

ST. LOUIS ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT

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Barry Lower, Project Manager, Holcim Corporation and Tim Quarles Holcim lead consultant confer with Michael Ricketts District Regulatory Project Manager, District Engineer COL Michael Morrow and CONOPS Division Chief Wally Feld.

Stuck in the Middle: Members of the District's Regulatory Branch are often caught between conflicting interests.

Care to take a stab at which District mission attracted the most media coverage over the past two years? Navigation . . .? Nope. Flood Control . . .? You're getting warmer. Regulatory . . .? *Bingo!*

On average, the Regulatory Branch receives around nine permit applications a day. In many instances contentious public meetings, conflicting opinions in competing newspaper editorials, and finger pointing in newspaper articles, are thrust into the mix before a decision on an application is ever reached.

So what's the root of all the commotion? In a word: wetlands. The regulatory program encompasses more than just impacts to wetlands. It also revolves around impacts to all waters of the U.S., particularly here in the St. Louis District. But wetlands provide an emotional connection shared throughout the nation.

Wetlands are important environmental features that help maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of our nation's waters. Wetlands are multi-dimensional: they function as a nursery for seafood, they provide habitat for wildlife, they serve as a buffer against flooding, and they act as a filter of miasmatic impurities in the water supply-nature's kidneys if you will.

For these very important reasons, the protection of wetlands is an issue of the utmost importance to environmentalists and preservationists. But wetlands, much like the Corps itself, are often caught in the middle of the battle between pro-environment and pro-development interests.

Continued on page 3



Commander's Perspective



COL Michael R. Morrow, Commander

The regulatory process is described well in the lead article of this month's Esprit. It indeed focuses great attention and controversy on our work throughout the Corps of Engineers and here in the St. Louis District. I want to share my perspective and thoughts on this subject with you.

First, it's vitally important. The Waters of the United States, which we are charged by laws and regulations to protect, are truly treasures of this nation. These waters and their surrounding lands are areas of great concern both to groups who would develop and use them as well as others who seek to preserve them untouched forever. And honestly, both groups have very real, very valid positions and concerns.

It is the optimal balance between those positions that we seek, because the advocates of both postures — as well as those who find themselves

somewhere between the extremes - have equal rights to fair and equitable treatment under the laws and regulations.

Individuals, groups, businesses and even governments may be parties either requesting permits or having positions affecting applications concerning water and wetland issues.

Time is also a complicating factor in deciding whether to approve a permit to allow someone to act in a certain manner when the Waters of the United States are affected. We need to exercise diligence and effort to render timely decisions. After all, the variety of interests that are going to be impacted by a permit decision have rights to a reasonably prompt response so they may either proceed, reformulate plans or look elsewhere.

At the same time we must understand that what we are doing may have great and lasting effects over a lengthy period of time - perhaps long after we who have made the decisions either are retired or gone. So we must make our best effort to make the proper and right decisions.

Finally, the regulatory process has been, is and most likely will remain, a very dynamic environment. During my nearly three years as District Engineer there have been a multitude of twists and turns and I don't expect the velocity of these changes to diminish anytime soon. Court cases, a multiplicity of political interests at various levels, emotions and economics virtually guarantee that these issues will remain lively and fast moving for at least the foreseeable future.

I think we do an excellent job in this area. I assess that the Corps of Engineers has built an enviable and remarkable record of service as an honest broker in this process. A significant segment of the staff supports me directly in this endeavor, and in the end, I know you all are behind this essential element of what we do for the region and our nation.

Americans of all walks of life are affected by what we do in this regulatory arena, whether they know it immediately or not. In the end they depend on us to do the right things. I depend on you and trust you to do so.

Essays

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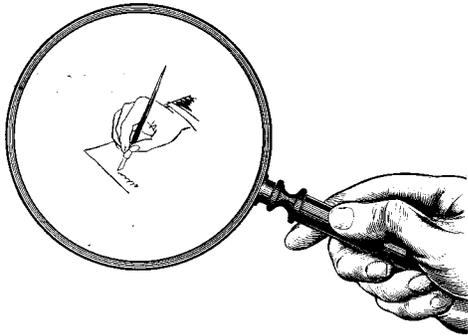
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Stuck in the Middle Cont. from page 1

Understanding the Permit Process

In order to comprehend the controversial nature of regulatory permits, it is necessary to gain an understanding of the permit process. Any proposed project involving the excavation of material or placement of fill into rivers, streams and adjacent wetlands or creating obstructions to navigation comes under the jurisdiction of the Corps of Engineers and requires a permit to authorize the activity. Upon receipt of an application, a project manager starts negotiations with the applicant to avoid impacts to waters, to minimize any impacts, and to mitigate for any unavoidable impacts.



Although this is an oversimplification of a complicated process, it captures its essence. The permit process is designed to regulate development of wetlands, not to prevent development of wetlands. In other words, as long as an applicant follows certain steps prescribed in existing laws and demonstrates that it has done everything possible to avoid, minimize and mitigate for impacts to wetlands, a permit generally will be issued. The process is more representative of a litmus test used to determine whether or not a proposed development or action meets the guidelines and requirements of the Clean Water Act or the Rivers and Harbors Act. If the applicant meets these guidelines and requirements, the tenets of the Clean Water Act/Rivers and Harbors Act dictate that a

permit be issued. The permit process is not a referendum or popularity contest. Approval of a permit does not indicate Corps support for a project; denial of a permit does not indicate non-support for a project. The Corps takes an unbiased view of all applications.

