



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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## CFC contributions balloon above goal

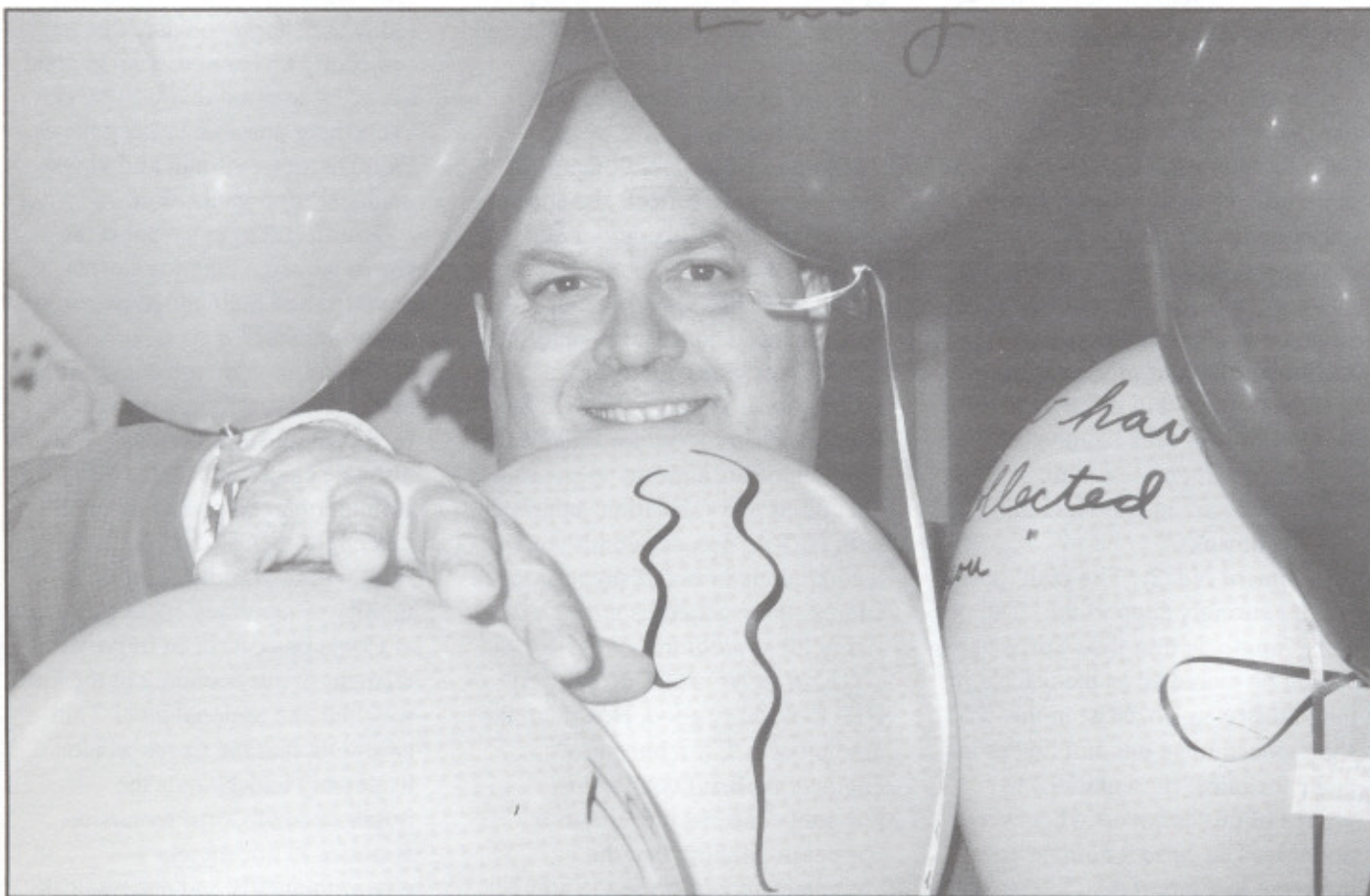


Photo by Peter Versteegen

Contributions in this year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) ballooned to more than \$31,000, exceeding the \$27,000 goal for the district. Each year, CFC offers federal employees an opportunity to give to charitable agencies of their choice through payroll deduction and cash contributions. Frank Star (above), CO-TS, delivered balloons Oct. 22-23 for the CFC Balloon Message Center. During this campaign,

