

District holds 5th annual Engineers Week, page 3

ENGINEERS



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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## Training prepares district for CEFMS introduction

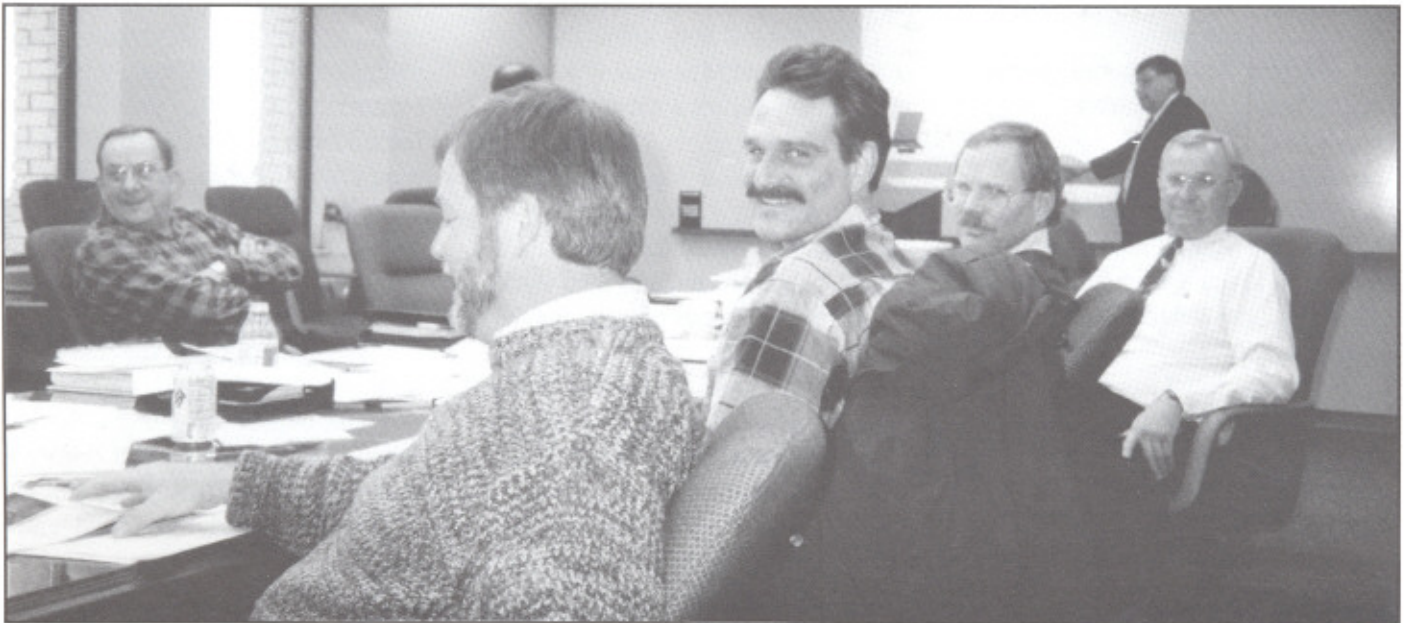


Photo by Peter Versteegen

Personnel from the field have been visiting the district office for a variety of CEFMS training classes. Through February, the district has held 20 classes in-house and five in the field. From left, above, are Ken Tschida, upper area lockmaster; Steve Odegaard from the Western Flood Control Project Office in Fargo, N.D., John Zahalka from

Leech Lake at Federal Dam, Minn.; Gregg Struss from Gull Lake at Brainerd, Minn.; and Jim Ruyak from the Mississippi Headwaters Project Office in Remer, Minn. Standing in the background is Harold Taggatz, assistant chief of Construction-Operations Division. The above session dealt with a "CEFMS tree" on how to allocate money.

# District prepares for potential spring flooding

by Ken Gardner  
Chief of Public Affairs

District personnel continue to prepare for possible spring flooding, despite some reduction in snowpack caused by the unseasonably warm temperatures in recent days.

Bob Post, chief of Engineering and Planning Division, said that the warm trend is helping somewhat to reduce the flood potential for later this spring. "However, there is still plenty of snowpack on the ground throughout much of the region. We still have March to get through. Historically, it's our heaviest snowfall month," he said.

With about a month to go before the spring melt begins, district flood engineers are:

- Meeting with state and federal agencies to discuss runoff conditions and emergency operations requirements; and
- Identifying potential problem areas in the Souris, Red River of the North, Rainy and Mississippi rivers. These are the district's four major drainage basins.