A Rubber Stamp?

Critics of the Corps' regulatory program often argue that the Corps indeed takes a biased view toward permit applications—a pro-development view. This view, critics argue, essentially amounts to the Corps' rubber-stamping applications for approval. To support this argument, they point to the Corps' own estimation that less than 1% of permit applications are denied. But according to Susan Hampton, Mississippi Valley Division Chief of Regulatory & Environmental Compliance, this statistic is “a credit to the project managers for working with permit applicants to modify their plans, thereby reducing impacts to wetlands and alleviating the need for permit denial.” Hampton went on to say, “a more accurate measure of the program's success is found in the countless acres of wetlands” saved through the avoid, minimize and mitigate processes.

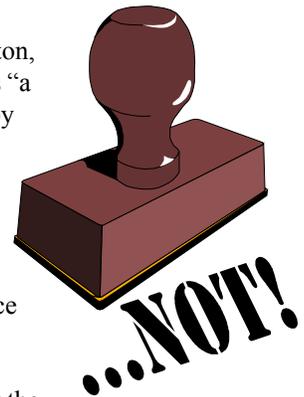
A recent high-profile permit application serves as perfect illustration to support Hampton's conclusions. (For privacy reasons, the applicant and project manager will remain nameless). The applicant's initial wish list called for the construction of parking lots and a second entrance for emergency vehicles. The anticipated impacts: over 40 acres of wetlands would have to be displaced.

“Right off the bat, we knew that wasn't going to fly,” says the District's project manager for the permit application. “There were a number of options out there that had to be considered.”

Through the avoid and minimize negotiations between the applicant and the St. Louis District, the applicant agreed to seek other locations for the proposed parking lots and settled for widening an existing, yet abandoned, road as a second entrance. The negotiations resulted in the loss of only 0.65 acres of wetlands; and, through the mitigation process, an additional 1.3 acres of wetlands were created to replace those lost.

The end result: Initial application—over 40 acres of wetlands to be impacted . . . Wetlands actually displaced—0.65 acres . . . Newly created wetlands—1.3 acres . . . You do the math.

Such negotiations to avoid, minimize, and mitigate for impacts to wetlands do not always sit well with developers either. Susan Asmus, a spokeswoman for the National Association of Home Builders, made these comments to the Jacksonville Times-Union, “Environmentalists think that the Corps rubber-stamps these things. That's not true, and if you were a permit applicant, you would know that's not true.”





African American History Month

Born in 1820 in Dorchester County, Maryland, Harriett Tubman had a childhood similar to that of most



Harriett Ross Tubman

slaves — no schooling, little play, much hard work and severe punishment. In 1848, she succeeded in escaping from this life, leaving her husband John Tubman. Once free, she began to design ways to help other slaves escape. Over the next 10 years, she made some 20 trips from the North to the South, rescuing more than 300 slaves, including members of her own family. Because of this, a price of \$40,000 was set on her head.

Her reputation spread rapidly. She won the admiration of leading white



abolitionists, some of whom sheltered her passengers.

In 1860, Harriet Tubman began to canvas the nation, appearing at anti-slavery meetings and speaking on behalf of women's rights. Shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War, she was forced to leave the country and stay in Canada, but soon returned to the United States serving the Union cause as nurse, soldier, spy and scout. Two years after the end of the war, John Tubman died and Harriet married Nelson Davis, a war veteran, in 1869.

Despite her many honors and tributes (including a medal from Queen Victoria of England), Harriet spent her last years in poverty. She didn't receive a pension until more than 30 years after the Civil War. She used most of this money to help found a place for the aged and needy, which was later to be called The Harriet Tubman Home.

After her death in 1913, Harriet Tubman was buried in Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York with military honors. She has since received many honors,



including the naming of the Liberty Ship Harriet Tubman, christened in 1944 by Eleanor Roosevelt. On June 14, 1914 a large bronze plaque was placed at the Cayuga County Courthouse, and a civic holiday declared in her honor. In 1995, she was honored by the federal government with a commemorative postage stamp bearing her name and likeness.

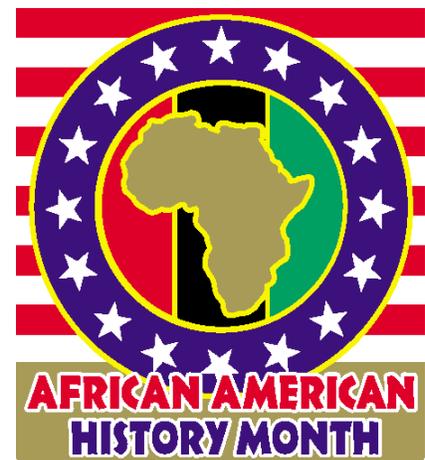


Harriet Tubman arriving in Canada with passengers

Black History week will highlight Ms. Harriet Ross Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Our fourth floor lobby will feature an exhibit of Ms. Tubman's life and the history of the Underground Railroad.

