



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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Art becomes concrete expression at Rochester



Photo by Russ Snyder

The concrete mural (above) was designed by Winona artist, Anne Scott Plummer and is part of Stage 2A of the Rochester Project. The wall depicts frontier images of covered wagons, bison, a

ceremonial pipe, the original Mayo building and other historic symbols of the Rochester area. District and city officials dedicated the project late in 1994.

Posthumous award to Damian Yerbich

The St. Paul District officially recognized and presented posthumous honors to the late Damian Yerbich.

He was an economist in the old Planning Division. He died in September 1993.

In a May 3 ceremony, his widow, Lisa Hedin, accepted the Corps' 1993 Planning Excellence Award on his behalf. Hedin is a civil engineer in Management and Evaluation Branch.

The ceremony took place in the Executive Conference Room. District Commander Col. James Scott presented the plaque.

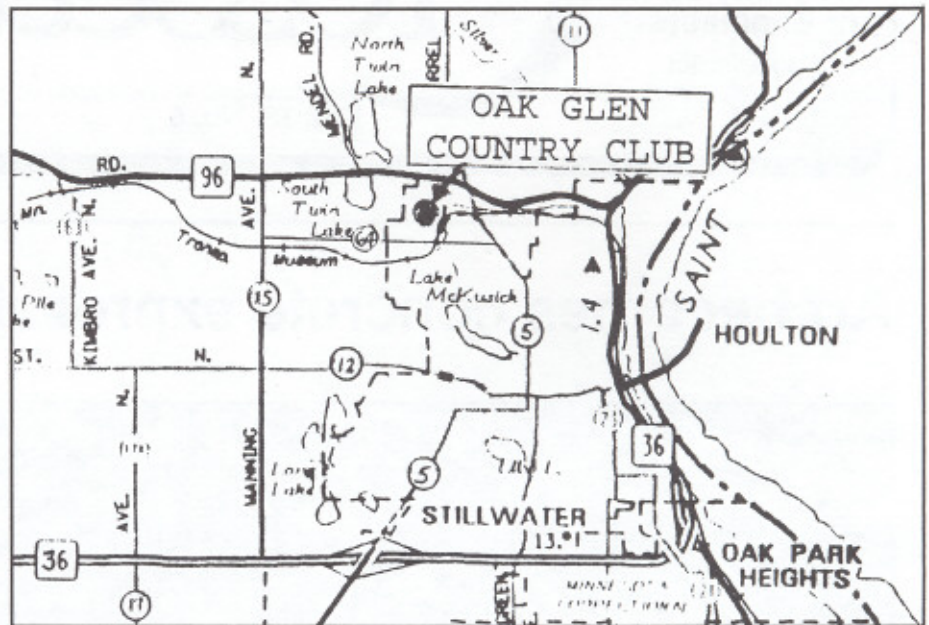
The award recognized Yerbich's foresight, leadership and diligence in applying risk assessment techniques in updating the design of the Flood Control project at Portage, Wis.

The awards said that the enduring significance of his contributions:

- Enriched partnerships in the Crookston, Minn., feasibility study;
- Enriched the Ortonville, Minn., Partners for Environmental Progress study;
- And supported innovative development of computerized applications to enhance the management of Corps programs.

Carol Esnough, Yerbich's sister, Hedin's parents, and a large crowd attended.

Driving from freeway to fairway

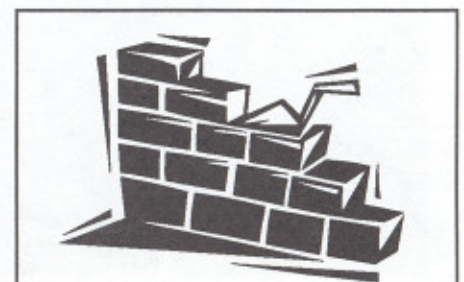


Oak Glen Country Club (map above) is the site to play golf during the organized activity portion of the Corps Day Awards Ceremony Picnic. To get there, take Highway 36 to Manning Ave. Go north on Manning 2.5 miles to County Road 64 and right on County Road 64 for 1.5 miles. Oak Glen Country Club is on the left side of County Road 64. Contact either Greg Eggers at 290-5607 or Terry Zien at 290-5714 to register and for additional information.

