



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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## NCD Division Commander visits district, recognizes safety record at Upper St. Anthony



Photo by Jon Lyman

North Central Division (NCD) Commander COL James Van Epps, third from left, visited Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam on Jan. 15 to recognize personnel for their outstanding safety record. Bob Stahl, former lockmaster for the combined Upper/Lower St. Anthony Falls Locks and Dams,

pointed out ongoing repairs of the bulkheads during his briefing of Van Epps. The district has spent more than \$500,000 in the three-year repair effort. From left are St. Paul District Commander COL Wonsik, Stahl, COL Van Epps, and Upper Area Lockmaster Ken Tschida. (More on page 3.)

*Division restructuring has St. Paul District reporting to new Mississippi Valley Division: page 2*

## St. Paul and Rock Island to join new division

by St. Paul District Public Affairs

St. Paul and Rock Island districts will be reporting to the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) under a new Corps of Engineers division structure. With the addition of the two new districts, the existing Lower Mississippi Valley Division is being renamed the Mississippi Valley Division. The addition of St. Paul and Rock Island is to enhance the integrity of the watershed management of the Mississippi River.

These and other highlights are part of a larger restructuring plan announced by Corps of Engineers Headquarters on Jan. 23. The revised plan is in response to Public Law 104-206, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 1996, which directs the Corps to reduce the number of its divisions.

Official news of the Corps' restructuring came in an NCD commanders' video conference at the close of business on Jan. 23. St. Paul District Commander COL J.M. Wonsik conveyed news about the plan in a Town Hall meeting with employees on Jan. 24 at 8 a.m. Wonsik met with employees on the Skyway level of the Army Corps of Engineers Centre.

"Implementation of this plan is scheduled to begin no earlier than April 1, 1997," said Wonsik. "There will be no restructuring actions taken before April 1. This includes any and all contact between affected organizations."

Wonsik said that Corps headquarters will issue implementing instructions on or about April 1. "At

that time, we will formulate our plans and coordinate the implementation," he said. The initial announcement did not provide a published end date for restructuring.

The following is a synopsis of the approved structure.

### North Central Division and Ohio River Division

North Central Division Headquarters and the three Great Lakes districts (Buffalo, Chicago and Detroit) will merge with the Ohio River Division (ORD). The new division will be named the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division. A deputy division engineer (Colonel), one SES (Senior Executive Service) and some staff will remain both in Chicago and Cincinnati. The division commander (general officer) will be located at either Chicago or Cincinnati (to be determined).

### North Pacific Division and Missouri River Division

Both will merge and become the Northwestern Division. A deputy division engineer, one SES and some staff will remain in Omaha and in Portland. The division engineer (general officer) will be located at either Portland or Omaha (to be determined).

### New England Division and North Atlantic Division

New England Division will become a district assigned to North Atlantic Division.

### Pacific Ocean Division (POD)

Pacific Ocean Division (POD)

remains and gains Alaska District.

### South Atlantic Division (SAD)

No change.

### Southwestern Division (SWD)

Albuquerque District is transferred to SPD.

### South Pacific Division (SPD)

Picks up Albuquerque District from SWD.

Eight USACE divisions emerge from restructuring. They are:

1. Pacific Ocean Division
2. Mississippi Valley Division
3. Great Lakes and Ohio River Division
4. North Atlantic Division
5. South Atlantic Division
6. Northwestern Division
7. Southwestern Division
8. South Pacific Division

## Notes from the Brown Bag

*Editor's note: The following is an edited version of COL Wonsik's remarks from the Jan. 9 Brown Bag Lunch with employees.*

### Potential for Spring Flooding

We've already received a winter's worth of snow. Devils Lake, North Dakota, has received 55 inches of snow. This is the average for the whole winter — already. The Twin Cities has already received 40-44 inches — another average. And it's only January. The good news is

*Brown Bag, cont. on page 6*

## EEO initiates Special Emphasis Program Committee

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

"An all-encompassing and truly interactive EEO Program begins with SEP," said Marianne Price, Equal Employment Opportunity program manager.

SEP stands for Special Emphasis Programs. The SEP objective is to address problems and concerns of the work force in achieving equal employment.

"It's going to take all of us working together to make this a true

equal opportunity workplace," said Price.

To support this goal, the EEO office is recruiting volunteers for the Special Emphasis Program Committee (SEPC).

"We are looking for representation among employees at all levels and occupations, including the field, to volunteer," said Price. "Posters will be going up throughout the district asking for names."

The SEPC is made up of four subcommittees:

- Ethnicity/Race;

- Gender Issues;
- Disability Employment;
- Diversity.