balloon messages raised \$205.85. The sale of books donated by employees earned \$164, with unsold titles going to Goodwill Industries. The book sale was held on the skyway level in the Army Corps of Engineers Centre on Oct. 24. The bake sale, held Oct. 25 on the skyway, raised \$104.75. Through September and October, the candy sale earned \$975.39. The campaign began Oct. 15 and ended Oct. 31.

# Candid comments from the town hall meeting

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

On October 10, I talked to many district office employees at a town hall meeting. I hope those who missed the town hall meeting have had an opportunity to watch the videotape of that meeting.

Following the meeting, we received comments and questions from several district employees. I would like to share some of their comments and questions, along with my responses.

**Comment No. 1:** "If the Corps is to remain a viable part of our nation's future, we must become more efficient and competitive at providing quality services to our customers. Resource constraints are going to require us to review our structure and eliminate redundancies and streamline our processes. ... Failure to do so will drain the LIFE BLOOD of our organization, the young people with less time in service who are most vulnerable during cutbacks."

**Comment No. 2:** "The plan looks good. I strongly support the "Tell our story" angle on this. The Corps should be marketed as the leaders in the industry. ... To assist in this we should encourage our employees to make technical presentations to groups of professionals whenever possible. The current climate does not seem to support this."

**Comment No. 3:** "The Corps is the leading provider of water-based recreation in the Nation. ... Numerous studies have shown the importance the public (our ultimate customer) places on parks and open space in terms of quality of life, etc. In terms of 'hard' dollars, the Corps'

role in facilitating commerce was mentioned (in the Civil Works strategic plan). Yet, no mention was made of the over \$12 billion spent by visitors related to recreation visits to COE projects."

**Comment No. 4:** "Many impediments must be removed if we are to become competitive and efficient in providing work for others. We need to have the ability to consult with clients, prepare a scope of work and a time and cost estimate. We usually can't charge to technical indirect to do this. We are often thwarted or delayed by legal technicalities."

**Response:** The overall theme of these comments reflects the need to streamline Corps operations and change some policies and regulations. The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) provides the forum to achieve these changes. Here in St. Paul, the Army Ideas for Excellence Program offers a means to streamline operations and regulations consistent with GPRA. Please submit your recommendations and suggestions to address these concerns through the Army Ideas program.

**Question No. 1:** "The (district) FTE looks very good. However, the amount of A/E (architecture/engineering firm) contracting required concerns me. ... Am I correct in thinking that the contracting could cause the number of engineer FTEs to drop? Will more positions in Engineering Management offset this potential drop?"

**Response:** You have identified a real concern tied with the increased A/E contracting requirement. It will be a challenge to manage FTEs, our

people, in-house workload, and contracted workload to minimize the impacts of this new policy. As we contract out more, there is bound to be a slight decrease in design staffing. We hope to be able to handle this through attrition. With increased levels of A/E contracting, there might be a slight increase in FTEs in Engineering Management to manage contracts. But it will not be a one-to-one replacement. Please remember that our FTE position today is better than what we were projecting a year ago. That is good news. Be assured that we will do everything possible to keep the St. Paul District a vibrant and viable engineering organization.

