

Crosscurrents

April 2012 Vol. 38, No. 4

Serving the St. Paul District since 1977

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department
train on rescue
procedures**

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creates wildlife
habitat**

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®

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

BUILDING STRONG®

On the Cover



From left, Kevin Ressie, operations; Capt. Duane Chadbourn, Winona, Minn., Fire Department; Dan Cottrell, operations; and Winona Fire Department Fire Fighter Jason Theusch conduct cold water rescue training on the Mississippi River March 28.

Photo by Patrick Moes

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Articles and photography submissions are welcome and must arrive by the 15th day of the publishing month for consideration. Submissions can be mailed or e-mailed.

Submissions should be in Microsoft Word format for all written copy and photos should be no smaller than a 5 x 7 at 300 dpi. All photographs appearing herein are by the St. Paul District Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

The mission of *Crosscurrents* is to support the commander's internal information program for the St. Paul District and its stakeholders.

Crosscurrents also serves as the commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies and command philosophy to the St. Paul District community and its customers.

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Col. Michael J. Price
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Photo by Mark Davidson

Water Safety message

District park rangers and Bobber, the Water Safety Dog, will be on hand at the St. Paul Saints baseball game May 17 in St. Paul, Minn., to talk about water safety and the importance of wearing a life jacket. Details next month.



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Click on a logo to go to the St. Paul District social media page, where you can like us, watch videos about us or see more photos.

Comments from the top

Team,

We've had quite the difference this spring compared to last year and it's surely welcomed by many. What that really means is that we can all get many things done that we overlooked the past few years.

We do have some good news this month to announce. Congress confirmed Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick as our 53rd Chief of Engineers. Bostick was nominated a year ago and he has been eagerly waiting to continue leading the Corps' transition to great. He will officially assume command May 22, and our headquarters has a detailed transition plan to get him up to speed. At this time, he is not scheduled to visit the St. Paul District.

Last week I was in Vicksburg, Miss., at regional meetings and would like to relay some of the thoughts from Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody, Mississippi Valley Division commander. He recently attended a water management conference at Harvard University and he relayed to us one of his take-aways, "Three Vs and a caveat."

The three Vs are: value, vision and vector.

•We have talked about value before. We must clearly convey the value our services provide to the nation. This value must go beyond providing flood risk reduction to a community; it must also consider the national significance of protecting that community. Our infrastructure projects on the Mississippi River are a great example. We maintain a navigation channel that allows interstate commerce to continue, which provides economic viability to our nation.

•Vision gets to the 200-year Vision that the Mississippi River Commission developed for the Mississippi Watershed. You can see that vision on our [website](#). Peabody asked that we help communicate that vision with our partners. He also challenged us to develop our own regional "vision" and our senior executive team will begin working on that next month.

•The third "V" is vector. Vector is the direction and it's developed in our detailed plans. Again, Peabody challenged us to align our direction with headquarters.

•His caveat is "knowledge." Our professionals have extensive knowledge about our partners and water basins, yet we sometimes make corporate decisions counter to or not supported by that knowledge. We owe it to our customers and to our nation to use the knowledge we have to inform and educate the decision makers. One of my favorite sayings is, "facts, not emotions." In our case, it means, "science, not emotions."

The other big topic at the regional meetings was the state of our future. There is considerable concern within the division about the future of many of our programs and the



Col. Michael J. Price
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District Commander

levels of funding that will force us to make tough decisions on our workforce. There are six imperatives for change that we have experienced or will be forced to deal with in the near future. They are: the national debt ceiling was breached in 2011; there is external pressure to change the Corps' business model; lack of timely budgets and the use of continuing resolution authorities; expiration of the Bush-era tax cuts;

upcoming national elections; and the Budget Control Act of 2011, or BCA. The BCA takes effect January 2013, and means that if the super-committee, Congress, and the President cannot agree on trillions of dollars in budget/program cuts, sequestration begins. This would directly impact every federal agency.

All of these imperatives are causing the Corps to re-look at how it does business and it directly influences Peabody's "Three Vs plus the caveat." So I urge everyone to stay informed about "our" U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We all affect our business models, and each of us can positively impact how we change.