In a recent flood assessment meeting held in St. Paul, personnel from the field offices and the district office:

- Identified potential problem areas based on their personal experiences in past floods;
- Exchanged data on their meetings with city officials in the four-state area (Minn., N.D., Wis., Ia.) to discuss local flood preparations, local needs and Corps assistance;
- Reviewed Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

procedures. The district's EOC in St. Paul coordinates among the district office staff and teams working at various flooding locations. An emergency simulation exercise on March 13 will test EOC procedures, communications, emergency supplies and equipment including radios, pumps and sandbags.

The district maintains a supply of about one million sandbags for distribution to state and local governments for use in protecting public property.

The district is also developing lists of potential contractors who might be available to build emergency levees in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Iowa.

Congress has authorized the Corps to provide several types of assistance during a natural disaster like a flood:

- Technical advice. Before and during a flood, Corps flood engineers can provide technical assistance and advice to help local communities better prepare for flood conditions.
- Supplies and equipment. The Corps can provide sandbags and polyethylene sheeting to local governments on a reimbursable basis. The polyethylene sheeting is used to protect emergency levees against erosion by turbulent floodwaters. The Corps also has a supply of pumps to lend to local communities.
- Federal assistance. Once the governor of a state experiencing widespread flooding declares a state emergency and requests Federal assistance, the Corps can

become actively involved in flood-fight planning and execution. This often involves establishing one or more EOCs close to the flood to coordinate with local officials and to supervise the dozens of Corps flood engineers working throughout the flood area. Corps EOCs are often co-located with city or county disaster centers to make communications and coordination easier.

- Emergency levees. Federal law gives the Corps the authority to contract with local contractors to build emergency levees designed by the Corps.

- Health and safety actions. Following a natural disaster (like a flood), the Corps can take certain emergency actions immediately required to protect the health and safety of local residents. Activities authorized under this provision include emergency construction of temporary roads for emergency vehicles or emergency construction to restore potable water to a community immediately following a natural disaster.

- Water supplies. Federal law authorizes the Corps to assist local governments in providing temporary supplies of drinking water during a natural disaster. During the drought of 1988, the district provided water supplies to two communities in North Dakota (Edmore and Pembina) that ran out of water.

The Corps has also responded in the past to special situations concerning water supplies. In the 1970s, the district provided drinking water for Duluth and other north-shore communities affected by water contaminated with taconite tailings.

## 22 installed in 'Order of the Engineer' ceremony



Photo by Jon Lyman

The newest members in the Order of Engineer posed for their picture after remarks by Peter Fischer, retired chief of Engineering Division. Standing from left are Doug Crum, Fischer, Joe Skupa, Jim Sentz, Greg Eggers, Dan Reinartz, Tony Fares, Jerry Cohen, Wayne Koerner, Al Koniar and COL Wonsik. Seated are Terry Zien, Kent Pederson, Scott Goodfellow, Ferris Chamberlin, Chris Afdahl,

Ann Banitt, Michelle Schneider and Joel Face. Brian Johnson, pictured below, was also inducted. Each inductee received a stainless steel ring to symbolize the unity of engineering in its goal of benefiting society. All current employees except Skupa (Construction-Operations) are with Engineering and Planning Division.

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs Specialist

The St. Paul District recognized Engineers Week by inducting 22 engineers in the "Order of the Engineer" on Tuesday, February 18. Fifty attended the ceremony held in a conference room at nearby Galtier Plaza. The theme for Engineers Week was "Engineers make a world of difference."

"The 'Order of the Engineer' is a fellowship of engineers who are trained in science and technology and dedicated to the practice, teaching, or administration of their profession," said Bob Post, chief of Engineering and Planning Division (PE).

"The objectives of the Order of the Engineer are to uphold the



Photo by Jon Lyman

**Nathaniel Johnson, at five and one half months old, accompanied his father, Brian, to the Order of Engineer ceremony on Feb. 18.**

standards and dignity of the engineering profession, to advance engineering technology thereby and to realize that engineering's primary purpose involves the pursuit of its learned art in the spirit of a public purpose," said Post.

Peter Fischer, former Engineering Division chief for the district, spoke from personal experience on the importance of the engineering profession. He has worked as an engineer in both the private and public sectors and is recognized in the St. Paul District Hall of Fame.

Tom Eidson, Construction-Operations Division (CO), John Blackstone, Bob Engelstad, Jan Graham and Mark Meyers in Engineering and Planning Division (PE) coordinated the event.

## Lock operator's sideline leads to Russia

by Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

Terry Schneider, head lock and dam operator at Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, has a sideline that is playing a symbolic part in the collapse of communism and the rise of religion in Russia.