**Question No. 2:** "What is the Corps strategic plan for Corps-operated and maintained recreational opportunities?"

**Response:** You are correct in your assessment that Corps recreation facilities are an important link to our ultimate customers — the American people. In fact, approximately 80 percent of the national population lives within 10 miles of a USACE facility. The money spent by visitors at Corps projects is an important element in our economy at the local, regional and national level. I am confident that the Corps' senior leadership understands the importance of Corps recreation facilities to our society — environmentally and economically. Please remember that a strategic plan is a broad-brush look at where an organization is going in the long-term. Mentioning every important Corps program would be difficult, if possible, in a strategic plan. Our job at division and district levels is to

*Comments, continued on page 4*

# Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to CEFMS we go

by Jim Mosner, Design Branch

The St. Paul district has gotten off to a strong start down the trail to the brave new world of CEFMS (Corps of Engineers Financial Management System). Since the last "Crosscurrents" article about CEFMS, a group of CEFMS teams has been formed to plan and to carry out

the conversion to the Corps' new financial management system. The CEFMS teams have goals to ensure an efficient and timely transition to the new system and to make the system as user-friendly as possible for the district's personnel. Here's an overview of the district's CEFMS teams.

## The team members

## Their objectives

### CEFMS Planning Group

Char Hauger, Jim Mosner and Gary Nelson

Develop the district's implementation plan and ensure timely execution of plan. Formulate post-implementation of action. Coordinate with HQUSACE, NCD, and other districts. Primary interface with the district front office and the specialized teams below.

### Business Process Team

Harold Taggatz, John Bailen, Randy Brunet, Deb Foley, Pat Johnson, Olivia Vavreck

Define the district's business processes that affect or are affected by CEFMS. Develop long-term business processes that optimize the use of CEFMS.

### Training Team

Linda Wiley, Dave DePoint, John Welch, Olivia Vavreck and all trainers

Develop a curriculum of specialized training modules. Develop a schedule of training sessions. Help develop a correlation of training needs for function positions. Prepare training facilities and equipment. Conduct training sessions.

### Data Base Team

John R. Johnson, Delores Aldinger, Liz Sackett, Marcia McCloskey, Paul Kosterman, Merrill Cotter, Wayne Scheffel, Kim Jones and Rick Rothbauer

Identify the data bases (DB) needed for CEFMS (such as COEMIS, REMIS, RFMIS, SAACONS, APPMS, ACPERS, and new data bases). Prepare current DB for conversion to CEFMS ("scrubbing"). Create new DBs for CEFMS environment. Provide for long-term maintenance and administration of DBs

### Conversion Team

Dave Koepsell, Randy Brunet, Amy Rothstein, Wayne Scheffel, Brent Johnson, Kim Jones and Ron Wolney

Develop a plan for converting the current data bases into the format required for CEFMS conversion. Execute the data base conversion during the "blackout period."

### Installation Team

Charles Sedgwick, Dale Brintnall, Jeff Bailey, Mary Chang, and Lance Caven

Develop a plan of action for installation and testing of CEFMS hardware, software, communication networks, and electronic signature equipment for training rooms and district-wide. Execute installation plan.

*Comments, cont. from page 2*

develop and implement supporting regional strategic plans and their business plans.

**Question No. 3:** "If HQ is so hot on work for others, why has our Sec. 22 program of water resources planning assistance to states ... been reduced to less than \$100k/yr — a pittance?"

**Response:** The St. Paul District has effectively used the Section 22 program for many years to serve our state customers. The Section 22 program has an annual Corps-wide cap of \$6 million. For many years we received significantly more than our pro rata share (about \$160,000) because some districts weren't active in the program. Now other districts are becoming active in the Section 22 program. The result is that our share of the total funds available has been shrinking. The good news is that WRDA 96 — the Water Resources Development Act which was just passed by Congress and signed by the president — increases the annual cap on the total program to \$10 million. This change is an indication that Congress and the administration recognize the benefits of this program. Only time will tell if actual appropriations for Section 22 will follow the increased authority. LTG Ballard is currently compiling an overarching USACE vision and strategic plan. It will be the central basic plan upon which all subordinate implementation plans (regional and district business plans) will be based. The division and district commanders have been deeply involved with the USACE plan.