Additionally, we will show videotape concerning the history of the Underground Railroad. Both exhibits will be available throughout the month of February. February 20th, the District welcomes Ms. Melissa Waddy-Thibodeaux performing *Harriett Tubman: Grandma Moses in "The Underground."*

Ms. Waddy-Thibodeaux comes to us from the Speakers Bureau.



"All but this we have flown the air like birds and swum the sea like fishes, but have yet to learn the simple act of walking the earth like brothers."

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.



A Taste of Southern Cooking



Left to right: District Engineer COL Michael R. Morrow, Diane Hill, Jeanné Campbell, Paula Bell [front], Gerri Shanklin, Tandika Gates, and Division Commander BG Edwin J. Arnold.

As part of our month long celebrations of Black History, five hard working employees offered us a taste of southern cooking. Division Commander, BG Arnold took time from his busy schedule to attend. He was so impressed he presented a “Just Did It” compass to each one! [see side bar]

You could sample the following:

- ☐☐ Shannon’s Southern Fried Chicken
- ☐☐ Fried Corn
- ☐☐ Green Beans
- ☐ Great Northern Beans
- ☐ Collard Greens
- ☐ Mixed Greens
- ☐ Cornbread
- ☐ Peanut Soup
- ☐ Chicken Wings
- ☐ Chicken & Dumplings
- ☐ Peach Cobbler
- ☐ Pound Cake
- ☐ Lemon Pound Cake
- ☐ Louisiana Crunch Cake
- ☐ Banana Pudding
- ☐ Sweet Potato Pie
- ☐ Iced Tea



Gerri Shanklin, Dave Cash representing Memphis District, Division Deputy Commander COL Thomas A Holden, Memphis District DE, Jack V. Scherer, Donald L. Basham MVD-MD, Tandika Gates and Division Commander BG Edwin J. Arnold. The Southerners are apparently critiquing the recipes for authenticity!



New Award From Division



Division Commander, BG Arnold has designated a new type of recognition for employees who have used their “Just Do It” authority.

It’s a beautiful “Just Did It” compass and our District Commander has received a supply of them for presentation.

If you see fellow co-workers you believe are deserving of this recognition, please let your supervisor know (or theirs).



Inscription on the compass.

“I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.”

Helen Keller



George Washington: A leader and more

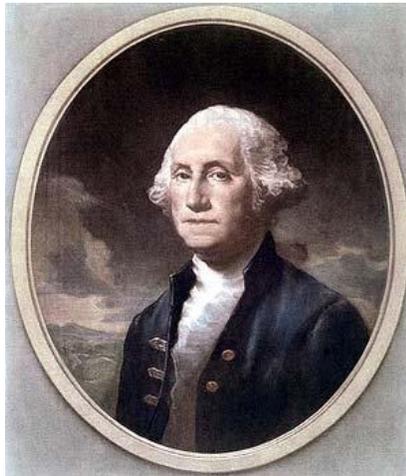
On November 22, we mark the 270th birth anniversary of George Washington, patriot, general, and first president of the United States. No American is more recognizable, yet even those who knew him found him hard to explain.

Of his personal life, Abigail Adams wrote that “he has a dignity which forbids familiarity, mixed with an easy affability which creates love and reverence.”

The man who has given his name to 1 state, 1 capital city, 33 counties, 9 colleges, 7 mountains, and 121 post offices was often the target of character assassination.

During the Revolution, the English press claimed Washington regularly crossed the Hudson River to New Jersey where he visited a mistress.

Though he was probably innocent of these charges, he did have a very human side. He was ambitious. As a



young man, he pursued fame, fortune, and land ownership in whatever ways he could. But during the Revolution, he supported the cause and paid with more than half of his fortune.

He did have a violent temper, and some say he was prone to loud cussing. But he had class in other ways. At Yorktown, for example, the general put an end to unseemly celebrations among his troops, saying that it should be left to people of the future to celebrate.

Because Washington was able to balance leadership with restraint, he gave us a government strong enough to lead and wise enough to listen, says Richard Norton Smith, author of *Patriarch: George Washington and the New American Nation* (Houghton Mifflin). Washington had slaves working his land, but he disagreed with the system. He was careful never to break up a family. He depended on blacks to help win the Revolution. In his will, he gave all who worked his land their freedom.

By recognizing his humanity we confirm Washington’s heroism.

Low-fat meats are a gold mine of vitamins, minerals, and protein.

The demand for beef has been climbing over the past two years in the U.S.

So are we headed for a health disaster? Not at all. In moderation, lean beef, pork, venison, and other meats provide health benefits. They prevent vitamin and mineral deficiencies, boost immunity, and build stronger blood.

Red meat’s main drawback is that it’s high in saturated fat and calories. If you choose to eat red meat, eat lean cuts and trim the fat before cooking.

A University of Minnesota study in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition* suggests that people with high cholesterol can improve their numbers by switching to lean cuts of beef, pork, fish, or chicken.

