



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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**Strategic Vision: *Serve the Army***

## District 'camps out' at Ft. Snelling military expo



Defense agencies in Minnesota hosted the Military Exposition on July 31 and August 1 on the grounds of the 88th Regional Support Command (above), the Air Force Reserve and at Fort Snelling. See military expo, back page.



Photos by Peter Verstegen

Strategic Vision: *Reshape Culture*

# COMMAND / WORK PHILOSOPHY

By Col. Kenneth Kasprisin  
St. Paul District Commander

This article is intended to communicate to you my fundamental command and work related philosophy.



It is relatively simple:

**Have fun, work hard, play hard; take the job seriously, don't take yourself too seriously; reward those who put forth the effort and do well, eliminate those who don't try and those who repetitively perform poorly.**

In essence, I expect everyone in the organization to know (learn) their job, do their job, and take responsibility for how well they perform individually. I also expect all to take active ownership of how well the organization performs collectively two levels above and two levels below their current position. The District TEAM cannot operate effectively if we have individual agendas being pursued or "resistance" to higher order mandates.

Everyone in the District is part of a team – several teams to be more exact. You may be a member of a Project Management Team, an Operations Project Team, a Program Team, a District specific "system" team (such as PBAC, Training, Maintenance, Parts, etc.), and the ARMY team concurrently. **BOTTOM LINE:** If you don't feel a sense of 'belonging' to several teams, you're probably not exercising much initiative nor asking many questions. It also means we have Team Leaders not fully exercising their responsibilities.

Some rules for success:

- Become a part of the team.
- Participate in all they do.
- Establish clear, identifiable, and measurable standards for everything you do. These are a must:
  - HAVE STANDARDS FOR EVERY TASK;
  - STANDARDS ARE KNOWN AND

UNDERSTOOD BY ALL;

- STANDARDS ARE ENFORCED;
- THERE ARE NO DOUBLE STANDARDS.

Don't pick and choose. You must buy into all team rules and protocols!

Other items:

**PROPERTY:** I hold supervisors responsible and accountable for all property. In general (under the rule of Simple Negligence), if you lose it, neglect it, or break it – you buy it. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring Reports of Survey are completed accurately and on time.

**SAFETY = COMMON SENSE:** Every employee in the District is a Safety Officer. We all shoulder this responsibility. Accordingly, I expect everyone to actively eliminate all unsafe acts.

**LEADERSHIP:** Be positive. Treat everyone with dignity and respect. The legacy we (leaders) leave behind is the quality of the junior leaders we help develop. Take charge – enforce standards.

**RISK TAKING:** Be innovative. Don't be afraid to try something new but ensure it is well-planned and thoroughly brainstormed.

**COMMUNICATIONS/**

**FEEDBACK:** Don't tell me what you think I want to hear – disagreement is not disrespect. Be open, honest and professional in all we do. If you present a

**“The District TEAM cannot operate effectively if we have individual agendas...”**

problem, give me your recommendation for a solution. This doesn't imply whining and grumbling are acceptable communications. Once decisions are made, we all have an obligation to actively support them – regardless of our personal feelings!

**REWARD** in a timely manner. Recommend deserving employees for appropriate awards.

Always stop and thank those doing a good job – ensure they know you appreciate them.

**PUNISH** when appropriate. Don't accept substandard performance or behavior. Let folks know when they haven't measured up – they know when they are "getting over" (Army slang for substandard attitudes and performance) on you.

"Philosophy" cont. on page 7

Strategic Vision: *Reshape Culture***Diversity training 'enables' St. Paul District**

Photo by Peter Verstegen

**Steven Adamski, deputy district counsel, greets Maj. Charles Horwitz from Contracting Division at the FACETS conference held in St. Paul on August 3. Adamski and Barbara O'Keefe, a professor of occupational therapy at the College of St. Catherine, taught two break-out sessions titled "Healthy Today, Disabled Tomorrow." Nearly 70 federal employees attended their workshops.**

By Peter Verstegen  
Public Affairs specialist

"You might be able today, but disabled tomorrow," said Steven Adamski, deputy district counsel for the St. Paul District. "How does the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) apply in federal employment," he asked.