As always, thank you for everything you do for the Corps and for our nation, and for being the greatest group of Army civilians assembled in the Corps! Keep up the tremendous work.

BUILDING STRONG!

District, fire department team up for rescue training

Story by Patrick Moes

Time is critical during a crisis. Decisions can, and often do, determine the outcome in many emergencies. Recognizing the importance of teamwork and communication, the district and the Winona, Minn., Fire Department participated in a joint rescue training event along the banks of the Mississippi River March 28.

Originally designed as ice recovery training, Dan Cottrell, channels and harbors, said the mild spring weather changed the training focus of ice recovery to cold water rescue. Regardless of the water conditions, the agencies were focused on learning from each other and learning how the Corps' airboat can be used to save lives.

Winona Fire Department Capt. Curt Bittle said the training was a great opportunity for both the fire department and the Corps to work together. "It was something that we should have done years ago," he said. "Just to physically get guys in the airboats and run through the scenario was great training." The scenario included a person floating in the water, far away from the shore, and in an area surrounded by trees.

Bittle said there are some locations along the river that would take the fire department more than 30 minutes to get to. With the assistance of the Corps' airboat, the time could be reduced by as much as 10 to 15 minutes, or more.



Photo by Patrick Moes

Kevin Ressie, operations, left; Dan Cottrell, operations; and Winona Fire Department Capt. Duane Chadborn, drive an airboat during a training exercise with the Winona, Minn., Fire Department on the Mississippi River March 28.



Photo by Patrick Moes

Kevin Ressie, operations, monitors cold water rescue training on the Mississippi River March 28. The district and the Winona, Minn., Fire Department participated in a joint rescue training event. It was the first time both agencies trained together.



Photo by Patrick Moes

(Above) From left, Winona, Minn., Fire Department Capt. Duane Chadbourn; Kurt Ressie, operations; and Dan Cottrell, operations; prepare to pull Winona Fire Department Capt. Jason Theusch from the water during a joint cold water rescue training event March 28 on the Mississippi River. This was the first time that both agencies trained together and they both plan on making it an annual event.

(Right) Brandon Olson, operations, watches the cold water rescue training as he operates a small boat. Photo by Patrick Moes [Click on the video link to watch the video.](#)

With a focus on saving lives, Brandon Olson, channels and harbors, said this was the first year the two agencies trained together for any type of water rescue mission, but they plan on continuing the new partnership in upcoming years. "It's kind of a work in progress," he said, adding that the ability to trust and understand each other during a crisis is important.

Olson said, the training also taught him how the fire department responds to emergencies. Seeing what they do and what type of equipment they have and how they use it is great, he said. "This type of training definitely builds confidence."

Bittle said the training is all about creating partnerships. Covering areas along the Mississippi River from Lock and Dam 5A in Fountain City, Wis., to Lock and Dam 6 in Trempealeau, Wis., the Winona Fire Department lacks the funds to purchase airboats, but they make up for it by building relationships. "I think it's really important for all of these agencies to do a

little networking and be able to contact people to get assets to rescues or to whatever events that we have," he said. "In this day and age, we just have to."

Looking toward the future, Olson and Bittle both said they look forward to continuing to work and train together. Bittle said he hopes they can line up ice rescue training next year and work a lot more closely with the Corps in the future. "To have the Corps behind us and working with us," he said. "What an asset."



A tree today, wildlife habitat tomorrow

Story by Patrick Moes

One of the final steps in the Corps' Environment Management Program Pool 8 project began April 20 with the last season of tree plantings on islands south of Brownsville, Minn.



Photo by Patrick Moes

Dan Reburn, forestry student, drills holes during the spring tree planting in Pool 8.



Photo by Patrick Moes

Tom Novak, Environmental Management Program project manager, plants trees on islands in the Mississippi River south of Brownsville, Minn., April 20. The Corps will plant more than 4,900 seedlings this spring on the islands, which are located in Pool 8.

The Corps, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or USFWS, will plant more than 4,900 seedlings this spring on islands created during the past few years of environmental rehab on the Mississippi River. Within Pool 8 there are more than 125 acres of islands providing habitat for a wide variety

of species. "Through this project we've done a complete makeover of the river," said Jim Nissen, USFWS Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge district manager. "It's really been a great success story."