Meat is an excellent source of protein, which builds enzymes, hemoglobin, muscles, and more. And it has the virtue of containing all nine of the amino acids that humans need.



It is also a good source of iron. Iron deficiency is the most common nutritional deficiency in the U.S. And it’s an excellent source of zinc, which is needed for a healthy immune system, as well as many B vitamins and

potassium. Cuts that are considered “lean” include round steak, pork tenderloin, lamb foreshank, veal, deer, and elk meat.

For a healthy dinner, try beef and spinach stir-fry:

Cut a pound of round steak into thin slices and toss in 1 T cornstarch. Heat 2 t canola oil in a skillet and add the beef plus 2 t grated ginger, and stir-fry 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate. In the pan, cook a sliced onion for 2 minutes, add 6 oz. spinach and stir-fry 30 seconds.

In a bowl, combine 1/3 C beef broth and 2 T ketchup. Add to the pan, add beef and stir-fry 2 to 3 minutes. Season with pepper and serve over rice or noodles.

A Thought:

“Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant.”
Robert Louis Stevenson



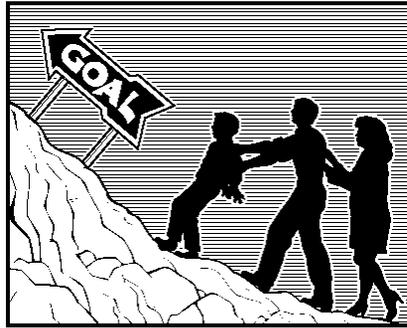
Parents' best goal: Raise productive kids

We like to believe that our children are above average. According to experts, however, only about 10 percent of kids are truly gifted, either academically, creatively, or athletically. Pushing them to make A's in subjects that don't come easy to them, filling their free hours with special lessons, athletic practice, and tutoring can take the fun out of childhood. More importantly, it can set them up for a lifetime of feeling that nothing they do will be good enough.

School psychologists from Richmond, Va., say the average kid has a great deal of potential that parents should allow to develop naturally. Those who are pressured to excel beyond their ability can become

insecure, bitter adults. They hope parents will consider these tips for slowing down:

□ *Trust that being average is OK.* Most kids in gifted programs aren't really gifted but have more ambitious, competitive parents.



□ *Recognize that there are lots of ways to be gifted.* Every child has strengths that are not being recognized at any given time. One parent visited

the school to complain that her daughter was only getting B's and C's on her report card. The teacher noted that the girl was an average student, happy, healthy, one of the nicest kids in class, and had lots of friends. "What more could you ask for?" she asked.

□ *Take the long view.* At high school reunions, it's often not the kids who were big standouts in school who turned out to be very successful.

□ *Keep it simple as long as you can.* A hectic schedule at an early age is not in the child's best interests.

The real goal of parenthood, say the doctors, is to help a child become a happy, productive person. Forcing children to be something they're not will undermine that goal.

How the 'foot, yard, and inch' came to be

Pre-metric measurements had some interesting, if inexact, origins. Though they have been standardized in countries that use them, they are still difficult for the rest of the world to understand, and even more difficult to explain.

The Foot. This unit of measurement was determined by the length of King Charlemagne's foot and modified in 1305 to be 36 barleycorns laid end to end. (No measurement for the barleycorn is given.) **The Inch.** The width of King Edgar's thumb was officially designated as an inch. It was three barleycorns across.

The Yard. The distance from King Henry I's nose to his fingertips. The distance is also twice as long as a cubit. **The Mile.** In the Roman legionary, the mile was the distance covered by 1,000 double steps. Queen Elizabeth added more feet so the mile would equal eight furlongs. **The Furlong.** The length of a furrow a team of oxen could plow before resting. **The Acre.** The amount of land a yoke of oxen could plow in one day.

The Fathom. The span of a seaman's outstretched arms; 880 fathoms make a mile. The National Geographic News Service, which collected this information, says the metric system has a more scientific origin, though the common person may think it almost as difficult to understand.

The Metric System. Based on the meter, which is defined precisely as 1,650,763.73 wave lengths of orange-red light emitted by the krypton-86 atom, or originally one-ten-millionth of the length of the longitude from the North Pole to the equator.

The meter is exactly 39.37 inches. Or it measures about 118 barleycorns, however you choose to think about it that way.

Why Academy Awards are called 'Oscars'

It's a mystery. How did the Academy Awards come to be known as Oscars?

Nobody knows for sure, not even the Academy director of communications John Pavlik, not even the accountants at PriceWaterhouse-Coopers.

The first Academy Awards were

presented in 1929, but the nickname wasn't officially adopted until 10 years later.

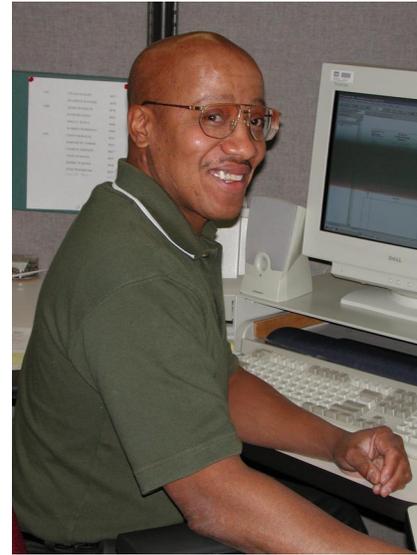
Before that, journalists were stuck with such monikers as "the statue of merit" or "the golden trophy."

