



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®

St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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## Minnesota engineers honor Rochester Project

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

"It was a huge project," said 3M's Steve Struss. "The coordination among the groups impressed me."

"The size of the project and the accompanying construction of the city hall-county courthouse building impressed me," said Charles Britzius, retired chairman of Twin City Testing Company, Inc.

Struss and Britzius were two judges in the "Seven Wonders of Engineering" competition, sponsored by the Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers (MSPE). The project they're talking about is the Corps' Rochester Project, one of the winners in this year's competition.

The award recognizes top engineering achievements. Judging criteria included the scope of the project, the project's uniqueness, engineering skills, significance to society and the quality of the presentation for the award.

"The Corps is honored that the MSPE selected the Rochester Project as one of its Seven Wonders," said St. Paul District Commander COL J.M. Wonsik. "Everyone who worked on the project did great. Our people worked closely with the local sponsor and others who were



Photo by Ferris Chamberlin

**The Rochester Project offers river access and picnic shelters in downtown Rochester. Above, on both sides of the stairs top soil and seed cover interlocking concrete blocks. The cover adds to the park-like appearance. The slope and blocks help protect against flooding while the stairs offer access to the river. From left are Judy DesHarnais, Engineering and Planning (PE); Randy Oswalt and Ed Perry from Waterways Experiment Station; Mark Meyers, PE; and Dean Peterson, project manager of the Mississippi River Project in Fountain City, Wis.**

stakeholders. The project succeeded in providing flood protection, recreation, and a great looking design. This helps enhance the quality of life there."

"The Rochester Flood Control Project provides an excellent model

of partnering," said Project Manager Deb Foley, "and how an emphasis on sustainable development can lead to the innovative integration of engineering, recreation, aesthetic design, sensitivity to the environment, and high quality and

*Rochester Project, cont. on page 3*

## Quality must become second nature throughout the district

by COL J.M. Wonsik  
St. Paul District Commander

The mindset that quality can improve our work and make us more competitive must become second nature throughout the St. Paul District.

You have all heard about "quality" in the workplace. You will undoubtedly hear more during the next months. The first process action team (PAT) reports have been presented and are helping us eliminate unproductive, unnecessary requirements and activities. Processes are being examined and improved. We are becoming more efficient and more productive.

We are now in our second round of process action teams.

PATs are being organized and trained. And for the first time, we have a team that will be looking at a field process — day-use fee collections. This is a good program. It's making the processes we work with each day more streamlined and more business like.

But remember, there is more to being a quality organization than having PATs look at four or five processes each year.

Quality must be part of everyone's job. As budgets continue to shrink, we need the efficiencies and productivity that come from being a quality organization.

Part of being a quality-oriented organization is the mindset of "building a better mouse trap" and of how we can eliminate expenses that don't contribute to our overall competitive position. The concept of a better mouse trap includes competitive, cost-effective

construction that satisfies customer needs; it also includes the efficient, customer-focused operation of navigation and recreation facilities.

You can be part of the quality effort in several ways. You could be part of a future process action team. You can suggest ways of improving the way we work by talking to your supervisor. You can also submit suggestions through the Army Ideas for Excellence Program or the Army Community of Excellence Committee. These programs are also part of the quality program.

Next, I'd like to talk to supervisors — especially first line supervisors. The topic is grievances and complaints.

Grievances and complaints are serious issues. They affect people. They cost the district time and money. And the conditions—real or perceived—that triggered the complaint adversely affect our productivity and efficiency.

Most complaints and grievances originate in the workplace.

And that is the best place to

resolve them. That is where first-line supervisors come in. Good communications and good supervision can resolve many irritants and small problems encountered on the job before they become big problems. First-line supervisors must actively seek to resolve problems at the earliest stage. It is better for the individual and the organization.

Additionally, we need to congratulate Deb Foley in Programs and Project Management. The Rochester Project was just named one of the "Seven Wonders of Engineering" for this year by the Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers. Deb has been project manager for most of the Rochester Project—another recognition of the quality job we do in St. Paul.