These were all valid comments and good questions. I appreciate the effort these people made to submit their comments and questions. I encourage all employees to be aware, interested and involved with the important issues

## An ill wind shakes the Dredge Thompson

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

Under the midnight darkness of October 30, a Mississippi River mistral shook the Dredge William A. Thompson (WAT) and its crew down to their anchors.

By the time dawn crept over Lake Pepin, the cold wind had snapped 1.5 inch thick polyester lines, broke apart 10 pontoon barges, and sent dredging pipes to the muddy depths of the river.

"From midnight to 1800 hours on Oct. 30, a steady wind out of the west northwest blew between 40 and 50 miles per hour," said Dave Peck, pilot for the dredge.

The crew had just completed their early morning shift change. The dredging fleet was anchored at river mile 781.5 near Point No Point just off Frontenac, Minn. The dredge and its supporting equipment had left a project in St. Paul a day earlier and was downbound to Fountain City, Wis.

"The Mullen, the Thompson and Booster Barge 6157 had all been spudded down since 1700 hours on October 29," said Jim Maybach, plant engineer at Fountain City. Spuds function like anchors, "only they are more effective," he said. The

spuds on the dredge each weigh 15 tons and have a point on the end to anchor the boat to the bottom the river. They are used whenever the dredge and the boosters need a firm anchor to the bottom the river.

The pontoons that broke loose were part of the Booster Barge Mullen tow. The abrupt change of wind upended the pontoons in water 12-18 feet deep at river mile 781.5. Ten pontoon barges, holding piping linked together like an extra long garden hose, broke loose and drifted off in the lake. The pontoons hold the piping that carries slurry — a combination of sand and water pressurized by the Mullen — from the dredge to a disposal site. About a dozen dredging pipes sank. The pipes are 60 feet long and nearly two feet in diameter.

"They had been sitting in a calm while the wind was going above them on the top of a cliff," said Maybach. "Then the direction of the wind changed and came from the west northwest down the river valley."

Suddenly, the calm surface of Lake Pepin churned with five-foot waves. The wind snapped the steel cables and polyester lines holding the assembly together.

Two of the Corps' motor vessels, two barges and a crane based at Fountain City left a project at Minneiska, Minn., on Oct. 31 to recover the loose pontoon barges and pipes. They arrived at the scene that afternoon.

*Thompson, cont. on page 6*

facing the district and the Corps.

And speaking of involvement, my thanks to everyone who helped make CFC (Combined Federal Campaign) a

success and especially to Jan Pream who coordinated the CFC for the second year in a row. A super performance. Thanks!



Photo by Ken Gardner

## Small, disadvantaged and women-owned business win with district contracting

by Peter Verstegen, Public Affairs specialist

"We exceeded all our goals this year for small and disadvantaged businesses," said Patricia Johnson, (at left) chief of the Contracting Division. Carrie Felita (right), of the Small Business Administration, recognized the accomplishment on behalf of the Federal Executive Board in a presentation in the St. Paul District office this November.

The total obligation base line for fiscal year 1996 was \$32.8 million, of which \$25.9 million, or about 80 percent, went to small business.

The award recognizes the "outstanding buying activity of the Corps of Engineers, St. Paul," and Johnson for her leadership and "outstanding efforts in contracting with small and small disadvantaged business."

## District 'takes next step' with Elliott, Kunisawa

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

The St. Paul District "takes the next step" for Diversity Appreciation Week (DAW) 1996. The DAW theme was "The Next Step" and featured return engagements by two individuals who conducted thought-provoking presentations last year.

On Nov. 18, Jane Elliott presented "Eye of the Storm" in the Jerome Hill Theater (JHT) at First Trust in St. Paul.