Schneider and his wife, Connie, have made a statue of the Virgin Mary that will be installed in the Shrine to our Lady of Fatima at St. Catherine the Great Church in St. Petersburg, Russia, later this year.

The statue they have made is the Immaculate Heart of Mary statue. "The statue is four-feet high," said Schneider. "It is made of fiber glass and weighs about 50 pounds. The statue has a hollow core. The design comes from a mold that makes a very realistic looking statue."

"I do the casting and Connie does the painting," said Schneider. He said that their son Shawn also helps with the painting.

"We've been making religious statues for more than 10 years," said Schneider. The Schneiders and their sons create their works of art under the trade name of Corpus Christi. "Terry was inspired by the Heart of Mary statue in his own parish," said his wife.

The history of the statue as a religious symbol dates to 1917 and the Russian Revolution.

Believers traced the vision of the Virgin Mary to the region of Cova de Iria, in Fatima, Portugal. There, in 1917, an apparition of the Virgin Mary occurred several times to three small children.

"The vision requested that the three children make reparation for the sins of the world and encourage others to do so in order to prevent the continual spread of evil in the world as evidenced by World War I and the Russian Revolution, then in progress," said Bernard Pedersen, Information Management (IM). Pedersen is also deacon in the Catholic Church.

"She prophesied the coming of World War II and urged the faithful to pray for peace and for the conversion of Russia from an atheistic society (communism) to a society that would foster the rise of religion in Russia once again," said Pedersen. "In the



Photo by Peter Verstegen

Terry Schneider, head lock operator at Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, worked with his wife and family to make the Heart of Mary statue (above right). The necklace with the globe at the bottom is a symbol for the world; the seven thorns that radiate from the heart are symbolic of the seven sorrows in Mary's life.

vision she opened her arms to reveal her heart and said: "In the end, my immaculate heart will triumph."

These sightings became popularly known as the Fatima vision. The statue with the open arms made by the Schneiders is the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

A priest and author from South Dakota, the Rev. Robert Fox, learned of the Schneiders' avocation and asked them to create a Fatima statue for a shrine in Russia. The priest was acting in a round about way on behalf of a Catholic archbishop in Russia.

The Schneiders made the statue last summer and expect it will go to St. Catherine's church in St. Petersburg the summer of 1997.

# St. Paul District overcomes obstacles, preserves historic riverfront through partnering

by Peter Versteegen  
Public Affairs specialist

"There were several problems which could have been fatal to the project," said Tom Eidson, quality assurance engineer, Construction-Operations (CO). "Minimizing project impacts such as high river elevations, preventing Zebra mussel infestation in the St. Croix River, and providing for minimal disruption of day-to-day activities in the business community were many of the challenges facing the project partnering team."

Eidson was talking about the first stage of the three-stage \$11.6 million project in downtown Stillwater, Minn. Stage one is primarily an erosion-control and retaining-wall project on the shores of the St. Croix River at the heart of the city. The district awarded a construction contract for stage one in June 1996.

The district's Stillwater Project is located on the scenic riverfront that is the focal point for the community and is a major tourist attraction for Minnesota and the Midwest. The city wanted to minimize the impact of construction on the downtown community, traffic, and visitors in the waterfront area and city park.

The district, the City of Stillwater, the city's architect-engineering (AE) consultant and the project contractor signed their "Partnering Charter" on July 25, 1996. The charter established the partnership with a mission of "a cooperative team committed to resolution, while constructing a

quality product, safely, on time and within budget...." The partnership provided a way to overcome problems that could have been fatal to the project.

The upper retaining wall, constructed through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the late 1930s, had been designated as historically significant by the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. Preserving and stabilizing the entire 1000-foot-long retaining wall would maintain the historical charm of the riverfront — an important community asset.

The district, its contractor, the architect and the city used an informal partnering process to develop a list of shared goals for the project. "The district offers contractors the option of a formal partnering process with professional facilitators," said Joel Rogers, resident engineer for the project, "or an informal process." The contractor, Lametti & Sons of Hugo, Minn., chose the informal process. This eliminated the expense of facilitators.

The partners dealt with three primary issues: preventing infestation of the St. Croix River by Zebra mussels; minimizing the impact of construction on the business and recreational community; and the sequencing of construction to take advantage of low river stages.

The Zebra mussel is an exotic species that overtakes native freshwater mussels such as the Higgins' Eye pearly mussel, an endangered species native to the St.

Croix River. The Corps and its contractor established an aggressive strategy to prevent Zebra mussel contamination from construction barges coming up the infested Mississippi River.