With an eye toward the future, the district's



Photo by Patrick Moes

Tom Lytle, engineering and construction, plants trees in Pool 8 on the Mississippi River April 20. The Corps plans to plant around 4,900 seedlings this spring.

foresters developed the island planting pattern with a focus on future growth, while addressing the lessons learned from the past. Bobby Jackson, district forester, said, "We determine what species are planted, and their location based on the [island's] elevation." Understanding what trees do best in low-lying areas helps increase the survivability rate of the trees. Jackson said, every one of the 10 different tree species being planted this year can survive up to 30 consecutive days of flooding. He added that he hopes to have at least 75 to 80 percent of the trees survive.

Randy Urich, environmental section manager, said, one of the reasons that he's excited about the survivability rate is because they are adding more tree species to the islands to include a very unique American elm tree. Urich said the elms they are using are Dutch elm disease tolerant. He said the U.S. Forest Service originally found six different variations of Dutch elm tolerant parents, and they have developed



Photo by Patrick Moes

Randy Urich, environmental section manager, prepares to plant an American elm seedling April 20. This is the third year the Corps has planted seedlings on the Pool 8 islands. Including this year, around 15,000 seedlings have been planted.

cuttings that are now available to plant. He added that these elm trees are also tolerant of shade and can live with limited sunlight while taller trees grow and die. "The elms can wait and begin the second generation in the forest."

District, Valley City, N.D., sign agreement, marking the beginning of a feasibility study along the Sheyenne River

Story by Shannon Bauer

The district kicked off the Valley City, Sheyenne River Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study during a signing ceremony in Valley City, N.D., April 10. Col. Michael Price, district commander, and Valley City Mayor Bob Werkhoven signed the cost-sharing agreement in front of local officials and the media to mark the beginning of this \$1.5 million study that is expected to take 2 1/2 years to complete.

The study follows extensive flood fighting by both the community and the district in Valley City in 2009 and 2011. Both years were considered 120-year flood events, and many critical facilities would have been flooded without building temporary emergency clay and sandbag levees.

"For a city that has seen its share of devastation from the rising waters of the Sheyenne River, the agreement is much more than a celebration of two entities working together," reported the local TV station, KVRP. "It is a commitment to saving homes and the possibility of finally having

piece of mind."

The study will be broken into three phases. The first phase, which will cost approximately \$500,000, is anticipated to be complete in December 2012. It includes initial data collection, an update to the area hydrology, analysis of the current flood damage risk reduction projects and the development of the initial alternatives. Project alternatives will be compared and evaluated in Phase 2 and a tentatively selected plan will be established. Phase 3 will include the development of that plan.

"[This] is our opportunity to document the existing conditions in Valley City and get a real handle on the level of existing flood risk in the city. This is imperative to accurately tell the story and ultimately to identify the best flood risk management plan," said Sierra Schroeder, district planner. "In this cost shared study, Valley City will be able to leverage Corps' expertise and experience to complete this important task."



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Col. Michael Price, district commander, left, and Valley City, N.D., Mayor Bob Werkhoven sign the Valley City, Sheyenne River Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study cost-sharing agreement during a signing ceremony in Valley City April 10.