When Elliott was an elementary school teacher in Iowa, she created the powerful "Brown Eyes-Blue Eyes" exercise to teach the lessons of discrimination to her students. Her challenging presentation received many outstanding evaluations last year.

Mark Nelson, chief of Real Estate Division, acted as master of ceremonies for the opening ceremony on Nov. 19. Nelson introduced Byron Kunisawa, who

returned to present the DAW keynote speech. Kunisawa, a nationally known consultant on diversity issues, presented "How Do We Get Started?" at the JHT.

The Courage Center Craft Fair and ethnic foods and music from COMPASS followed Kunisawa's presentation. These events were in the Great Hall next to the JHT.

Dorothy Nelms, a former federal employee from Washington, D.C., presented "You, Yourself and I" on November 20 in the JHT.

A panel discussion on gender communications, "Yes We Can," followed Nelms. Scheduled panelists were Ed Eaton, Judy DesHarnais, Doris Sullivan, Tom Raster, Georgia Stanonik, and Tom Sully. The discussion was in the Executive Conference Room.

DAW closed with the popular Diversity Food Taste and music by Son del Sur on Nov. 21 at the Towers of Galtier Plaza.

The taste grew from the program

objective to provide an aware and receptive environment conducive to a diverse work force.

"Everyone who contributed a food dish for six to eight people was given two tickets to the Diversity Food Taste," said Marianne Price, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) officer. "Those who did not wish to bring a food dish, but still wanted to participate, were able to purchase a \$5 ticket to attend," she said.

The EEO Office coordinated DAW. The annual program combines eight EEO special observances into one-week. The observances are:

- Martin Luther King's birthday;
- Black History Month;
- Women's History Month;
- Asian-Pacific Islander Month;
- Minnesota Heritage Month;
- National Disability Awareness Month;
- American Indian Month.

Thompson, cont. from page 4

"The pontoon barges that were part of the Mullen group contained 20 to 30 gallons of biodegradable oil as a rust preventative," said Dean Peterson, manager of the Mississippi River Project in Fountain City. "We lost only a few gallons from a couple of these units and that was recovered. The recovery crew exercised prudent caution in the righting of these barges to insure that they were not punctured," said Peterson.

The stiff wind blew unabated throughout the recovery. The commercial tow *Prairie Dawn*, pushing 15 barges with 22,500 cargo tons of fertilizer destined for St. Paul, sheltered the *Thompson* and the 6157 tow on Oct. 30 and 31. Another tow, the *Robin B. Ingram*, pulled alongside shortly after midnight, Nov. 1, and remained there until mid-morning.

"They sheltered the *WAT* and the 6157 tow," Peterson said. "Sustained winds in excess of 30 miles per hour out of the west-northwest continued through the morning. They stood by until the tow was assembled well enough to survive on its own."

The recovery of the Mullen pontoons took most of the day Nov. 1. By then, crews had located and tied up the stray barges in Lake Pepin. "The crew on *Launch 19* located the last missing pontoon barge on the Wisconsin side of the lake, a little below Maiden Rock," said Peterson.

The dredging fleet regrouped and resumed its journey late on Nov. 1 and arrived in Fountain City on Saturday, Nov. 2.