In addition to golf, the day offers organized activities in fishing, volleyball, and children's games. For information and to sign up for fishing, contact Tim Yager at 290-5277; for volleyball, contact Lisa Hedin at 290-5431; for children's games contact Myrna Jinks at 290-5583.

Food for thought

Food tickets for the awards ceremony are sold until June 16. The menu includes one-quarter barbecued chicken, hot dogs for children, potato salad and chips, beans, rolls, vegetable tray with dip, fresh fruit bowl with dip, and pop. If you plan to bring your own picnic food, you can purchase tickets for only \$2, with no charge for children under 12.



In Fiscal Year 1994, the St. Paul District awarded nearly \$38 million for construction contracts

Source: Contracting Division

Highlight June 22 for Corps Day Awards Ceremony Picnic

by Al Koniar, hydraulic engineer

Highlight Thursday, June 22, on your calendar to remind yourselves of the Corps Day Awards Ceremony at Lake Elmo Park Reserve. (Location map at right.)

There will be a drawing for prizes, so be sure you print your name on your ticket.

The price of admission (non-food) is \$2.

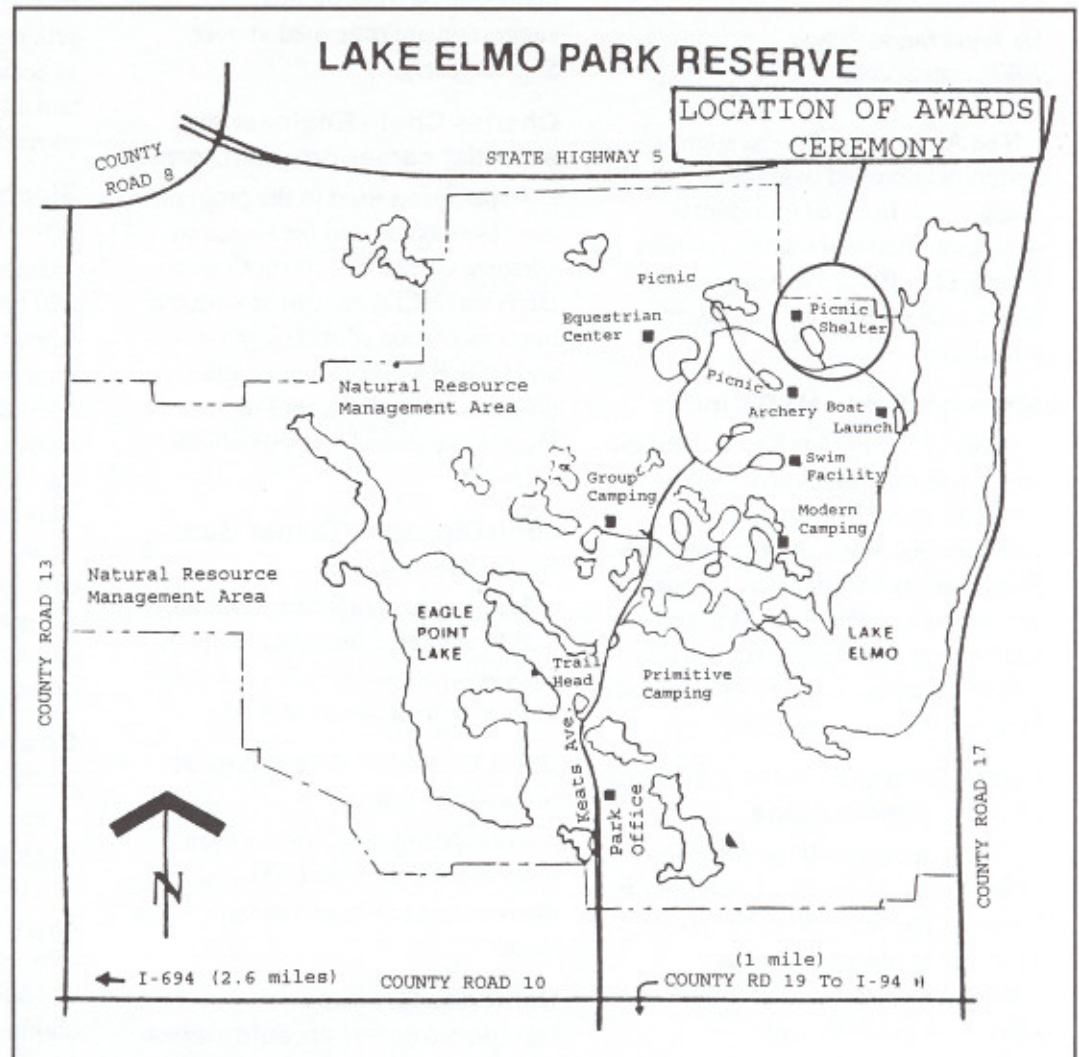
The price for admission with food is \$6 for ages 13 and above. For children under 12, the food ticket is \$2.