Last, but far from least, remember to drive safely on the frigid, slippery snow-bound roads here in the upper Midwest. Dress warmly. Allow extra time to arrive safely at your destination. A "quality process" is not just a work process. It applies to personal safety as well.

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## Life in the "freeze lane" requires safe driving

This winter's record-breaking cold and ice-covered roads have changed commuting patterns. Gone is a hurried life in the fast lane. Here and now is life in the freeze lane. The adverse weather demands that car and driver be prepared.

Here are a few helpful reminders to help you navigate safely to your destination.

Keep alert about road conditions. Listen to the broadcast media for the latest information about road

conditions before you leave. Once on the road, observe road surfaces for unsafe conditions.

Use your headlights. They will help you see through adverse weather and alert other drivers to your position.

Slow down. You'll have better control of the vehicle under slippery or unsafe conditions.

And before you leave, clear any snow from your windows, mirrors and hood so it won't blow back onto the windshield and obstruct your vision.

*Rochester Project, cont. from page 1*

cost-effective flood control in an urban area.”

Sustainable development is engineering and design that goes beyond the immediate engineering problem. “It addresses the environmental, social and economic needs of the future,” said Foley. The concept of sustainable development positively answers the MSPE’s “significance to society” criterion, which asks: “Does the project or product have a significant effect on the lives of people (safety, comfort, entertainment, convenience, quality of life)?”

The government complex, mentioned earlier by Britzius, is part of the sustainable development concept. The complex was constructed on recovered flood plain.

Construction on the Rochester Project started in September 1987. The project was completed in August 1995 and dedicated in September. Design innovations and competitive construction bids reduced the estimated cost from \$123 million to a final cost of \$97 million—a \$26 million savings. “Value engineering accounted for \$4 million of savings,” said Foley. “Teamwork and innovation accounted for \$11 million. Favorable construction bids accounted for the rest.”

From the start, the district partnered with the City of Rochester, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Olmsted County. Also, the district coordinated closely with state and other federal agencies.

Incorporating recreational trails and providing for a water feature are two examples of partnering with the city. A NRCS project of seven upstream impoundments to retard

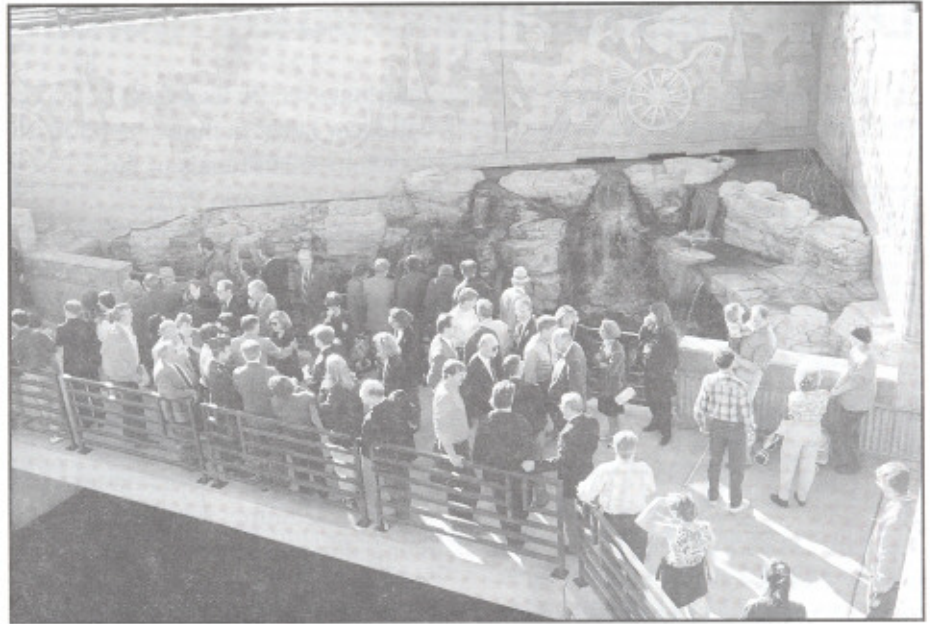


Photo by Russ Snyder

**The above water feature discharges warm water from the Mayo Clinic heating plant. It replaced a corrugated steel pipe and was part of Stage 2A. The mural above it depicts symbols meaningful in the history of Rochester.**