Some credit entertainment reporter Sidney Skolsky, who first used "Oscar" in print in a 1934 column. But historians say he provided no explanation of the term, which suggests that it had already entered the Hollywood vernacular.

Actress Bette Davis claimed she invented the name. She noticed that the statuette's hindquarters bore a striking resemblance to those of her husband, trumpeter Harmon Oscar Nelson. There is, of course, no documentation of this claim since Harmon Oscar is long gone.

The most widely accepted theory is that Academy librarian Margaret Herrick thought the statue looked like her Uncle Oscar.

One problem: It turns out she didn't have an Uncle Oscar, just a second cousin. Herrick went on to become the executive director of the Academy.



New Public Affairs Chief

Alan Dooley comes to the St. Louis District from a lengthy military public affairs career — albiet with the US Navy. A native of Racine, Wisconsin, he served first as an enlisted photographer and journalist and public affairs officer during his 31 year career.

Logistics Management

Warren Workman will be handling excess property for the District. He was a school teacher in Atlanta, Georgia. He enjoys music, plays basketball and baseball.

New Deputy District Engineer for Planning, Programs and Project Management

Mr Joseph Kellett comes to St. Louis from his current assignment at Rock Island. Mr. Kellett served on the team that designed the Mel Price Lock and Dam back in the 1980s. He moved to Rock Island in 1995 where he has served as both Chief, Construction Division and Chief, Project Management Branch, Project Management Division. He also led the team for the transition of the Rock Island Arsenal's DPW mission to USACE. Joe's previous assignments included work in Kuwait, HQUSACE Civil Works Directorate and the European Division in Nuernberg Germany.



New Chief of Regulatory Banch

Danny McClendon has over ten years of experience with the St. Louis District Regulartoy Branch. Previously, he served with the Planning Division of the Kansas City District. Danny's a native of Missouri.



Office of Counsel

Beth Pitrolo left the District in 1987 after working for the old Recreation-Resources Management Branch and in Real Estate. From there she lived in Wyoming, Australia and Texas. Beth went to law school in 1994, and comes to Office of Counsel from the Illinois Attorney General's Office.



The Way I Remember It

by *Claude Strauser*

27 January 2002, my 33rd anniversary with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers! Over three decades, nearly a third of a century – whew! In many ways it seems like I started work here only yesterday. In another way it seems like it was several life times ago. What do I remember about my very first day with the Corps?

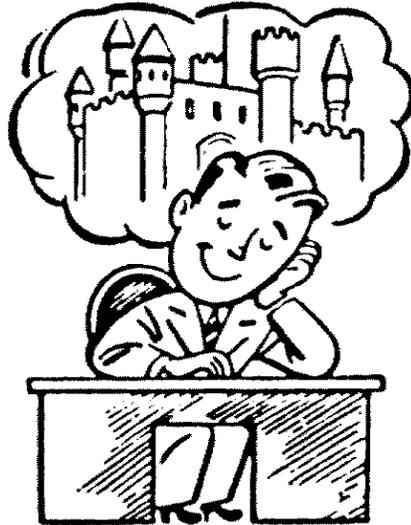
This is really a story about Barb Boswell. Barb worked for the Corps in the Personnel Office during the time I was here. She was the one person who kept my first day with the Corps from also being my last day with the Corps. Here is the story, the way I remember it:

Monday morning – 27 January 1969 – the weather is cold, raining and, of course, the days are short and it is dark when you arrive at work. I had never been to the district office before and I didn't know exactly where it was. Don Wampler gave me a map in the package mailed to my house with the job offer. I had interviewed with the Corps on the campus of the University of Missouri at Rolla.

I parked in the area by the St. Louis Public Library. It was on Olive (between 12th and 13th Streets) and I needed to walk to 9th and Olive. The district office was located in the Frisco Building. I started walking and crossed the street at 12th and Olive. There was construction going on at that corner (I didn't know it then, but this is where the Corps would move in a couple of years). The sidewalk was blocked so I had to walk in the street. Just then a city bus drove by and splashed water all over me – nearly drowned me. I kept walking and dripping – some of the water was beginning to freeze on my coat and pants legs. Finally I found the Frisco building. I walked into the lobby and

paused. Before me were four elevators.

I had never seen an elevator before, much less ride on one. One of the ladies yelled at me – “Going Up”. I later become friends with her. Her name was Marian and she was always cheerful and smiling. I told her I wanted to go to the personnel office of the Corps of Engineers. I got into the elevator; she pulled a see through expansion door closed. Then she gave a lever a 180-degree turn and a heavy door closed. The elevator began with a jerk and almost immedi-



ately stopped with another jerk. The personnel office was on the 2nd floor. Since this was my first elevator ride, I didn't know what to expect and I was almost sick. I emerged from the elevator and headed for the opposite wall. I was cold, dripping water from the near drowning experience and was experiencing nausea from riding the machine from hell called an elevator. I remember saying to myself – I can't do this everyday for the rest of my career and I was wishing I were back home on the farm. This is when I first met Barb Boswell. She said, “Honey, can I help you? I told her I was looking for the personnel office of the Corps of Engineers. I ex-

plained that I was hired for the Junior Engineer Training (JET) program and I was to begin processing that morning. She said to follow her and she took me to her office.