An added food option is being offered this year for buying an extra quarter-chicken. You may purchase an extra quarter-chicken with your meal ticket for an additional \$1.25 until June 16. No food tickets will be sold after June 16.

Retirees are reminded to contact Jan Graham at 290-5305 for information on the engineers awards day and picnic.

The vehicle permit is not included in the ticket price. There is a daily \$3 vehicle park permit fee (\$14 annual) to enter the Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Autos with annual park permits from Anoka, Carver, Hennepin and Washington Counties do not have to purchase a daily vehicle park permit.

Car pooling is recommended since parking may get a little crowded. The



Outlet Mall at the intersection of Highways 19 and I-94, could serve as a convenient park-and-pool location.

The Oak Glen Country Club in Stillwater, is where the golf tournament will be held. (See page 2 for details.)

Family activities includes horse shoes, hiking, children's games, balloon toss, three-legged race and volleyball.

If it is a warm day, you may want

to bring your children to the two-acre swimming pool. It has a sand bottom and a water-filtration system. There is a building with bathrooms, changing rooms and food stand located nearby.

Lake Elmo has a boat launch and a 104-foot fishing pier. The lake has a depth of 130 feet, and supports large mouth bass, bluegill, crappies, northern pike, and walleye. Contact Tim Yager at 290-5277 to register for the fishing contest.

Army Ideas for Excellence

29 over 40

by Anne Marie Scheie
AIEP coordinator

The Army Ideas for Excellence Program approved over 40 suggestions from 29 individuals during the first and second quarters Fiscal Year 1995. The suggester's name is listed with the suggester's permission.

Sherolyn Bahl - MSDS index

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for each hazardous material stored and used on sites will be put on a computerized index. Information can be found quickly for reference, indexed on the date of the MSDS so old material can be located and updated. This idea will be tested/evaluated for six months, then re-evaluated at that time.

Debra Bertrand - Safety mirrors at blind intersections

Safety mirrors will be placed at blind intersections where visibility is limited. The mirrors will improve visibility in obstructed areas, decreasing collisions and providing a safer work environment.

Terry Birkenstock - Network printers location map

A floor plan is being designed which will provide the network printer locations. Also, IM will publish guidance via cc:Mail on the use of the "CAPTURE" command, which allows the user to route printouts to different printers, eliminating much of the confusion, frustration and work-stoppage when area printers are down.

Bruce Carlson - Postal permit

A bulk mail permit will be

obtained and the mailroom will start bundling mail and applying reduced postage on all the district bulk mailings. Savings on this suggestion are estimated at over \$6,500 yearly.

Charles Crist - Engineer and scientist career program forms

Paper forms used in the program have been converted for access by personal computer. North Central Division (NCD) concurred with the implementation of this suggestion and HQUSACE automated the program, using Perform Pro, and recently upgraded it to FormFlow software.

John Dickson - Tainter Gate Staff Gauges

Tainter gate gauges and indicators will be mounted on top of the pier. This will protect them from damage and make them easier to read.

John Dickson - Recycling at locks and dams

A recycling program has been implemented at those locks and dams not currently served by a waste hauler.

Catherine Greguson - Development of an automated credit card log system

The credit card log system will be automated making all card purchases readily available to users, approving officials, Logistics Management (LM), Resource Management (RM), and Contracting Division (CT). The new log system will improve accuracy, diminish the time necessary for verification of charges, provide monetary savings and faster processing of the accounts.

Catherine Greguson - Utilizing the electronic invoice option

The district will begin receiving

VISA credit card invoices electronically instead of manually. This will save about two weeks in receiving documents, reduce processing time, provide more time to accurately review the documents, and additional time to insure prompt payment.