"The ADA does not apply to the federal employer-employee relationship. However, the Rehabilitation Act and the

Architectural Barriers Act do," said Adamski.

Adamski educated nearly 70 federal employees who attended his two workshops titled, "Healthy Today, Disabled Tomorrow" at the FACETS diversity training conference held in August in St. Paul.

FACETS stands for Foster our unity, Applaud our differences, Celebrate our cultures, Explore our similarities, Tout our accomplishments and Share our

strengths. More than 40 St. Paul District employees attended the conference. The Federal Executive Board of the Twin Cities sponsored FACETS. Nearly 210 federal employees in Minnesota participated in this "one-stop" diversity training, which offered 15 workshops and a keynote speech. The district was one of 28 participating federal agencies.

Adamski taught the workshops with Barbara O'Keefe, a professor of occupational therapy at the College of St. Catherine, site of the conference. They defined disability, explained that an agency shall not discriminate against a qualified individual with a physical or mental handicap and outlined steps an agency can take to provide reasonable accommodation. O'Keefe presented a number of adaptive devices that provide accommodation and improve productivity.

Participation in FACETS helped district employees meet their Consideration of Others training program requirements. The goal of Consideration of Others training is to enhance trust and cohesion by ensuring continual awareness of caring as an organizational imperative. Training sessions included Sexual Orientation in the Workplace, Multi-Cultural Customer Service, Learning about the Hmong Culture, and Ourstory, a workshop on the perceptions of Native Americans.

The St. Paul District EEO office and its Special Emphasis Program supported the FACETS conference with in-kind services.

Strategic Vision: *Satisfy the Customer*

## MV Mississippi sails up-river for low-water tour; MRC



Photos by Anna Wetterling

The above photo shows the headwaters of the Mississippi River at Itasca State Park in August. The top-center photo shows Mississippi River Commission (MRC) members on a log that bridges the river's headwaters. Left to right are: Clifford Smith, Rear Admiral Nicholas Prael, Major General Phillip Anderson, Sam Angel, and R. D. James. The MRC has seven presidential nominees, who are confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Members not on the trip were Brig. Gen. Carl Strock and Brig. Gen. Robert H. Griffin. The MRC advises the Chief, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The photo at right shows the Motor Vessel Mississippi at Winona, Minn. The MRC conducted a series of public meetings aboard the towboat as part of its tour of communities along the river this August. The boat spends 90 percent of its time on the Lower Mississippi River and conducts inspection tours for the other 10 percent. Its late-summer trip to St. Paul is part of its low-water inspection tour.

# IRC tours Mississippi River headwaters



Left to right aboard the MV Mississippi are district employees Ron Wolney, Carol Olson and Shu Luong. They attended Consideration of Others training. Wolney works in Real Estate Division, Olson in EEO, and Luong in Information Management.