storm runoff in the upper watershed of the Zumbro River dovetailed with the Corps objective to provide flood protection with its Rochester Project.

The project incorporated innovations in its use of riprap, slope design, pedestrian access to the Zumbro River, recreational trails, and sensitivity to the environment. For example, top soil and sod were used to cover riprap. This reduced vandalism, softened the glare of the riprap and provided additional green space along the river for recreation. “In some park reaches, interlocking concrete blocks replaced riprap,” said Foley. “The block surfaces support turf growth and blend the slope protection into the park surroundings.”

Another innovation in use of riprap and geotextile fabric was a design that maintained the playability of fairways at Soldiers Field Golf Course while providing the hydraulic capacity needed for flood control.

Four holes of the course cross the Zumbro River channel. The design preserved play on the holes that cross the river.

The project is designed to integrate recreational features that offer safety, comfort, entertainment and convenience. These features include more than 6.5 miles of trails and underpasses that are handicapped-accessible and lighted at night. The project provides an urban link to Minnesota’s statewide trail system and offers recreational access to the river, pedestrian plazas, and picnic shelters.

This is the district’s fourth “Seven Wonders” award. The district received the award in 1984 for the Lock & Dam No. 1 Rehabilitation Project; in 1963 for the Upper Lock at St. Anthony Falls Project; and for the Bassett Creek Water Management Project.

The MSPE will recognize the district and its project at an Engineers Week Awards and Recognition Dinner in Minneapolis on February 23.

## District retiree honored by McKnight Foundation

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist



Gloeb

"Whenever there's a problem, we always call Leonard," said Mary Kasel, president of Minnesota Friends of the Orphans. Corps of Engineers retiree

Leonard Gloeb's calling as a problem solver was recently recognized by the McKnight Foundation. Gloeb was among 10 Minnesotans who were honored by the foundation for their volunteer work and human service contributions. Gloeb received \$7,500 from the foundation. He donated what was left after taxes to two of the groups he works with.

Gloeb, age 66, retired from the St. Paul District in 1985. He was chief of the old Automated Data Processing office, the district's computer operation. Since retiring, Gloeb has

contributed more than 6,000 volunteer hours in human services to the Minnesota Friends of the Orphans, the Como Park Conservatory, the Children's Health Care in St. Paul and to the Catholic Charities' Dorothy Day Center.

He has volunteered his knowledge as a master gardener for children in the hospital. Young hospital patients have benefited from his classes in gardening—called horticultural therapy. "Children feel a sense of ownership and pride when their plant grows well," he said. "They realize that plants are part of our environment and can be a friend."

Gloeb's first experience with gardening was when he helped his grandmother plant a "Victory Garden" during World War II. "My mother liked gardening, too. And the first thing I did when we moved to the cities in May 1960 was put in a garden," said Gloeb.

He volunteers as a gardener aid and answers questions once a month as a Ramsey County Master

Gardener at the Como Park Conservatory, St. Paul's botanical garden. "Leonard has volunteered for more than three years," said Jean Hammar, volunteer coordinator. "He concentrates his energy on the cactus and the succulents," said Hammar. "He's a great person. We really enjoy having him."

Also, Gloeb has set up a computer system and helped prepare tax forms at Minnesota Friends of the Orphans. "He set up the entire computer system," said Kasel, who nominated Gloeb for the McKnight award. "He has been a speaker for the organization. He has worked on fund raising. He has saved Friends thousands of dollars each year that goes directly to support orphans in four Third World countries."