Stephen Harmon - Tainter gate remote power interlock

Installation of the contact blocks will provide a positive stop of the tainter gate machinery when the remote power interlock is de-energized, reducing the possibility of inadvertently moving a tainter gate to the fully raised or lowered position. This is an important safety improvement which will prevent loss of pool and serious scouring when the gate is fully raised, and possible damage to the gate on debris caught in the dam when lowering the gate.

Charles Hiam - Prevention of body fluid contamination

Presentation and adoption of this suggestion was one of the reasons Mr. Hiam was chosen as last year's Suggester of the Year. Recently this idea, which resulted in the purchase of CPR Assistance Kits to protect employees from the risk of hyperventilation and exposure to blood-borne pathogens during CPR, was also adopted for implementation at NCD. HQUSACE praised this suggestion as "an excellent choice for the St. Paul District" and commended Mr. Hiam.

Gary Hinderberger - Passenger loading gate on lockwall

At lock and dam sites with passenger access, a permanent, lockable gate will be installed into the hand railing, allowing safer transit from boat to lockwall. This could possibly avoid a serious accident and lower the liability

of the Corps in case of a boarding accident.

Brent Johnson - Copier enhancements

Permanent signs will be acquired to place on top of copiers when they require repair or maintenance. The sign will inform user when the repair person was called and approximate time copier will be available for use.

Brent Johnson - St. Paul District history plaque

A history of the Corps plaque will be created as part of the entry way exhibit the district plans for the entrance to the Corps of Engineers Centre. Display of this information will benefit those working for and visiting the district, enhancing pride and prestige.

Brent Johnson - Electronic HR newsletter

Most hard copies of the HR

Newsletter will now be eliminated and sent via cc:Mail. The this lower printing, paper and postage costs, decrease waste, and give employees the benefit of long-term electronic storage of data.

Kimberly Jones - Microfiche reimbursable agreements

All prior years reimbursable support agreements will be put on microfiche instead of retaining the

continued, next page

Army ideas and related programs cooperate to achieve common goal

Suggestions are up over last year

by Ann Marie Scheie
AIEP Coordinator

The past few months have brought some changes in the Army Ideas for Excellence (AIEP) Program.

Suggestions are up, and the AIEP is now linked to Total Army Quality (TAQ) and Army Communities of Excellence.

During the first half of fiscal year (FY)1995, the program processed twice as many suggestions as FY 94, with 55 percent being implemented or approved for adoption. The November Suggestion Campaign contributed to this success and suggestions continue to arrive in Resource Management weekly.

The changes have had a positive effect on the program and the success of suggesters and evaluators.

The goal each program shares is to implement business practices that reduce costs or provide better services for our customers, internally and externally. To help coordinate these efforts, the TAQ Coordinator,

Tom Heyerman, is now a member of the AIEP Review Committee and is part of the evaluation review process.

Also, strong management support has called district attention to the program.

"I look at the Suggestion Program as another avenue available for district members to introduce their good ideas about enhancing mission accomplishment," said Col. James Scott, district commander. "The TAQ program is a natural recipient of some of these ideas. With the additional resources available in a Process Action Team, some of the more detailed suggestions that cross division and office boundaries can be given a thorough review. We all benefit directly or indirectly by increased efficiencies in the system.

"The bottom line is that we should be looking for ways to encourage innovation by approving suggestions. Positive feedback to innovators encourages creativity not only through the suggestion program but in everyday work activities. Rarely will we lose anything by approving a suggestion, at least in part."

AIEP goals and objectives

1. Provide a formal channel for communications between management and personnel.
2. Provide an organized method for employees to submit constructive ideas.
3. Foster and maintain an atmosphere that invites participation, cooperation, imagination, creativity, and innovation.
4. Provide evaluation that is unbiased, consistent, prompt, and efficient.
5. Promptly and equitably recognize all persons who improve government operations through adopted suggestions.
6. Improve morale by providing an opportunity for employees to voluntarily take part in the management of the Army.
7. Provide management with insights into potential training needs and communications breakdowns, and identify areas needing improvement.

hard copies in notebooks. This will increase efficiency and decrease the amount of office and storage space needed as well as time needed for searching for documents.

Marcia McCloskey - Delrina FormFlow Eng Form 5055-R

Access to form 5055-R will be improved making it more user-friendly. Less time will be spent looking up the information for each field and lessen the frustration in filling out the form.