"The Gender Issues subcommittee is not limited to just women and gender issues specific to women," said Price. "We are looking for males."

The SEPC activities include workshops, seminars, and training that promote affirmative employment, inform employees how to advance their careers and the eradication of discrimination in the work place.

## Upper St. Anthony team wins with safety



Photo by Jon Lyman

Lockmasters Bob Stahl and Steve Lehart and the above personnel at Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam achieved a safety record of no lost time accidents since 1963. North Central Division Commander COL James Van Epps recognized this achievement with a Special Award for Sustained Safety Performance. From left are: Ken Tschida,

Upper Area lockmaster; Gerald Wood; Lenhart; COL Van Epps; Terry Schneider; Stahl; Gary Herbert; Hubert Letourneau; John Boller; David Nerva; John Mena; Jeffrey Anderson; James Crosby; Jan Janos; Tim Meers; Greg Yale; Dean Peterson, manager of the Mississippi River Project; Susie Reed and Richard Mattson.

# Happy campers, happy kids

by Lisa Robertson,  
student in Public  
Affairs

"The thing I liked most was the dam," wrote one fifth-grader after a field trip to Leech Lake Dam. The child's potential as a future-engineer was sparked after visiting the dam. "I made a dam out of legos; it doesn't look the same, though. I wish I could work at the dam. I like to see how things work."

Over the years, the district has received positive feedback regarding its recreation sites and the employees who help maintain them. The headwaters campgrounds hosted nearly 575,000 visitors in 1995. The visitors continue to praise the sites for being clean, well maintained, and competitively priced.

Visitors consist of two groups: day users and overnight campers. Both Corps rangers and campground hosts work together to generate positive word-of-mouth and repeat business from each group.

Campers who stayed overnight or longer wrote with appreciation for the "courteous and friendly" nature of the camp rangers. Campers praised rangers for offering fishing tips, getting them settled, and even helping with their car trouble. Although they were kept busy by their regular duties, they managed to take "a little time to visit, too," as one happy camper pointed out.

Oct. 8-1996

Dear MaryKay and Gregg,  
Thank you for taking  
care of my bee sting so good.  
My favorite part was playing  
with the Crayfish Very car-  
elly! Even though I got a  
bee sting it was fun. I also  
liked really liked the part  
when MaryKay took us  
to the Indian Burial.  
I hope you are there every  
year for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to  
come too!

Do you ever  
open all of the dam doors?

your friendly  
Amber Stinec  
P.S. Please send me  
an autographed picture and  
compass if possible

Employees at recreation sites are also kept busy arranging activity programs for young campers. "We try to keep the kids busy," said Bob Gossett, a ranger at Cross Lake. With a laugh, he added, "We try to give them something to do other than pester their mothers and fathers." To accomplish this, Cross Lake offers

fishing contests, crayfish hunts, and interpretative programs. Interpretive programs may deal with the campgrounds, recycling, boat safety and wildlife.

Similar programs are also offered to summer campers at Pokegama and Winnibigoshish. Programs may include guest speakers, movies, or lessons in tying knots. Of course, the types of programs vary from summer to summer. These programs rely heavily on the use of co-op

10-6-94

room for improvement. For their annual fishing contest, Reynolds said that he hoped to arrange a special presentation on trick casting by a fishing pro. Last year, over 135 children fished for prizes donated by a local sporting goods company. Every child registered in the contest took home a prize. Employees also gave out prizes for the biggest fish.

The top three winners in each age group won such prizes as fishing poles and reels.

Day users, such as teachers and students, who visited Corps facilities also

Happy campers, cont. on page 6

Dear Ranger Bob & Mary Kay,  
 Thank you for letting us  
 look around your Hull Lake  
 Recreation. I had a lot of fun  
 on the scavenger hunt. I hope  
 I can visit you again sometime.  
 Thank you for taking the day  
 off just to show us the park.  
 I think the park was very  
 beautiful and I wish my back  
 yard was as beautiful as your  
 park.

Sincerely,  
 Tiffany  
 Louger

Dear Ranger Bob, and Mary Kay,  
 Thank you for talking all morning and  
 all afternoon to give us the computer course.  
 That must of took a lot of preparing, all  
 but it was hard work to prepare computer  
 course color black and then have to prepare  
 to prepare the scavenger hunt, you had to  
 decide were the boundaries are, what we need  
 to get, how much of it we need to get.  
 Then after that you had to prepare your path  
 for the clown brain ground.

Thank You  
 Patricia



students.

Consequently, some recreation sites cannot offer as many interpretive programs as they would like. Jeff Kleinert, a manager at Pokegama agrees. "Wherever you find rangers, you'll pretty much find interpretation programs."