## Bits and Pieces

### Farewell

#### Construction-Operations Division

Phyllis A. Ammann, laborer  
 Jeffrey J. Bignell, laborer  
 Jamie R. Borowiak, laborer  
 Chad A. Brooks, laborer  
 Jerome E. Burke, laborer  
 Victor Callahan, welder  
 Wayne J. Carrels, park ranger  
 Larry A. Cedar, lock and dam operator  
 Clifford A. Doman, laborer  
 Delmar R. Ellingboe, laborer  
 Robert B. Flen, laborer  
 Terrance A. Fluekiger, lock and dam operator  
 Patrick A. Fritz, laborer  
 Andrea L. Geisert, park ranger  
 Roger W. Gilman, laborer  
 Lonnie M. Gulseth, surveying technician  
 Milton J. Hauptert, laborer  
 Paul W. Heil, laborer  
 James H. Henderson, laborer  
 Neil A. Henkenius, lock and dam operator  
 Donna R. Heyer, laborer  
 Terrance C. Hogan, laborer  
 Kenneth L. Hovell, lock and dam operator  
 Bruce R. Hudson, laborer  
 John M. Jacobson, Sr., lock and dam operator  
 Larry D. Johnson, lock and dam operator  
 Sten M. Johnson, laborer  
 Jeffrey A. Just, laborer  
 Roger A. Kaiser, laborer  
 Dawn M. Kaluza, student trainee  
 Laverne G. Keezer, laborer  
 Lewis L. Keith, welder  
 John C. Klein, laborer  
 Neal L. Knutson, lock and dam operator  
 Cheryl A. Larose, laborer  
 Raymond T. Larson, laborer

Steven K. Lechnir, lock and dam operator  
 Bryan H. Letourneau, laborer  
 Paul A. Manders, laborer  
 Shannon L. McGuine, laborer  
 Thomas P. Mikrut, lock and dam operator  
 Maryann Miller, secretary  
 Ilona M. Moen, laborer  
 Charles D. Mosholder, laborer  
 Michael A. Muehlberg, lock and dam operator  
 Randall J. Nichols, laborer  
 Gerald E. Orlikowski, laborer  
 Raymond S. Paananen, laborer  
 Randy L. Sackett, laborer  
 Juan J.R. Santos, laborer  
 Michael A. Savage, laborer  
 Rickey Scott, laborer  
 Allen D. Stahl, lock and dam equipment mechanic  
 Kenneth C. Stewart, lock and dam operator  
 Lucas W. Stinson, deckhand  
 Erik D. Tropple, laborer  
 Angela L. Hanson-Wall, laborer  
 Tony R. Weilandt, laborer  
 John M. Welch, lock and dam operator  
 Kim A. Wenger, welder  
 Darwin B. Wilson, laborer  
 Megan M. Zander, student trainee

#### Engineering and Planning

Virginia F. Davis, geologist

#### Human Resources

Mary F. Hendrickson, personnel management specialist

#### Information Management

Edmund G. Farnham, student trainee

#### Logistics Management Office

Glenn K. Hazley, supply clerk

#### Resource Management Office

Neil W. Pearson, accounting clerk

## DOD expands outreach on Gulf War Illness

The Department of Defense (DOD) announced October 22 that it will expand its outreach to notify by letter more than 20,000 Gulf War veterans who were within 50 kilometers (31 miles) of the Khamisiyah ammunition storage site anytime from March 4-15, 1991.

DOD is expanding the notification to:

- gather more information from troops who were at or near Khamisiyah to help piece together the events during the Khamisiyah munition demolitions (soldiers with information should call the Persian Gulf Incident Hotline at 1-800-472-6719), and

- inform veterans who are experiencing health problems that they believe are a result of service in Operation Desert Shield/Storm of their health care options:

- those eligible for health benefits through DOD are encouraged to call the Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program (CCEP) at 1-800-796-9699;

- those eligible for benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs are encouraged to call the Persian Gulf Help Line at 1-800-PGW-VETS.

## Army Communities of Excellence awards distributed

The Army Communities of Excellence (ACOE) awards are giving district employees some warm feelings lately. The past two months, Human Resources (HR) distributed more than 500 lined nylon ACOE jackets — the most popular award

item.

Permanent employees of the St. Paul District in fiscal year 1994 and still here now were eligible to receive the apparel awards.

"We used up all the \$25,000 ACOE award money," said Jim Mosner, ACOE coordinator. "We also gave people an opportunity to make personal orders of additional items," he said.

HR distributed more than 1,000 ACOE awards. The first order consisted of 928 items: 511 jackets, 186 attache bags, and 231 sports bags. The second order totaled 78 items: 34 jackets, 26 attaches, and 18 sports bags.