District website migration happens soon

Goal is to create consistent, clean design throughout the Corps

Story by Patrick Moes

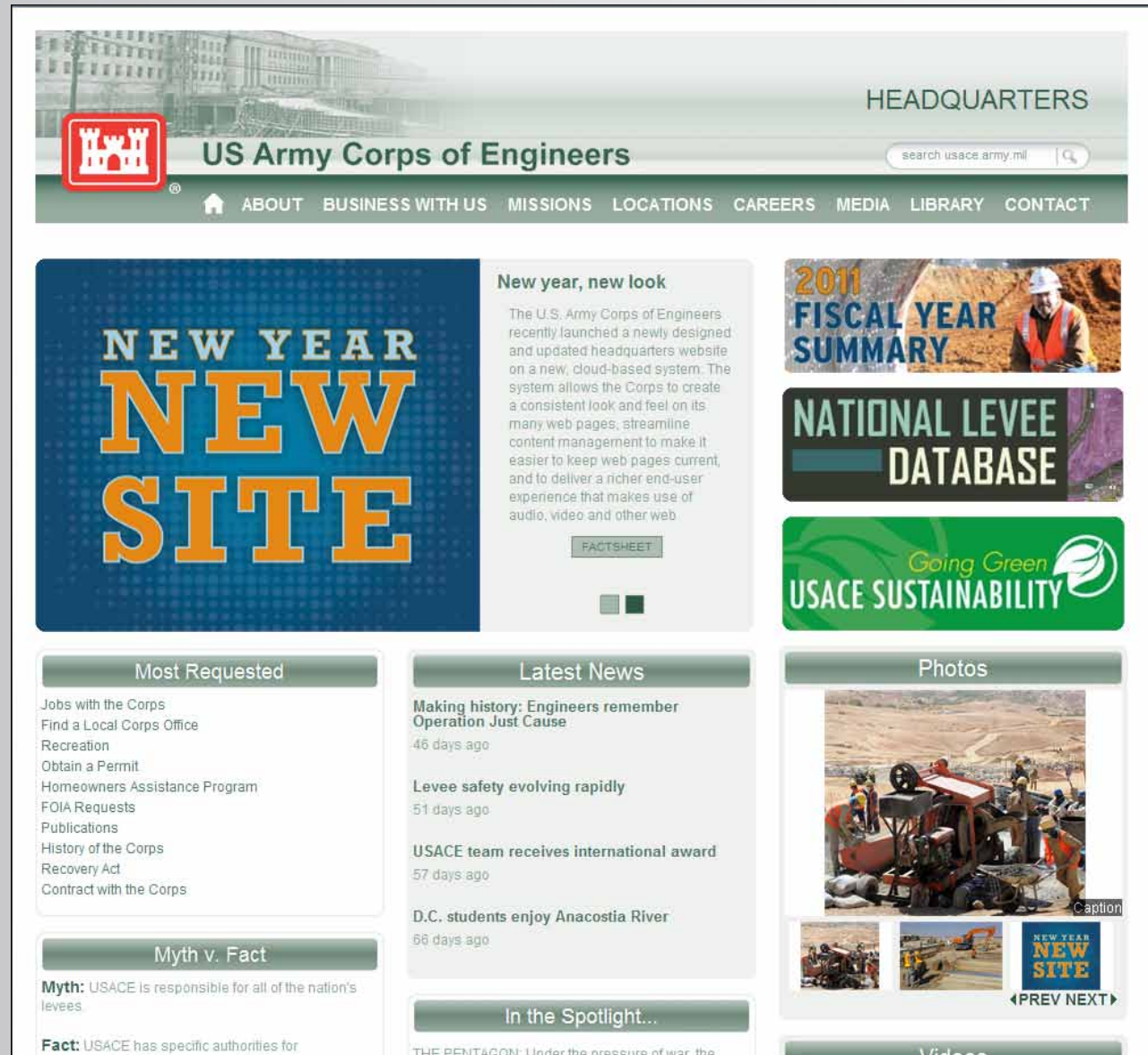
The district's public website will soon have a new look. As a part of the Corps' campaign plan to communicate strategically and transparently, 58 websites are migrating to the new design in the coming months.

The Corps' headquarters was the first to launch the refreshed website. They did it during the first part of January. The new, cloud-based platform is migrating throughout the Corps and the Mississippi Valley Division and all six districts are currently scheduled to begin the changeover process sometime in August.

"We are always seeking to improve the way we communicate with our stakeholders," said Acting Corps Commander Maj. Gen. Meredith W.B. 'Bo' Temple. "Since our public website is our number one communication tool, we are overhauling our Web presence to increase transparency and deliver fast, accessible, relevant information to the American public."

According to studies conducted by Pew Research Center, 58 percent of individuals who encounter problems which had potential connection to the government used the Internet to obtain information, whereas only 34 percent said they directly contacted a government office or agency.

The migration process should not cause any impact to the day-to-day operations to include posting public notices or other information. That said, any bookmarks that users currently have will no longer work once the new site is active, because the links will change.