However, the number of programs a site can have, he adds, "does come down to staffing limitations and resource availability."

Leech Lake is currently using the resources it has to create more efficient and beneficial programs.

"Currently, we're working with the U.S. Forest Service out of Cass Lake to put together new interpretative programs," said David Reynolds, a ranger at Leech Lake.

Many programs, such as slide presentations, are being updated and geared to people of all ages. Even in their largest and most successful program, Leech Lake has found

*Brown Bag, cont. from p. 2*

that the frost depth of the soil in our district is not too deep. This spring has a great opportunity for long work weeks. There's a potential for flooding. And oh by the way, there's the introduction of CEFMS (Corps of Engineers Financial Management System).

### Emergency Management Support for the West Coast

The district has a call to assist in recovery efforts for flooding on the West Coast. We have 14 people from here ready to go. At the moment, they are in a holding pattern.

*Happy Campers, cont. from p. 5*

offered gratitude for the efforts of the rangers.

"At Gull Lake, for instance, we'll have six to 10 groups per year," said Gregg Struss, resource manager at Gull Lake recreation area.

"And each group can have from 40 to 100 kids," he added. During field trips, visitors may learn about Native American burial mounds, fire safety, how to use a compass, and of course, dam operations.

After one such field trip, many children sent drawings and letters thanking rangers for their new knowledge. Pleased with the



Poison Ivy

practical application of this new information, one child wrote, "Now I know what poison ivy looks like, so I won't get it at camp any more."

### Standardization of Computers

The South Atlantic Division (SAD) has standardized computer hardware and software throughout its division. The SAD approach has wide acceptance in USACE.

### Reducing Costs, Staying Competitive

With LTG Ballard, the Corps has a new chief. There is also a new deputy, a new head of Military Programs and a new director of Civil Works. We have a proven performer in the new chief. LTG Ballard is off to a good running start with the ASA (Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works). In November he talked to division commanders and two weeks later he met with district commanders. The chief has directed his team to work to see how to adapt business processes to the Corps. They are looking for ways to reduce costs. About half of the federal budget is entitlements. Of the other half, one third is defense, one third is discretionary and one third is debt service. The Civil Works Program budget is part of the discretionary spending.

Congress is looking for ways to get the deficit down. The Corps is looking for ways to reduce costs to stay competitive with reduced levels of discretionary spending.

### FTEs

The district has given back a couple of civil works FTE (full-time equivalents). We are looking at FTE very closely where we have vacancies. Our priority is to re-employ people in-house.

I don't see an immediate need for VERA or VSIP (Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary

Separation Incentive Program).

But for planning purposes, we expect to be surveying employees to gauge interest in VSIP and VERA. The '98 program is not looking too bad. We're just starting to fight that battle. The drive is for dollars, not FTE.

### Office Moves and Consolidation

We are still planning to consolidate space. We now occupy four floors. Sometime in 1998, it will be down to two and one-half floors.

### Corps Parking

The district and General Services Administration (GSA) are discussing some parking changes. One is parking the GSA fleet we use in another garage. The parking set up here in the basement garage presents some basic geometry problems. LM is also looking at dedicated parking.

## FWP sponsors session on retirement and estate planning

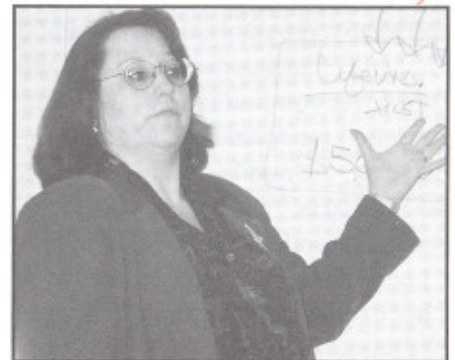


Photo by Peter Versteegen

The Federal Women's Program sponsored a lunch-hour session on retirement and estate planning. Patricia J. Miller, an attorney and wife of John Miller, Logistics Management, conducted the presentation on Jan. 22.

## Bits and Pieces

### More on 'Smart Cards'

by Lisa Robertson  
student in Public Affairs

The introduction of the new Corps of Engineers Financial Management System (CEFMS) and a key component, the "smart card," is scheduled for early May. The smart card is an electronic signature system that will eliminate hand-written signatures on hard copies of official documents and reduce the handling of paper.

"The majority of district employees will not need to have smart cards," said Jim Mosner (PE-D), a member of the CEFMS Planning Group. For many actions in CEFMS, such as originating documents and printing reports, only a valid login and permission authority is necessary, not a smart card. Mosner added that the cards "will only be needed by personnel who will be approving/certifying actions that they previously would have signed manually."