## Lon Earney races to the checkered flag

"The main results are at the checkered flag," said Lonnie J. Earney, a crane operator at the Service Base in Fountain City, Wis.

When he is not in the control seat lifting heavy loads with his crane, Earney has been seeing the checkered flag through the driver's seat of his race car. The racing season runs from May to September.

For that past 20 years, he has won a number of trophies in Minnesota and Wisconsin races with a conservative approach to his driving. A nine-year old car that he drove this season has been "totally re-worked twice," he said.

"Some drivers can be very successful by simply trying to go as fast as they can," Earney said. "They can also use up a lot of equipment. When others won't let up, I will back down. I figure I'll get a shot at them sooner or later."

"It's the competition and the people," that Earney said he finds challenging to the finish.

## Room for spares in bowling league

On Oct. 1, five teams from the St. Paul District started league bowling on Tuesday after work at the Maplewood Bowl. "We have about 30 people, altogether," said Liz Sackett, Human Resources. "But there is still opportunity to participate."

Participants came up with some whimsical names for their teams. The team captains and team names are:

Darrell Morey: "Muddy Waters;"

Liz Sackett: "Blind Chickens;"

Lynn Stebe: "The Pin Setters;"

Tim Grundhoffer: "The Gobblers;"

Bob Dempsey: "Dynasty."

If you are interested in participating, contact Sackett in Human Resources at 290-5493 or Morey in Design Branch at 290-5651. The games begin at 4:45 p.m. The cost is \$7 per night. The bowling season will continue through March.

## Hurricane Fran duty

Four people from the district served hurricane duty in October. Shelly Shafer, a park ranger at the Eau Galle Project in Spring Valley, Wis.; Marty Frawley, Real Estate Division; Joe Skupa, an engineer in Construction Branch; and Dave Salberg, a resource manager at Lake Traverse in Wheaton, Minn., worked recovery efforts out of the Raleigh, N.C. Disaster Office in the aftermath of Hurricane Fran.

## Stillwater Project controls erosion



Photo by Peter Versteegen

The district, the City of Stillwater and the contractor, Lametti & Sons, are working together to repair and reconstruct the levee wall in Lowell Park at Stillwater, Minn. The objective of the \$3.2 million project is to control erosion. The district manages the project under Section 363 of the 1992 Water Resources Development Act. Much of the construction is being done from work barges to minimize impact on the public. The district has worked closely with the contractor to limit the spread of zebra mussels at the project site. Left to right are Tom Crump, project manager, Joel Rogers, resident engineer, and CPT Kent Savre, project engineer. The project is scheduled for completion in 1997.

## Southview is site for Holiday Awards event

The St. Paul District Holiday Awards Ceremony will be held Friday, December 13, at the Southview Country Club, 239 E. Mendota Rd., West St. Paul.

Bill McCarthy, Real Estate Division, is coordinator for the ceremony.

Entertainment is from 11-noon and the lunch buffet is from noon to 1:30 p.m. The program begins at 1:30 p.m.

Tickets for buffet lunch are \$11.50 each. Non-meal tickets are \$3 each. Retirees may contact Jan Graham for tickets at 290-5305. Field personnel may contact Jan Pream at 290-5312.

Last year's ceremony was held at the Southview Country Club.

## Schimming drives 'Vikingmobile' at Bears game half-time

Bob Schimming, the maintenance worker at the Orwell Project in Fergus Falls, Minn., drove his Vikingmobile on the field for half-time festivities during the Vikings-Bears football game on Oct. 28.

Schimming is among nine owners of the converted former military ambulance, an old 1963 Pontiac Bonneville painted with the Viking's team colors and topped with a helmet.

The old ambulance continued its mission of goodwill last June when Schimming drove it on the "Ride for Life" to the Vikings training camp. This Viking's charity drive raises money for children's organizations throughout the Twin Cities.



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