He has prepared meals and washed dishes at the Dorothy Day Center in St. Paul. "God has always been good to me. When I retired, I said it's time to start paying back," Gloeb said.

The Virginia Binger McKnight awards were given out in December 1995 at an invitation-only ceremony.

## Gardner photo makes final round in *Soldiers*



The photo at left by Ken Gardner, chief of Public Affairs, was one of 30 photos chosen from among 2,000 for the "This is Our Army" photojournalism feature in *Soldiers* magazine. The magazine featured both color and black and white photos in its January 1996 issue. From June 12 to 18, 1995, Army and civilian photographers sought out and photographed those things the Army does each and every day. Gardner's photo was taken at Lock and Dam No. 7, La Crescent, Minn. It shows Lock Operator Rodney Berg reaching over the fence during a lockage to take a rope from a deckhand.

# Great ideas make for great accomplishments

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

Some great ideas made for great accomplishments in the St. Paul District in 1995. Participation in the district's suggestion program was up 166 percent compared to fiscal year 1994 and resulted in more than \$122,500 in tangible savings.

"Nearly 150 suggestions were submitted," said Ann Marie Scheie, Army Ideas for Excellence Program coordinator.



**Suggester of the Year  
Brent Johnson**

"The committee approved 74 suggestions and the average award was \$171. Three suggestions have gone on to be approved at the USACE level for all Corps-level implementation."

The following highlights the individuals who achieved recognition for their contributions to the program and to the Corps of Engineers. They are Evaluator of the Year, Mark Edlund; Suggestion Champion of the Year, Dave Haumersen; and Suggester of the Year, Brent Johnson.

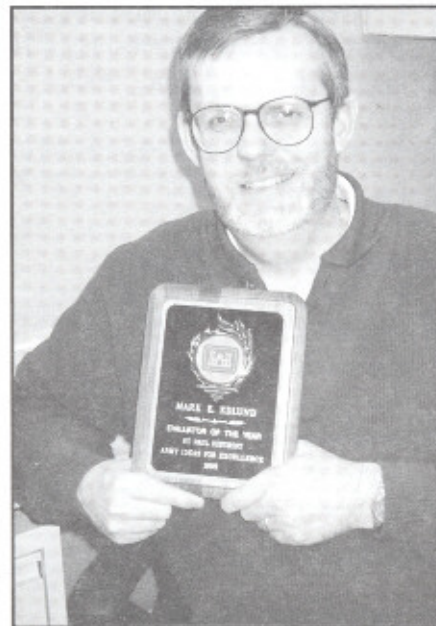
## Brent Johnson

When Brent Johnson of Programs Management Branch saw black and white, the result was an idea that saved the Corps an estimated \$82,000 each year. He suggested that budget status maps developed nationwide for congressional testimony use a black and white system of shading and cross-hatching instead of color. "The main reason for going to black and white/cross-hatching in producing maps is to reduce costs," said Johnson. "Besides, they fax more clearly and can be easily reproduced." Johnson earned \$3,100 for the idea. He submitted 19 high-quality ideas. Eight were approved for implementation and four were sent to Corps Headquarters. "I've had a lot of ideas in the works over the years," said

*Johnson, cont. on page 6*



**Suggestion Champion of the Year  
Dave Haumersen**



**Evaluator of the Year  
Mark Edlund**

## Dave Haumersen

Construction-Operations Chief Dave Haumersen received a new award in 1995 as the Suggestion Champion of the Year. The seven-member Army Ideas for Excellence Review Committee developed the recognition in 1995 to honor the supervisor who had demonstrated the

*Haumersen, cont. on page 6*

## Mark Edlund

"Mark has won the award several times," said Scheie. "He makes an all-out effort to be timely and thorough."

In achieving Evaluator of the Year, Edlund said, "I try to get the suggestions out so other people are aware of them. I want the guys in the field to feel they have a little say in

*Edlund, cont. on page 6*

*Johnson, cont. from page 5*

Johnson. "When the apparel awards came along, I decided to put them down on paper."