She took my drenched coat and hung it on a hook. She then got a trashcan to put under the coat to catch the water still dripping from it. She brought me a chair and said to sit down before I fell down. She was truly an angel and could tell the farm boy needed help.

Everything was done by hand in those days. Processing took nearly all day. Everything was done with a typewriter and carbon paper – there were no computers then. Many forms had to be filled out (in triplicate) and a government driver's license had to be obtained. This required a physical. A retired doctor had been given a small office on one of the upper floors.

Naturally, I walked up the stairs to his office – I wasn't ever going to get in the elevator again. His first words were, “How are you doing?” I replied OK and he checked a box saying my hearing was fine. The entire physical exam only took ten minutes – most of that devoted to filling out paper work.

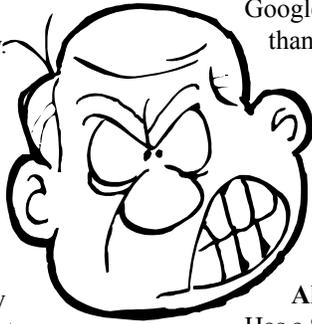
That was 33 years ago and I still remember the kindness and the thoughtfulness of Barb Boswell. She made a miserable day into a better day. Over the years, she and I became best friends. She was a very competent, very dedicated and very knowledgeable personnel specialist. She knew every personnel rule ever written by memory. She was also a very good friend with a wonderful sense of humor. Barb used to call me at least once a year after she retired but, unfortunately, I haven't heard from her for a long time.

Every year, on my anniversary, I think about my first day (and almost my last day) with the Corps of Engineers. That is the way I remember it.



Search smart: Some engines make it easy

If searching through Web pages for information is a frustrating, time-consuming task, you are in good company. A survey published last year by the market research firm IDS shows that 71 percent of Web users say they get frustrated by searching. On average, they give up after 12 minutes of fruitless hunting. Writing for the tech journal ON Magazine, columnist Jyoti Thottam claims the best search choice is Google. It has the unique feature of caching pages, so even pages that



have been taken offline by the creator might still be available on Google. At www.images.google.com you just type in the name, and it shows you a picture of that person.

Google looks at more of the Web than any other search engine, with an index of 1.6 billion Web pages, according to Search Engine Watch, the industry's online bible. The organization named Google the best search engine of 2000.

Other Search Engines AltaVista: www.altavista.com

Has a Search Assistant that lets you customize your search. It also features a nifty translator called Babelfish. This will allow you to plug in text from one language and get a translation, usually hilarious, into another.

Ixquick: www.ixquick.com

Hunts through 14 different search engines at once, including AltaVista and Yahoo, and ranks results based on how many times they appear in each one's Top 10 results.

Queryserver: www.queryserver.com

Searches up to 10 different search engines at once and organizes results by topic "clusters." It's more difficult to use, say the experts, but very useful for hard-core searches.

Wisenut: www.wisenut.com

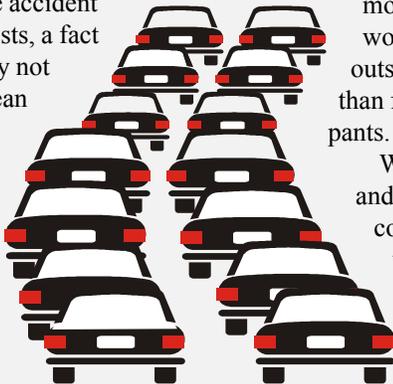
Organizes results by how many other pages link to them, but also ranks them by the quality of those links. It claims to have a larger database than Google, and is searchable in different languages. You can set search preferences, including no adult content. It's a little slower than Google, but somewhat more comprehensive.

More danger for drivers than for workers

Highway work zone accidents increasing

Most work zone accident victims are motorists, a fact that the public may not realize, says E. Dean Carlson, Kansas Secretary of Transportation. He was testifying before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit.

"This is a point that should be driven home in every campaign for work zone safety," Carlson said, "because most drivers think it's not their problem."



A Georgia Department of Transportation survey found that 70 percent of the drivers in its focus groups believed work zones were more dangerous for the workers standing outside on the project than for vehicle occupants.

While the government and the highway contractors are doing what they can to make navigating work zones easier and more safe, drivers should

have a high degree of self-interest.

Slow down, read the signs, and follow the directions. Save your own life and your own vehicle from damage.