Mary Ann Miller - Double-sided copies

Signs will be placed at all copier locations by Information Management reminding users to make double-sided copies whenever possible to reduce paper use.

Mary Ann Miller - Conference rooms

A list of conference rooms in the district will be produced to include the location of the room, person who schedules and their phone number, size of the room, phone jacks in the room, and any other information to aid the users of the rooms. This will eliminate much of the confusion and frustration often accompanying conference room scheduling.

Mary Ann Miller - Telephone flip charts by office

Flip charts that are sorted by office will have a notation beside the name of the office's secretary. Callers will immediately recognize the secretary's name and avoid disturbing other employees to get information, schedule appointments, etc., minimizing confusion and office disturbances.

Mary Ann Miller - Conference room scheduling by phone

The telephone flip charts will now

show in a bold print the names of the persons to contact for scheduling conference rooms. This will save time tracking the scheduling personnel and let employees know where the conference rooms are located.

Delene Moser - Automatic shut-off on gas/fuel pumps

Automatic shut-offs will be installed on gas/fuel pumps to prohibit runover spills. This will make the pump areas safer, more efficient and environmentally sound.

Ron O'Brien - Electronic monitoring of headwater project offices

An electronic monitoring device has been installed in project offices for early detection of changes to room temperature, intrusion, fire and power outages. These devices automatically call personnel, allow them to get a report of current conditions, and eliminate the need for personnel to be on duty constantly.

Marvin Pedretti - Permanent divers' records of guidewalls and aprons

When the hydrographic survey crews are not able to complete the scour soundings above and below the dam, and along the guidewalls and aprons as they do if the flows permit, the lockmaster will ensure that divers walk the walls and aprons with a depth finder on the diving flat and record it on the guidewall plan, giving each site a permanent plan of their scour soundings.

Jan Pream - Abolish regulation and overtime and holiday service

This idea abolished a regulation which contained obsolete references, and at the same time provided

managers with the authority to manage overtime. This has resulted in savings in time, computer time, paper and file storage.

Jam Pream - Drivers licenses

Those employees who drive only government sedans, vans and pickup trucks will no longer be required to obtain a government drivers license. They will use their current, valid state drivers license. This will decrease the amount of paperwork required in LM and insure that valid licenses are in force at all times.

Jan Pream - Televisions in conference rooms

TVs and VCRs will be placed in conference rooms 4A and 4B, making these multipurpose rooms available for meetings, training and conferences. The new equipment also provides safety by eliminating the difficulty of using storage carts for portable TV/VCR setups.

Sue Robinson - 1099 preparation

RM issues a 1099 to vendors paid over \$600 in IRS-specified categories. Modifications and updates to trackings will be incorporated in the CHEERS and IATS programs to facilitate the use of automated 1099 programs. Estimated savings: 125 labor-hours yearly.

Amy Rothstein - Plant increment changes

A change in the procedures in which LM provides RM the list of PRIP items in the process of being advertised and excessed will stop depreciation, insurance and increment charges on these items in a timely manner, and insure that they are taken off property records as soon as they become excess to district

needs. This will save the district over \$23,000.00 per year.

Wayne Scheffel - Full screen Unix editor interface

IM will purchase "Migration Tools" from the CEAP-IA contract and install it for use by employees utilizing applications on the CD4360. This will make UNIX edits more "user friendly" and less time consuming for users.

Robert Silvagni - Relocation of lockers

For employees who often visit field sites, lockers will be placed in the basement of the district offices to store boots, soil samples, shovels, etc. This will partially eliminate the need to carry all the field gear into the offices, then back out again on the next field trip.

Rodney Schultz - Earlier water control

Gate movement orders will be modified by Engineering and Planning and Construction-Operations, so that orders get out by 8 a.m. on weekends and holidays, lock personnel will assume a "no gate change" order unless they have been contacted by Water Control by 8 a.m., and night shift lock personnel will not be called back to work for gate changes except in an emergency. These steps should eliminate between 7 and 26 hours overtime on each one-man-shift weekends and holidays during the non-navigation season (Dec 1 through Mar 15).

Rodney Schultz - Returning dam gates to the water after pulling them out due to high flows

Site visits will be instituted between Water Control and lock and dam employees, improving communications between office and

field personnel, giving each a greater appreciation of the work the other area performs and striving to eliminate problems before they arise.