The project required the use of riprap to help support the retaining wall. The contractor transported the riprap on a barge from a port on the Mississippi River and delayed transport until mid-October when the chilly waters made it unlikely that the Zebra mussels would attach to the hulls. Through these cooperative efforts the partnership resolved an environmentally sensitive issue.

The contractor also agreed to a condensed construction schedule that would reduce disrupting the community. This change in sequence meant that work on stage one would be finished in spring 1997 instead of the original date of September 1997.

Parking in Stillwater, like in most cities, is important for commerce. The Stillwater Project impacted a major portion of public parking in the downtown community. The partnering team dealt with this with a plan to reduce the impact of construction on the parking available to the public. The contractor designed a smaller construction zone that took less of the city's parking lot area. In exchange, the city notified downtown businesses and managed traffic-related requirements.

The partners delayed the start of construction so that Lumberjack Days, an outdoor festival which

*Stillwater, cont. on page 7*

## 'Distance learning' opens new opportunities

by Julia Washenberger  
Real Estate Division

The topic was "Distance Learning." The session was under the heading of "Training." The conference was about the applications and benefits of assistive technology — the adaptation of computers for people with special needs.

The location was a hotel conference room in Washington, D.C., where I attended the "Assistive Technology Funding and Systems Change Project - Leadership Conference" from Jan. 21 to 26.

I went as a representative for the Star Program, an assistive technology program funded through the Department of Education. The program helps students with special needs reach their educational goals

through the use of assistive technology.

This particular session presented information about how distance learning and teleconferencing can be beneficial in society today for both people with physical/learning challenges and for those without.

What I found most interesting were the medical aspects of distance learning. A health care technician can take a photo of the inner ear, for example, which can be scanned and sent via the internet to another community miles away for immediate diagnosis by a medical specialist. People who do not have access to adequate medical treatment can especially benefit from this.

For individuals who cannot afford, or are not physically able to travel long distances, distance learning and teleconferencing can be

the best thing for them! If a conference is being held in Washington, D.C. and someone is not able to travel, they can participate via teleconferencing or distance learning.

Remote learning means that students can also have access to the best instructors, no matter where they live or what school they may attend.

I was very interested in this topic. I also had many concerns about it.

I have a learning challenge of concentrating on one thing at a time and "tuning out" distractions. For me "hands on" learning is more effective than just reading a text book. It helps to interact with someone about the objectives for a class and how to interpret the information I'm given. Distance learning for some highly technical classes would not work for me. But for others it may.

For business, distance learning can also be a very cost-effective tool. It can cut down on unnecessary travel for things that can be easily handled via teleconferencing. It saves money on travel and it would save on per diem costs also.

The conference was a great experience for me. I have learned so much that I am now applying to my daily life.

In my short week in Washington, D.C. I have learned a lot about myself and have set attainable goals for a successful and productive future!

*Editor's note: Julia Washenberger is an office automation clerk in Lands and Management Branch.*



Photo courtesy Julia Washenberger

Julia Washenberger (ar right), a student in Real Estate Division, attended a conference in Washington, D.C. to learn how computers can be adapted for people with special needs. Ron Reed (far left), the South Dakota Distance Learning Project, and Mike Schiffer, Assistive Technology Project of Alaska, were also delegates. The conference was from Jan. 21 to 26.

# Bits and Pieces

## Hello

### Construction-Operations

Charles G. Cox, master, Dredge Thompson

### Human Resources Division

Ronda M. Farrington, secretary  
Lupe Santos, employee development specialist  
Scott C. Schilling, personnel management specialist

### Resource Management Division

Emma M. Figueroa, accountant

### Information Management

Steven G. Grannes, supervisory computer specialist

### Engineering and Planning Division

Paul O. Johnson, surveying technician

## Farewell

### Construction-Operations Division

Daniel A. Eklund, general biologist  
Sheila M. Fiedler, office automation clerk  
Robert G. Radtke, tender operator

### Engineering and Planning Division

Barbara J. Duffy, student trainee  
Sonia M. Smith, biological aid

## Thanks from our neighbors



January 10, 1997

Mary Street,  
Corso, of Engineers  
190 5th St., E.  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Friends of Neighbors, Inc.:

Thank you for the gifts you provided to families in the Adopt-a-Family Holiday Program. The time you spent selecting, purchasing and delivering your gifts to Neighbors was greatly appreciated. If you were one of the sponsors with a tree watch, I am especially grateful to you for your assistance.