Direct deposit of tax refunds

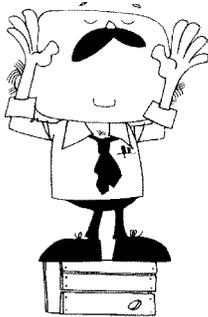
Last year 34 million taxpayers told the IRS to deposit their tax refunds into their bank accounts. That represented only 36 percent of taxpayers who earned refunds. Financial advisors say direct deposit is a good idea for several reasons. First, you get your refund much faster and safer than if you rely on the mail. Second, your refund check won't be returned as undeliverable. The most common reasons for returned checks:

- Taxpayers had moved and not informed the IRS of their new addresses.
- Taxpayers' handwriting was illegible.

If you move after mailing your tax return, notify the U.S. Postal Service or file IRS Form 8822.



Around the District



Rend Lake

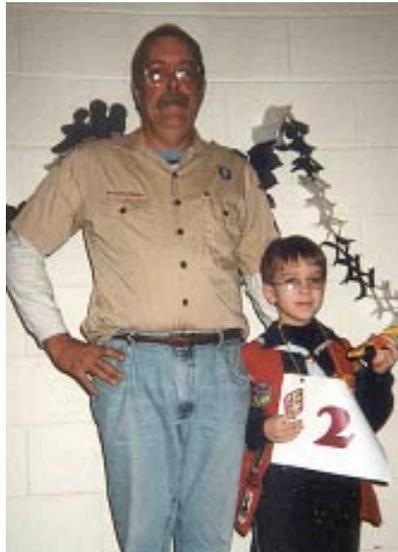
Corps Rangers Volunteer Their Time to Scouting

Rend Lake is well represented in the scouting arena with three Corps employees acting as scouting leaders. Mike Edwards, Rend Lake Ranger in the Interpretive Services and Outreach Department, serves as Cub Master for Pack 7048 in West Frankfort, IL; Janet Mifflin, Ranger in the Recreation Management Department, is the Tiger Cub Den Leader for Pack 7048; and Rend Lake's Assistant Operations Manager, Kevin Curran performs the duties of Cub Master for Pack 7085 in Herrin, IL.

Many hours are spent by each of the volunteers to insure that each of the scouts has a positive role model and it allows them to teach the young boys to live the scouting mottos every day of their lives. The mottos of boy scouting are to "do their best, honor God and country, and to help other people."

Rend Lake Park Ranger Janet Mifflin and Mike Edwards volunteer their time to serve with Pack 48. "Being a scout leader is a fun and very rewarding extra curricular activity" said Janet. She has led her den on many activities this year to reach their goals and advance to the next level of scouting. Janet says that one of the most anticipated events of the year is the Pinewood Derby. The 2002

annual Pinewood Derby was held on January 20, 2002 at the National Guard Armory in West Frankfort, IL. Approximately thirty entries, in five categories, were proudly displayed on tables near the wooden racetrack. Black and white-checked flags



Mike and Joshua Edwards at Pinewood Derby

lined the racetrack as parents, grandparents, siblings and friends filled the audience. The thirty young participants who had designed, hand carved, sanded, and painted their car listened carefully as the rules were announced. As their car number was called they each brought their car up, placed it in its lane and ran to the end of the track. The excitement could be seen on each of the boys faces. Scout leaders had cautioned the boys that the biggest winners at the Derby would be the individuals that displayed good sportsmanship and courtesy toward the other racers. Each race produced some that were disappointed at their defeat, but everyone was awarded a patch for participation. Each participant got to race a minimum of two times in the double elimination tournament.

Awards were given to the first, second, and third fastest cars in each category. Tiger Den Leader Janet Mifflin was especially proud to

announce that her 7-year old son, Seth Mifflin was awarded the honor of First Place in the Tiger Cub Division as well as the overall Grand Champion for the fastest car in all divisions.

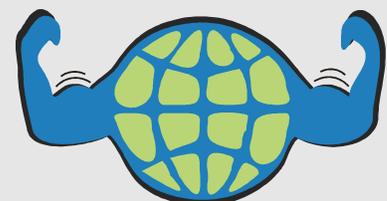


Seth Mifflin, son of Janet Mifflin, displays his Pinewood Derby trophies.

Don't forget!

Rend Lake Earth Day 2002

May 2nd & 3rd





Lake Shelbyville



Winter can be beautiful too.

These two scenes were captured by Lake Shelbyville's own Maria Shafer. Thanks for sharing!



September 11th Continues to affect lives

Park Ranger Leanne answered the call and exchanged uniforms in October. She became Petty Officer First Class Leanne J. Cruitt.

We'll have more of her story in an upcoming issue of Esprit.

Lake Shelbyville 2002 Special Events

- 20 April Earth Day
- 8 June Kid's Fishing Tournament
- 15 June Craft Show
- 4 July Fireworks at the Dam
- 6 July AquaFest - Water Safety Carnival
- 13-14 July Musket and Drums Muster
- 3 October Eco-Meet
- 12-13 October Fall Colors Hikes
- 26 October Whitley Creek Trail of Terror

Carlyle Lake will host Celebrate the Earth 2002 on April 26, 2002

The purpose of this event is to help students understand, make educated decisions and appreciate the environment. The events are geared to age groups. Our partners of this event are: Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Natural History Survey, Natural History Education Company, St. Louis Science Center, World Bird Sanctuary, St. Louis Zoo and the St. Louis Herpetology Society.