District's own creates national visual information projects

Story by Shannon Bauer

There's a reason St. Paul District faces keep appearing on Headquarters-level visual information products.

Emily Chavolla, Army Corps of Engineers Information Technology, or ACE-IT, print services manager for the St. Paul District, designed many of these items to include most of the products introduced during the last few years for the Corps' national branding initiative. These products include the PowerPoint, factsheet, bio and news release templates, as well as the Corps folder and command brochure.

"Her work is among the best that I've seen in the industry, and the Corps is very fortunate to have her talent."

-Tesia Williams, Headquarters, Corps of Engineers public affairs

Chavolla has also put together a number of national brochures, Web banner ads and displays to include a series of posters for each division now showcased in the Headquarters building in Washington, D.C. One of her most recent assignments included designing the "look" (but not the content or functionality) of the recently unveiled national website.

Chavolla's position description, however,



Photo by Patrick Moes

Emily Chavolla, Army Corps of Engineers Information Technology, or ACE-IT, print services manager for the district, works on designing new brochures for the Corps April 17.

didn't originally mention graphic design. Her official duties included procuring printing and scanning services for the St. Paul District. And although she took a few courses in graphic design in college, her degree is in management and information systems. Her last job, though,

before starting with the Corps first as a contractor in 2006 and then as a civil servant for ACE-IT in 2009, included designing the packaging and marketing tools for a company that produces weather instruments.

She said she got involved in designing

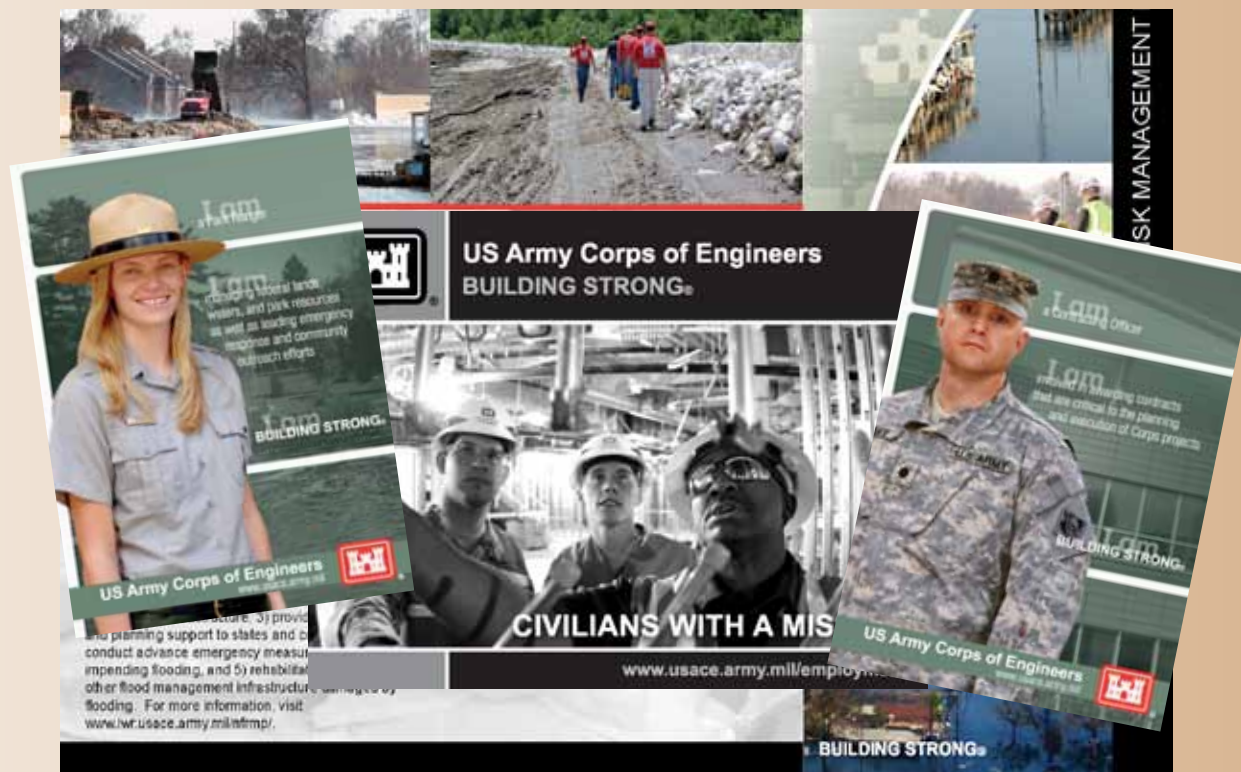
visual information products for the Corps nationally a few years ago, when she called the Headquarters public affairs office looking for a vector image of the new logo introduced in 2009. “They didn’t have one, so I told them I’d make them one,” she said. “It just snowballed into more work.”