For those who will use the new signature system, the smart card will allow them to certify a document electronically, such as a travel order or requisition.

Employees will be issued a smart card, similar in size to an automatic teller (ATM) card. Users will insert the card into a card reader at their computer station, and enter their personal identification number (PIN.) An employee can only use the signature card if he or she has the PIN number and is that authorized user. Using another person's signature card and PIN is never allowed — the

government considers that fraud. A cryptographic adapter board, installed in the computer, will verify the PIN and certify that its user has electronically signed the document. The employee can then forward the "signed" document for approval via the CEFMS server.

Some documents will still require a manual signature and a paper copy to be filed. For example, travel vouchers will still need to be signed manually by the traveler and kept in a long-term file along with receipts.

Although the new system will not allow employees to completely escape keeping files, electronic signing is designed to significantly reduce the handling of paper and save time.

### NCD sponsors CEFMS workshop in St. Paul

North Central Division (NCD) is hosting a CEFMS workshop in St. Paul on Feb. 5-6. The training will facilitate the integration of REMIS (Real Estate Management Information System) with

CEFMS. The objective of the workshop is to give NCD, and district-level personnel in Information Management, Real Estate and Resource Management, the opportunity to discuss REMIS/CEFMS issues.

### Engineers Week begins Feb. 18

Engineers Week is the week of Feb. 17 to 21, and events begin in the St. Paul District on Feb. 18. Pete Fischer, the retired chief of Engineering Division, will speak. The Order of Engineer induction ceremony will be held after Fischer's remarks.

Members of the planning team for the event are John Blackstone, Engineering and Planning Division (PE); Jan Graham, (PE); Tom Eidson, Construction-Operations Division (CO); Bob Engelstad, (PE); and Mark Meyers, (PE).

Watch the in-house computer bulletin board for event location and details. For additional information, contact Graham at extension -5305.

### Savre promoted to Major



St. Paul District photo

Kelsey Savre, age 9, and her brother, Matthew, age 7, mount Gold Oak Leaf shoulder boards for MAJ Kent Savre. His wife, Mary, their parents and district employees attended his promotion on December 30.

## Two Corps signage programs managed here

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

Two St. Paul District employees are managing two separate but related sign programs for the Army Corps of Engineers.

Russ Snyder in Engineering and Planning Division, and Henrik Strandskov in Construction-Operations, are adding "Danger," "Caution," and "Warning" signs to the district's work.

This January, Henrik Strandskov, a former section chief in Regulatory



Strandskov

Branch, began a new job as the Corps' National Sign Program Manager. He will manage the district's responsibilities as the Corps' Mandatory Center of Expertise

(MCX) for the National Sign Standards Program.

His assignment follows the district's designation by Headquarters in October 1996 as the Corps-wide MCX for signs. After more than 19 years in the Regulatory Branch, Strandskov said that he was looking forward to this challenging new assignment.

"A good, consistent sign program throughout the Corps is important for safety, for helping people better enjoy recreational opportunities at Corps facilities, and for presenting a professional image of the Corps to the public," said Strandskov.

The Technical Support Branch of Construction-Operations (CO) is responsible for MCX functions.

Russ Snyder, Management and Evaluation Branch of Engineering and Planning Division (PE-M), is coordinating the separate but related engineering MCX.

"The Corps established an engineering MCX in June 1995 because a strong centralized design center was needed to support the Corps-wide effort to install the mandated safety-critical waterway signs," said Snyder.

"Since the MCX has been

established," Snyder said, "a Design Branch team led by Tim Grundhoffer, a structural engineer, has prepared new standard drawings for waterway signs. The new standards will make sign panels easier to fabricate and will reduce the Corps' sign procurement costs."

The new MCX will process requests for approval of additional signs that are not listed in the Corps of Engineers' Sign Standards Manual.

The National Sign Standards MCX will also coordinate with UNICOR (the federal prison industry), with the Waterway Signs MCX in PE-M, and with material suppliers and contractors.

Strandskov will also help the Corps' Sign Advisory Work Group develop and provide training for district and division sign program managers and other Corps staff. Other tasks are updating the existing manual and sign software.

The National Sign Standards Program creates a uniform appearance for all Corps Civil Works signs by establishing standards for color, message format, letter-style, and mounting procedures. The program also establishes time-frames for the implementation of uniform signage throughout the Corps. The first deadline is January 1, 2001, when all water safety signs must be in place. Districts have until 2006 to bring the rest of their waterways signage into compliance with the program.

As the sign program MCX, the district is responsible for technical and operational aspects of the program. Strandskov said that responsibility for policy decisions is being retained by the Natural Resources Management Branch in Headquarters.



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