Jim Stadelman - Alternate method of distributing travel checks

Employees will be contacted via voicemail to let them know they have a travel check waiting in Resource Management, instead of having it sent to them at their homes. This gives the employee the opportunity to receive their check in a more timely fashion and saves on postage. If check are not picked up the deadline, they will then be mailed.

Jim Stadelman - Locator directories for district office employees

Both the telephone flip chart and floor directory will be modified to clarify where each employee works. Employees will benefit from the ease with which personnel can be located, saving time, increasing efficiency, and eliminating the frustration of trying to locate employees who are visited frequently.

Frank Star - Severe weather notification

Employees will now be able to dial the district offices directly for a broadcast message to be placed on all mailboxes to find out if the offices have been closed due to severe weather. We will no longer be dependent on getting the message via radio or television transmission, and often not getting the message at all.

Diana Tschida - Training procedures for default

Implementation of this idea will make it possible to trace accumulated

re-procurement costs while they are occurring, avoiding after-the-fact records reviews, and eliminating the numerous man-hours involved in reconstructing records.

Robert Turk - Tainter valve brake release

A valve brake release handle will be installed for locks 2 through 6. This will improve safety if power to the tainter valves is temporarily disrupted during a lockage. The current machinery will be modified using drawings provided by Turk.

Harold Vedvik - Water-based paints

Oil-based paints used on the locks and dams will be replaced with water-based paints whenever possible. This will save on the disposal of hazardous waste, extend the use of paint brushes used, decrease the need for solvents for paint removal, and provide a less toxic environment for Lock & Dam personnel.

Dana Werner - Use cc:Mail for mass distributions of information

Use cc:Mail for selected mass distributions of mail instead of hard copies. An example is the job vacancy announcements now being distributed using this method.

In addition, the AIEP has three suggestions awaiting implementation, pending the written "go ahead" from the building management. Two suggestions are in a "test" mode. One suggestion is being studied as part of a process action team, and nine suggestions which evaluators in the district approved, but could not be implemented at this level, are at NCD or Headquarters for further evaluation.

ACOE committee asks: "So now what do we do with it?"

There were a lot of excellent suggestions

by Jim Mosner, ACOE coordinator

As many people in the district already know, we have been awarded a \$25,000 prize in the 1994 Army Communities of Excellence (ACOE) campaign. That was terrific news. But it didn't take long for reality to set in for the ACOE committee. The decision of how we--the personnel of the St. Paul District--can best utilize the award money to make our district an even more excellent place to work was needed.

The ACOE committee had previously solicited, through e-mail (electronic mail on the local area network), suggestions from district personnel on how the award money might be best utilized on behalf of the district's employees.

The suggestions were reviewed by various offices that have responsibility for the legality of the district's operations. The following suggestions were deemed acceptable for further consideration as possible ways to "invest" this award money.



- Offset the cost of the traditional summer Awards Picnic by hosting an ACOE Awards Picnic. Only a small token fee would be charged for attendees.
- Determine the per capita value of the award and distribute the money to each functional element, at the lowest supervisory level. These small employee groups could then decide on how to utilize the money to improve the excellence of functional areas.

The following ideas are possible ways to invest the money:

- Artwork or wall decor for common work spaces;

- Silk flowers or plants for work areas;
- Exercise equipment or radios for field sites.
- Let employees select one of the following items with district and ACOE logos:
 - Leather notepad attache;
 - Fitness/gym bags;
 - Apparel similar to apparel award items;
 - Souvenir coin or key ring.
- Buy voicemail compatible phones (with a light to indicate a message is waiting).
- To improve ease of access, change the district office access system to a "proximity detector" instead of the "pass card" system.
- Install background music systems in the hallways and break rooms.
- Purchase new tables and chairs for the break rooms.
- Purchase a self-help videotape collection for use by field sites and the district office. Tapes could be rotated through sites or sent to sites as requested.
- Purchase a satellite downlink system for improving access to training possibilities. Recordings of taped sessions can be made available to all field sites.

As can be seen from the list, there were a lot of excellent suggestions submitted. The ACOE committee appreciates all the thought and effort extended by so many people.

At the time of writing this article, the utilization of the award money wasn't finalized, but undoubtedly it will be well put to use in improving the quality of our work environment.

We hope we are fortunate enough to be in the same position next year.



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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