Tesia Williams, Headquarters public affairs, visual information products for the Corps nationally a few years ago, when she called the Headquarters public affairs office looking for a vector image of the new logo introduced in 2009. “They didn’t have one, so I told them I’d make them one,” she said. “It just snowballed into more work.”

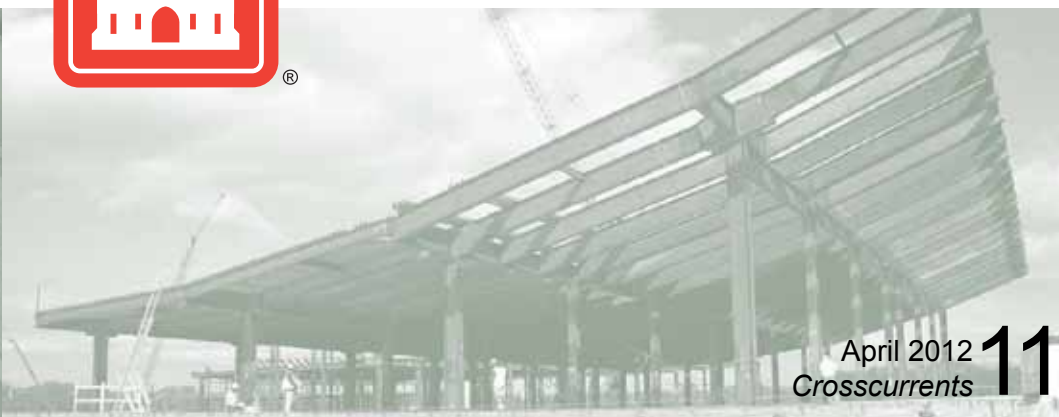
Tesia Williams, Headquarters public affairs, explained how Chavolla was brought on board. “When Headquarters public affairs was asked by then commander Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp to design several templates to be used enterprise-wide for our external communication products, we initially went to a small business owner who had vast experience working with government agencies,” she said. “However, the designs they presented didn’t reflect Lt. Gen. Van’s vision. Having done some work with Emily [Chavolla] in the past, we reached out to

her to see if she could come up with something that used the design elements leadership wanted to incorporate, but in a way that was modern and not stereotypical of government

national products, she said, “Often, the photos Headquarters sends are photos taken by our St. Paul District photographers that they found on [Flickr](#).”



US Army Corps of Engineers



District civil engineer earns fellowship honor

Story by Patrick Moes

A civil engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, earned the title of fellow from the Society of American Military Engineers, or SAME, in Bethesda Md., March 28.

Chris Afdahl, a Cottage Grove, Minn., native, and Elmwood, Wis., resident, said the fellowship is a great honor, and she looks forward to using her position to continue helping younger engineers reach their full potential. "The fellows enrich the society with their knowledge and experience," she said. "I can help others reach their full potential."

Afdahl was one of 38 SAME members selected as fellow this year. The selection process included an application with six questions ranging from the awards and honors received both within SAME and the engineering field to the number of years a person has participated in the organization. She said the focus was on what someone does that is above and beyond the daily job requirements.

In the 20 years since Afdahl has been a SAME member, she said she's served in positions from junior vice president to director and president. She now serves as a point of contact for the

Minneapolis-Saint Paul Post fellows.

While SAME is focused on the military, Afdahl said being an engineer is not a requirement to join. Further, she said that in addition to SAME being a great organization for networking and mentoring, it provides architectural/engineering firms and their employees the ability to see what military engineers do. She said this helps because A/E firms will ultimately support the military during the design and/or construction phase of a project.