This year, thanks to the dedication and generosity of sponsors like yourself, the Adopt-a-Family program was able to provide Christmas assistance to 242 families.

I hope you found this way of sharing your love with others to be rewarding experience. Again, THANKS for your kindness and generosity!

Sincerely,

*Paul Spornovich*  
Paul Spornovich  
Adopt-A-Family Program Coordinator

PROVIDING "NEIGHBORLY ASSISTANCE"  
A Volunteer Agency Serving Northern Dakota County, Sponsored by United Way, Local Churches and The Community We Serve.

Dear Sponsor,  
Thank you for making our Christmas a happy one! The kids were so happy to see what Santa brought them - Without your help - under our tree would have been bare. Thank you for making our Christmas a special one!

Love  
#697

Employees in the St. Paul District received "thank you" letters from families that they helped during the holiday season in December 1996. Human Resources and Programs and Project Management and Bill Vennemann from Real Estate provided gifts and food certificates to the Adopt-a-Family Program through the nonprofit Neighbors, Inc.

*Stillwater, cont. from page 5*  
commemorates the community's heritage, could be held as planned. Lumberjack Days went on as scheduled in July. The project would not disrupt festival parking.

Changing the sequence of work also allowed for construction during low-river elevations during the fall and winter. The partners rescheduled construction activities that were most susceptible to flooding by high water during spring. This change in the sequence and the design of a cost-saving cofferdam to protect the project from spring flooding took advantage of the low-river elevations.

High spring water levels would then have no impact on completed construction activities.

The current success of the Stillwater Project is largely attributable to the cooperative efforts of the partnering team. The partnership reduced the adverse impact on the community, addressed environmental concerns and preserved the historic structure of the retaining wall. Meanwhile, a treasured resource, Stillwater's St. Croix River waterfront, is being refurbished for the public to enjoy and to provide protection from floods and from erosion in the years ahead.

## Profile in Fitness

*Editor's note: The following is a narrative from John Baures, a small craft operator with the Waterways Unit in Fountain City, Wis., that describes his recovery from a heart attack in 1993.*

by John Baures

In June 1993 I had a heart attack which resulted in heart surgery. The heart attack was one of the worst things and one of the best things to happen to me. Let me explain.

Before my heart attack, I smoked between one and two packs of cigarettes a day. I ate bacon and eggs for breakfast. A Snickers brand candy bar was lunch. Steak and fries were dinner. My exercise program consisted of going golfing.

After my heart attack, my doctor told me that if I wanted to be dead in six months, I could continue my lifestyle.

My doctor also informed me that I could reverse my heart disease and lead a better, more productive life. Before I was released from the hospital, I consulted with a nutritionist and cardiac

rehabilitation specialist. They taught me about new diets and how to start an exercise program.

I learned about low-fat, low-sodium diets. (More about that in a minute.)

Upon discharge from the hospital, I bought a top-of-the line treadmill and began walking two miles a day. Weather permitting, I walked outside. In the spring of 1994, I invested in a good cross-training bike and in the summer of 1995, I bought in-line skates. All these added flexibility to my exercise program. When I'm out of town and the weather is bad, I look for motels that have exercise facilities that help me maintain my program.

My goal is to maintain a regular exercise program and healthy lifestyle. My biggest goal is to continue to exercise each and every day, whether I'm at home or out of town.

Stress tests are showing that my heart is continuing to improve. My low-fat, low-sodium diet includes a lot of chicken. I've told my friends many times over that I eat so much chicken now I should grow feathers!

## CEFMS update

"The work effort is heating up," said Gary Nelson, a member of the CEFMS (Corps of Engineers Financial Management System) Planning Group. "Each team has schedules to meet to make sure everything is ready for conversion from COEMIS (Corps of Engineers Management Information System) to CEFMS the first week of May."

Here's an overview of what the CEFMS teams are doing.

— The Business Process Team has developed and is testing changes in business processes. The team has also developed business process guidance and developed templates for use by originators of purchase requests and commitments (PR&Cs).

— The Data Base Team has worked on the production data base and is busy supporting trainers and timekeepers.

— The Conversion Team has completed reconciliation of accounts payable records with COEMIS, and accomplished other significant benchmarks.

— The Installation Team is working on issues related to "smart card" readers in the field and the district.

— The Training Team has completed and distributed training schedules, started training in the district office and the field, and is addressing other short- and long-term issues. Through February, 200 people have attended classes in St. Paul and 57 have attended classes in the field.

CEFMS is a huge relational database that integrates every system related to financial matters. It is designed to give accurate and timely data to program and project managers.



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