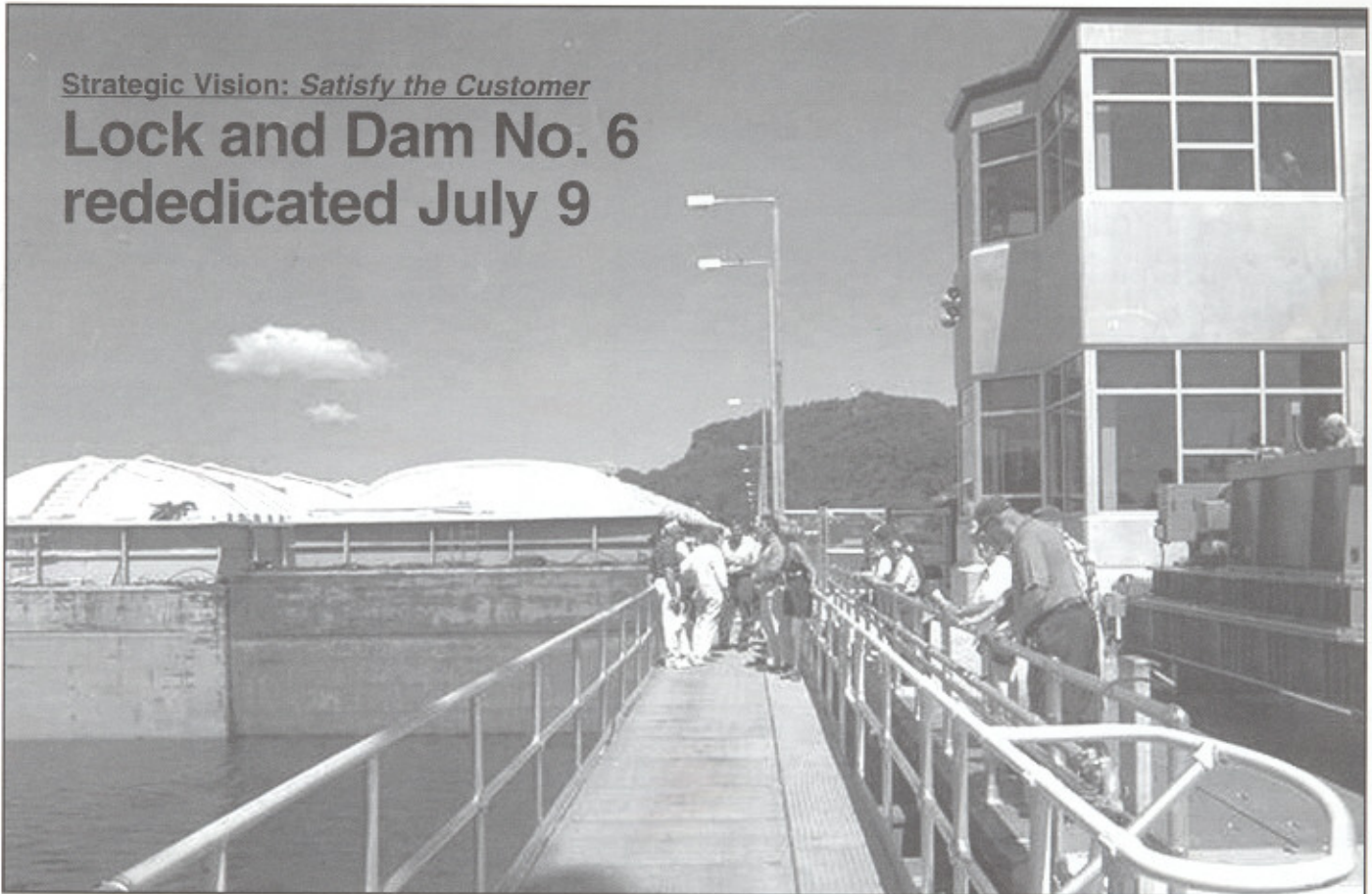
***MV Mississippi Specifications:***

- Length 241 ft.
- Beam 58 ft.
- Height 52 ft.
- Draft 8 ft.
- Power 6,300 horsepower



*Strategic Vision: Satisfy the Customer*

## Lock and Dam No. 6 rededicated July 9



Photos by Dennis Erickson

By Bryan Armbrust, Public Affairs specialist

St. Paul District and community officials celebrated the completion of major maintenance and rehabilitation efforts at Lock and Dam No. 6 in Trempealeau, Wis. on July 9. The work is part of the district's major maintenance-major rehabilitation project for Locks and Dams 2 through 10. It is part of a 10-year project designed to assure an uninterrupted navigation flow through the lock that originally began operations June 1936.

"The original system worked well for 50 years and we expect the new facilities to provide service to the nation for at least that long," said Dean Peterson, operations manager of the Mississippi River Project Office. Lockmaster Dale Ebner said, "My team is second to none and can't wait to start using the facility that matches their capabilities."

The Schwab Company of Winona, Minn., served as the contractor. Town and Country Electric of Appleton, Wis., provided electrical contracting.



The top photo, taken the same day as the dedication ceremony, shows the new control station and one of more than 5,500 lockages that take place at Lock and Dam No. 6 each year. The above is one of two plaques from the dedication ceremony. The other displays information about the contractors and architect. Lockmaster Dale Ebner plans to mount them on the side of the central control station this October.