Working on local, regional and national-level committees for the Corps, she said she tries to share her expertise at every level. Within the district, Afdahl is the computer-aided design, or CAD, manager. She said CAD is a tool that is used in the design process, but she remembers what it was like to do manual drawings and to learn all of the terms. While some of the younger engineers may not understand the manual methods of engineering design, she said many of the terms are still used today.

Afdahl, who began working for the district in 1985 one week after graduating high school, first worked in the drafting



Photo by Mary F. Calvert

Chris Afdahl, engineering and construction, receives her Society of American Military Engineers Fellowship Medal and plaque in Bethesda, Md., March 28, from Paul A. Parker and U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Chris Mossey.

room. The first in her family to go to college, she said, she initially thought about becoming an architect, but quickly decided to earn her engineering degree from the University of Minnesota. "I was working for an architect [within the district], and I could see he was young," she said. "There was no way I was going to take his job."

After working for the district for nearly 10 years, Afdahl began to question whether the public service or private sector was the best career path for her. She said while there are pros and cons to working for a government agency, she ultimately decided that the benefits of public service outweighed those of the private sector. "The government was really family friendly back then, there was flexibility," she said. "It's all about the extras."



Photo by Mary F. Calvert

The Society of American Military Engineers fellow medals and plaques were presented to 38 members March 28 in Bethesda, Md.