*Haumersen, cont. from page 5*

distinctive ability to stimulate participation in the suggestion program.

One of the many anonymous individuals who nominated Haumersen wrote that "No one in the district has given more support to the program, and especially to the people in Con-Ops ... He gives us time to work on our ideas and evaluations."

"It seems like with an organization this size that there are always things that can be done better," Haumersen said. "Good suggestions are all around us—we just need to listen and encourage our folks to follow through so that we all can benefit."

*Edlund, cont. from page 5*

what happens." Edlund, from Technical Support Branch, evaluated 19 suggestions with 30 days for an average turnaround time. High-quality, thorough evaluations are his trademark. Accuracy, completeness and savings calculations determine quality.

## Champion tree on Corps land

While working on Pool 10 near Bagley, Wis., last fall, forestry technicians Dan Oles and Loren Danson of the Mississippi River Project Natural Resources Section noticed an unusually large honey locust tree. The tree was located on Corps land and measured 12 feet 10 inches in circumference and 94 feet tall.

Oles and Danson sent a letter to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for nomination of the tree into the Wisconsin register of champion trees. Late in December 1995, Oles and Danson were notified that the tree was officially the new Wisconsin state champion honey locust.

As the owner of the property where the tree resides, the Corps received a state champion tree certificate which is on display at the La Crescent, Minn., office.



St. Paul District photo

"That's the biggest honey locust tree in Wisconsin!" said Dan Oles (left). "Loren Danson and I found it when we were out doing forestry field work." The tree is nearly 13 feet in circumference and is 94 feet tall. Oles and Danson work as forestry technicians out of the Corps' La Crescent, Minn., office.

## Spychalla returns to Pachia, Chile

Project Manager Bill Spychalla (at right) volunteered his construction skills for Operation Classroom for two weeks in November 1995 at the Kusayapu Agricultural Institute in Pachia, Chile. The project is sponsored by the Methodist Church. This is his second trip.

Spychalla was part of a team of five Minnesotans who assisted in the construction of a building designed to house two classrooms. Spychalla was the team leader for two high school seniors, a carpenter, and a retired school secretary.

Construction had been started two weeks prior to their arrival by workers on the site.

The two classrooms are for the 7th and 8th grades which are being added to the school curriculum in March 1996.



Photo courtesy Bill Spychalla

## Bits and Pieces

### AMEX training: "Don't leave home without it"

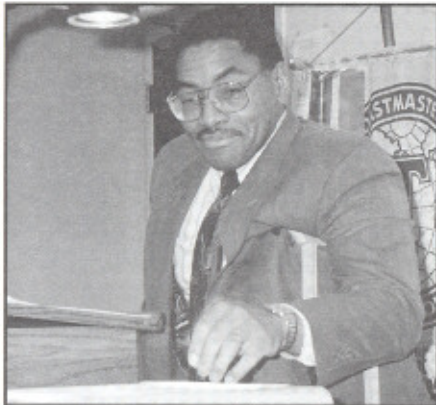


Photo by Peter Versteegen

**Russ Williams, chief of RM, gave his AMEX presentation at Heritage Toastmasters in January.**

"In a nutshell, the government-issued American Express card is to be used only for authorized travel," said Jim Gilbert, American Express (AMEX) program coordinator.

"AMEX had noticed many Department of Defense (DOD) employees using their government-issued AMEX cards for unauthorized purchases and cash advances," said Gilbert.

To remedy this, the Resource Management Office (RM) in January conducted "chain training" (a series of classes) for nearly 300 St. Paul District AMEX travel card holders. "This training was DOD driven," said Russ Williams, chief of RM. RM used a presentation prepared by DOD that described the authorized uses of the card.

To reach isolated field sites, RM provided a videotape of one of the training sessions held at the district office.