## Rededication includes photo presentation



Right of the lectern are Major Charles Horwitz of Contracting Division and Melissa Gulan, the area engineer in Winona, Minn. On July 9 they presented Pete Schwab of Schwab Construction a picture of the renovated Lock and Dam No. 6 control station. Schwab Construction built the facility. Dean Peterson, operations manager of the Mississippi River Project, stands at left. Seated, back to camera, is Ken Buck, the chief of Construction-Operations Division. The construction cost for the control station, handrails, lighting, landscaping, and related facility improvements was \$6.2 million.

*"Philosophy," cont. from page 2*

### SOME LIKES AND DISLIKES:

#### LIKES

- "Can Do"/Positive Attitude
- Effective Time Management
- Using and Knowing SOPs
- Good Communications – keeping folks informed
- Good faith efforts
- Taking "ownership"
- Being responsive
- Admitting mistakes
- Making a contribution to the team
- Well-intentioned initiative
- Pride and success

#### DISLIKES

- Sniveling
- Missed suspenses
- Being Late for Anything
- Hidden agendas
- Power plays
- "Emotional" arguments
- Excuses
- Hearing Bad News Late
- Personality conflicts
- Grudges
- Lackadaisical support

I am not a person that avoids difficult situations nor do I attempt to finesse bad news or poor performance. When I sense there is a problem – I'll address it. I don't hold grudges – but I will knock down barriers to progress. I love what we contribute and I think we collectively have the best work force in any of the Corps of Engineer districts. I also believe we have some problems we must address – some are at the individual level, some are at the supervisory/leadership level, and some are within our organizational structure and operating "systems." I am intolerant of non-team players and antiquated 'processes.' I don't care for attempts to "delegate upwards" those situations or problems that should and could be handled at lower levels. I absolutely love it when someone recognizes a problem and takes the initiative to resolve it!

**BOTTOM LINE:** I take this job very seriously. The District has been entrusted with a tremendous quantity of resources – approximately \$110 million/year budget, 800 employees, and \$ millions worth of plant and equipment. We owe the American taxpayer a return on the investment. I will do everything in my power to make us a better, more effective and efficient organization!

In essence, President Kennedy once said "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." We owe the country our best efforts!

## Shafer receives July Considering Others Award



Photo by Peter Versteegen

Jane Shafer, Resource Management, was honored as the recipient of the Considering Others Award in July. St. Paul District Deputy Commander Capt. John Weidner, at left, presented the award in late July. The award recognized her assistance and support to coworkers beyond her regular job duties. She put in the extra effort by assisting timekeepers with problem solving and associated issues. Her effective and efficient assistance was done with great courtesy and compassion. Her continuous assistance epitomized treating others with courtesy, compassion, dignity, and respect.

## District participates in military expo

The St. Paul District joined other military units for the third annual Minnesota Military Exposition on July 31 and August 1.

Vern Reiter from Construction-Operations and Dave Valen, Karen Cassidy and Lori Taylor from Engineering Division represented the district at the expo.

The event is designed to inform the public about the role of the military services, the mission that local forces play and the impact the services have on surrounding communities. More than 16,000 National Guard and military reserve personnel in the Twin Cities area have a \$250 million economic impact.

The expo took place at Historic Fort Snelling, the Army Reserve complex, and the Air National Guard-Air Force Reserve Base. The complex is on the north side of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a U.S. Army Drill Team, live bands, activities for children, food and many other events highlighted the diversity of military life.

**Page 1 photos:** The top photo shows the Minnesota Military Expo taking place in the shadow of the U.S. flag on grounds of the 88th Regional Command (88th RSC). The bottom left photo shows Dave Valen and Vern Reiter talking to Master Sgt. Beth DePoint, Public Affairs chief of the 88th RSC. The 88th RSC provided the tent and a generator for electricity. The photo at the bottom right shows Bryan Armbrust, St. Paul District Public Affairs, in his motorcycle helmet, talking to Valen and Reiter at the start of the expo.



**US Army Corps  
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