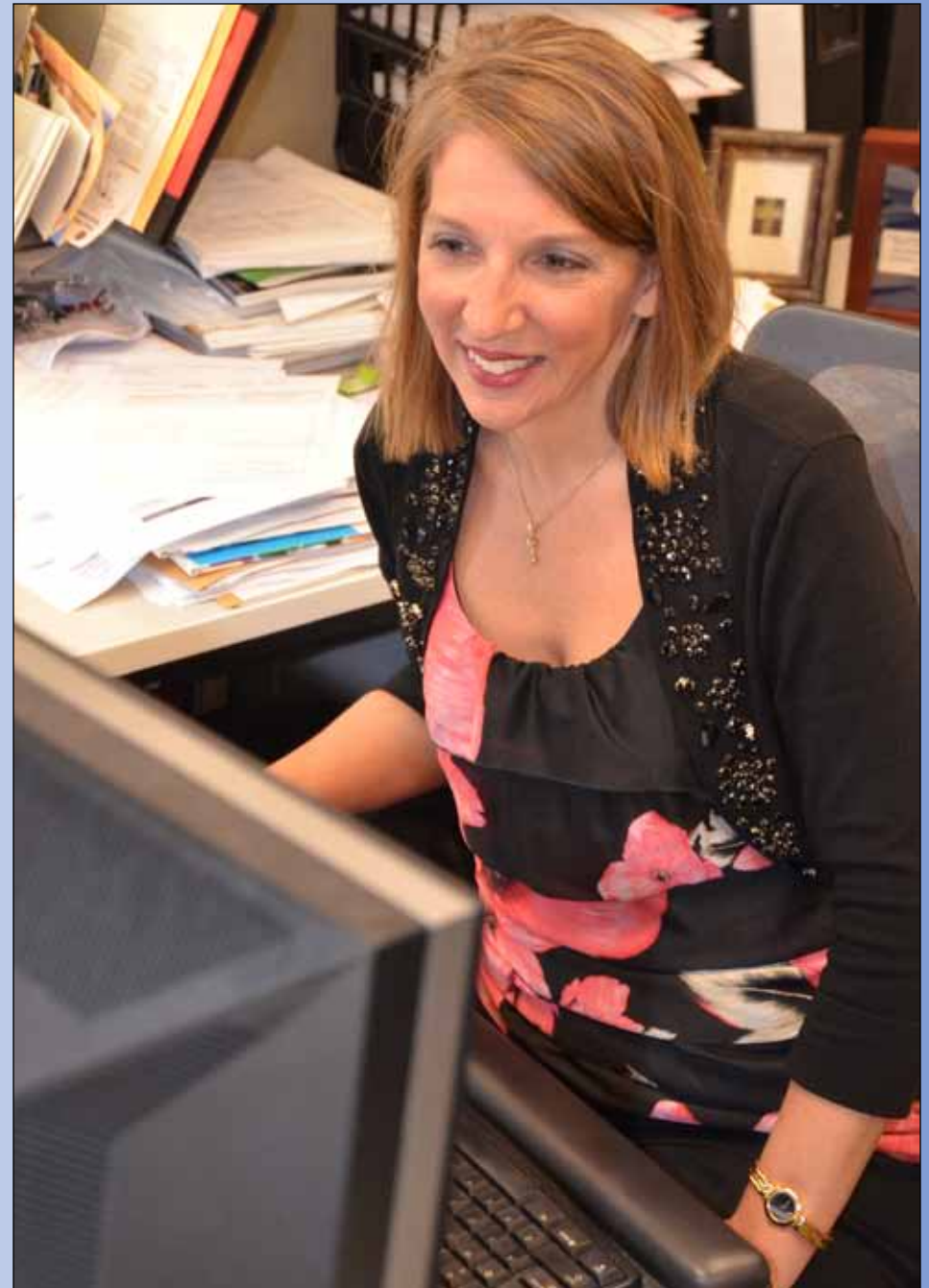


Photo by Patrick Moes

Chris Afdahl, engineering and construction, was selected as a Society of American Military Engineers fellow March 28 in Bethesda, Md.

Editor's Note

Do you have news you want to share with the district? Send your announcements of births, weddings, graduations, etc., to *Crosscurrents*. cemvp-pa@usace.army.mil.

Newcomers

Travis Brantner, deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.
Paul Fleming, engineering technician, district office
Mitch Goss, deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.
Tammy Kime, administrative assistant, district office
Mitch Goss, deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.
Branden Johnson, deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.
Pete Lillie, financial manager, district office
Scott Rolbiecki, deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.
Keith Schindler, deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.
Daniel Teigen, deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.
Gene Van Riper Jr., deckhand, Fountain City, Wis.

Retirements

Jean Shafer, civilian pay technician, district office

Do you know what this is?

Can you identify this engineering tool? Do you know what it was used for? If so, email the district librarian, Kevin Bokay, at kevin.p.bokay@usace.army.mil. The first person to respond with the correct answer will receive a price and be named in the May issue.



Congratulations

Kevin Anderson, project management, earned his project management professional certification.

Shannon Bauer, public affairs, was selected as the public affairs chief.

Connie Gholson, human resources, was selected as the human resources specialist.

New website provides Corps lock information

A new website is now publicly available for people interested in information about the Corps' locks and dams as well as vessel specific information. The URL is <http://corpslocks.usace.army.mil>.

Economist receives recognition for perfect game



Courtesy photo

Jeff McGrath, planning, left, receives his 300 ring from **Greg Brooks**, bowling league president. McGrath bowled the perfect game during league play March 19.

Chief of Engineers confirmed

The Senate confirmed Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 53rd Chief of Engineers/ Commanding General April 26.

Bostick will officially assume command during a ceremony May 22.

Prior to this new assignment, Bostick served as the Army's deputy chief of staff for personnel, where he was responsible for developing, managing, and executing manpower and personnel plans, programs, and policies for the total Army. Prior to that assignment, he served as commanding general for the U.S. Army Recruiting Command.

Bostick has served in a variety of command and staff assignments throughout his career, both in the United States and overseas. He was the assistant division commander-maneuver, and then assistant division commander-support of the 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas. He deployed with the division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom before commanding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division, where he was responsible for more than \$18 billion in reconstruction work within Iraq.

Bostick also served as an assistant professor of mechanical engineering at West Point and was a White House Fellow, serving as a special assistant to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. He has also served as executive officer to the Chief of Engineers; executive officer to the Army Chief of Staff; and deputy director of operations for the National Military Command Center, operations, in the Pentagon from May 2001 to August 2002, including the events of September 11, 2001, and the initiation of operations in Afghanistan.

Bostick is a 1978 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and holds Master of Science Degrees in both Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University.

Bostick replaces Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, who retired in 2011.



Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick,
53rd Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers