk

Logistics Management

George A. Sigstad, transportation
assistant (retired)

Programs and Project Management Division

Patricia J. Banks, office automation clerk

Resource Management

Lorenell P. Higgins, office automation
clerk
Britannica L. Steele, office automation
clerk

Hello: September

Construction-Operations Division

Jeffrey J. Gunness, laborer
Tammy Jo Wick, office automation clerk

Engineering and Planning Division

Dale K. Paulson, drill rig operator

Human Resources Division

Keith M. McFarlin, employee relations
and development

Good-bye

Construction-Operations Division

Christopher A. Bloom, summer aid
Christinia J. Cherry, summer aid
Jason G. Cockman, summer aid
Brian B. Duffy, summer aid
Ruth M. Hageman (deceased),
environmental protection assistant
Brian M. Krause, summer aid
Richard J. Kujak, summer aid
Joshua L. Kuster, summer aid
Matthew K. Lange, summer aid
John L. Larsson, student trainee
Lucas P. Lettner, summer aid
Adrian J. Loewenhagen, summer aid
Chad D. Mahutga, summer aid
Ben W. Moe, summer aid
Gail L. Molnar, summer aid
Eric L. Palubicki, summer aid
Shane N. Ressie, summer aid
Jeremy N. Schuld, summer aid
Deanna Wick, office automation clerk
John F. Youngstrom, civil engineer
(retired)

Engineering and Planning Division

Stanley R. Kumpula, supervisory civil
engineer (retired)
Jeffrey S. Morris, regional economist

Information Management Office

Nichole M. Johnson, student trainee

DePoint receives Meritorious Service Medal

Fort Snelling—The St. Paul District's Dave DePoint, Emergency Management, was presented the Meritorious Service medal during ceremonies inactivating the 205th Infantry Brigade (Separate) (Light) Army Reserve unit.

DePoint has worked for the Army Corps of Engineers since 1981.

DePoint was the command sergeant major of the 205th. He was responsible for more than 2,800 enlisted soldiers serving in units throughout Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. DePoint spoke at the inactivation ceremonies held at Historic Fort Snelling on September 10 and also spoke at the 205th's Dining Out that evening at the Medina Ballroom.

The 205th was one of the largest Army Reserve infantry brigades with more than 3,500 soldiers prior to its inactivation. The 38 units of the 205th were inactivated due to the downsizing and restructuring of the U.S. military.

DePoint retired September 16 after 27 years of combined service in the active Army and Army Reserve. He enlisted in 1967 and served one tour in Vietnam. DePoint is a 1990 graduate of the Sergeants Major Academy and has received numerous awards in his military career.

He and his wife Beth have four children and live in Fridley.

**"We are the World"
Diversity Week
November 1-3**

Lunsford follows her dream to do mission work

by Peter Verstegen
public affairs specialist

Sally Lunsford is changing her risk profile.

"When I saw my Sunday school teacher from high school over a year ago, she reminded me of my dream to be a missionary," said Sally.

Now 55, Sally slowly swiveled back and forth in her secretary's chair in the Office of Counsel. Her quiet voice quivered ever so slightly as she spoke. Her computer screen glowed in the background.

Bringing caring and hope

On September 29, she left behind the blinking of her computer cursor for the blinking eyes of tiny human spirits peering up from the smelly, sunken iron cribs of a hospital in Tutova, Romania. Sally brings her gift of caring and hope to lift those spirits.

When the television program 20/20 ran a story on the harsh conditions of infants in Romania in 1993, it



Sally Lunsford

touched her deeply. "Coincidentally, the next day my daughter told me the East European Children's Fund was recruiting volunteers," said Sally. She volunteered. So began her calling.

For three weeks, in October 1993, Sally worked as a nurse's aide in Tutova, and then returned to her routine at the Corps of Engineers. Then, as now, co-workers gave her diapers, diaper pins, sleepers with feet and baby cream to use in Tutova.

Sally said, "For the past two to three years, I've felt I should be doing something more than taking care of myself and paying the bills. But initially, I didn't feel mission work was for me."

Sally again listened to her inner voice. It rekindled her life-long call to be a missionary. "Once I made the commitment, I knew in my heart that was all right."

She signed up for the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP). She braced herself to leave a secure job and home. She said, "I felt a moment of hesitation and my hand trembled when I signed and turned in my SF-52."

Lunsford left behind the security of her regular job with the St. Paul District, effective Sept. 16. She took with her a spiritual faith that's rooted in Baptist, Catholic and Methodist traditions. Her mission in Tutova will last six months. After a short break next spring, she plans to return to Romania for an indefinite period.

Reducing risk

"Every volunteer has to pay their own way," she said. "There's not a lot of risk in going and doing what God calls you to do. There's greater risk in doing what you're not called to do," she said. "It's hard to leave behind the things you're familiar with, but very exciting to go where God is leading you."

(To reach Sally Lunsford after September 29, write her c/o Silvia Antonescu, Bul. Lacul Tei 126-128, Bl. 17-18 Sc.D ET8 Ap. 158, Bucharest 2, Romania, Europe)



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents is an unofficial publication, authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81. It is published monthly by offset for the St. Paul District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Editorial views and opinions are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers, nor of the Department of the Army.

Crosscurrents

Address all inquiries to:

Editor, *Crosscurrents*
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Army Corps of Engineers Centre
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

District Engineer	COL James T. Scott
Public Affairs Officer	Kennon Gardner
Editor	Peter Verstegen
Assistant	Pamela Spann