### Ryan selected as lockmaster

James Ryan has been selected as lockmaster at Lock & Dam No. 1 in Minneapolis. He replaces Joe Dvorak, who transferred as lockmaster to Lock & Dam No. 2 in Hastings. Ryan was previously head lock operator at Lock & Dam No. 1.

### La Crescent office moves

The district's Natural Resource Section Office in La Crescent, Minn. has moved. The new address is 1114 South Oak St., La Crescent, MN 55947.

### Loans, scholarships available from FEEA

The Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund (FEEA) is offering scholarships and loans to students for the 1996-97 school year.

Scholarships between \$300 and \$1600 per student are based on merit. The federal employee, as applicant or sponsor, must have three years of civilian federal service. Eligible applicants include graduating high school seniors and continuing college students with a 3.0 grade point average.

Scholarship selection criteria include academic achievement, community service, a recommendation, and an essay. The essay question is: "What is the federal government's single greatest responsibility to the public?"

Completed applications must be postmarked by May 31, 1996.

Low-interest loans are available to parents and students from Signet Bank at 1-800-955-0005.

In 1995, the FEEA awarded scholarships to students from two families in the St. Paul District: Nichole Lauer of Eau Galle, Wis. and Erin Rolbiecki of Trempealeau, Wis.

Federal and postal employee donations and contributions from Blue Cross-Blue Shield fund the program. An application form is available in the district library.

### In memoriam

**William Schultz**, a retiree who worked for the Corps for nearly 40 years, died on January 8, 1996. His daughter, Janet Baker, reports that her father "worked in the construction of many dams on the Mississippi River...on St. Paul Harbor, the South St. Paul flood control, the Ford Dam and finally, St. Anthony Falls Dam. He was always proud of his work and loved the Mississippi River. Both my parents were active and always attended the 'Old Timers' parties and reunions in the Twin Cities." Schultz was 85 years old.

**Harry Tillman** passed away on January 15, 1996. He retired in 1973 as head lock and dam operator from Lock & Dam No. 2, Hastings. He was 81 years old.

## Norton wins contest for "Best Buck"



Photo by Michael Sieve

Bruce Norton of the La Crosse, Wis., Field Office was the grand prize winner in the 1995-96 Best Buck Photo Contest sponsored by *Outdoor News*. Norton's winnings included a trophy whitetail deer hunt to Saskatchewan, a Browning rifle, and tree stand. *Outdoor News* featured the winning photo (above) on the cover of its January 12-21, 1996 issue. It was taken in September 1995 near Rushford, Minn. The buck has a green score of 176  $\frac{2}{8}$ .

## Dave Loss honored with planning award

The suggestion program (page 5) wasn't the only source of pride for the district in 1995. The successful Floodplain Management Assessment (FPMA) was submitted to Congress on time and on budget. Dave Loss, Management and Evaluation Branch, received the Planning Excellence Award from North Central Division this January for his leadership on the FPMA.

Loss and his multi-district team assessed the 1993 flooding of the Upper Mississippi and Lower Missouri Rivers and their tributaries. "The FPMA distinguishes itself from previous floodplain management documents by specifically quantifying ideas and represents a useful advancement in our understanding of the factors affecting floodplain management decision making," said John Zirschky, who was Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) at the time of the assessment. The whole FPMA team has been nominated for the Outstanding Planning Achievement Award.

## Governor inducts Kowalski into mythical navy



Photo by Peter Versteegen

### Lou Kowalski

In a ceremony at the 32nd Annual Convention of the North Dakota Water Users Association, the governor of North Dakota inducted Lou Kowalski into the North Dakota Mythical Navy with the rank of Commodore. In real life, Kowalski is the deputy district engineer for Project Management (DDPM) in the Corps' St. Paul District.

The governor commended Kowalski for his outstanding dedication and commitment to the development and management of North Dakota's water resources through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He cited Kowalski's leadership on the Souris River Flood Control Project, the Sheyenne River Flood Control Project and Devils Lake.

The award was presented in Fargo, N.D. in November 1995



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