St. Louis District FUSRAP Team Takes Field Analytics To A New Level

By Ron Frerker ED-HQ

At the heart of any hazardous, toxic or radioactive waste (HTRW) cleanup are chemical samples. They are planned as mentioned in a previous article, collected and sent to the lab. The normal turnaround time for a lab is about four weeks. After the analysis of this data, the remedial excavations are designed. Upon removal of the contaminated soil, samples of the excavation are taken to demonstrate the completeness of the remediation. These samples are expedited through the lab with an increased cost, usually fifty percent or more. Meanwhile, the excavation remains open, collecting water, which may require treatment, potentially adding more costs. Two things can be noted here: first the longer the excavation is open, the higher the costs and secondly, there is a tendency to over-excavate to assure that remedial goals are achieved and prevent having to go back and remove more if the samples are elevated.

Enter the use of field analytical measurements (FAM). FAM allow the HTRW team to achieve faster turnaround times (TAT) which in turn can diminish the need to over-excavate. However, these field instruments are frequently not sufficiently sensitive at the level of detection needed to demonstrate that the contractor reached the cleanup action level.

For the St. Louis FUSRAP sites, some procedures have been found which allow us to optimize the use of FAM. First, two of our radioactive contaminants of concern (COCs) have sufficiently strong gamma emissions that they can be detected at concentrations close to the remedial action level with a sodium iodide detector. A simple walkover with this instrument, computer aided of course, coupled with a GPS unit, can produce a color-coded map indicating the levels of contamination. Actual samples are

then taken, analyzed and specific isotopic ratios calculated such as radium-226/thorium-230. This is done because the thorium-230 does not have a strong gamma signature. Using the field measurement and the ratio, the thorium can be estimated. So now, the FUSRAP team can use the original sampling data to determine conservative gross cut lines for the excavation and then use the walkover data for those areas where contamination is still above action levels, eliminating over-excavation. When the cost of transportation and disposal is over two hundred dollars (>\$200) per cubic yard, savings in over-excavation are an important part of the program.



Chemist Wendy Elmes performs a settleable solids run.

But, we didn't stop there. The verification that areas have achieved cleanup goals requires samples with faster TATs than most labs could provide. After a careful study of the cost of samples and a projection of the numbers, it was concluded that our own on-site lab would be a cost effective investment, which would also give us the control over prioritization of sample analysis. An on-site lab could produce definitive level samples in just over eight hours for the most arduous analyses and screening level samples in less than one, thus improving TATs drastically. A modular building was designed, competitively bid and outfitted with the most productive equipment. The

lab was designed for a high production rate of a very narrow range of analyses; that is, geared exactly to our COCs and our sample needs.

The process has been fine-tuned so that all radiochemical samples are now accomplished on-site, including water discharges, verification of cleanup goals and air monitoring; lab Quality Assurance samples are an obvious exception. Our sample analysis charges allow cost-effective pre-design investigation sampling and therefore design enhancement. For the last two fiscal years, approximately nineteen thousand samples yearly have been run through our lab. Our cost for an alpha spectroscopy sample is one hundred forty dollars (\$140) versus two hundred eighty eight (\$288) from our contract lab. Likewise, gamma spectroscopy is fifty dollars (\$50) versus one hundred eighty nine (\$189) for contract cost. The lab has paid for itself more than once.

One final thought; the success of the HISS lab, as it's called, led us to the implementation of satellite labs at the two major sites, the St. Louis Downtown and St. Louis Airport Sites, to optimize the productivity of remediation contractors. These limited capability labs produce screening level samples only, but they can be done with fifteen-minute counts and no sample preparation. These samples support manifesting and disposal assessments, where lower levels of detection are not needed. There is a difference between our two disposal sites, where one site can only take soil below the source level definition, but at a lower price. Our satellite labs can determine the most cost effective disposal option. In a recent investigative area, thirty-five thousand cubic yards of soil were isolated and sent to the lower level facility at a savings of about two hundred and forty thousand dollars. We have documented savings of two and one quarter million dollars compared to the contract lab costs for 2000 and expect similar numbers for 2001. And that can bring a little tear of joy to the eye of a PM!



Employee of the Month



Charlie Deutsch of the Rivers Project Office

District Team,

It is my pleasure to select Charlie Deutsch as the St. Louis District Employee of the Month for February 2002. I received the following nomination from one of Charlie's co-workers and I thought it spoke for itself. Congratulations, Charlie!

Col Morrow

"My honorary nominee for District employee of the month is Charlie Deutsch. Charlie Deutsch, a Corps ranger, has worked for the St. Louis District Rivers Project for the last 10 years. I have only had the opportunity to work with Mr. Deutsch for four years, but my experience with him has been very memorable. Mr. Deutsch is one of the first employees to arrive in the morning, and one of the last to leave, not simply by schedule, but by dedication. Having been around a good while, Mr. Deutsch understands the fundamentals of "sustainable solutions", working everyday to make our public lands more beautiful and diverse places for the public to enjoy.

When individuals call the Rivers Project, Mr. Deutsch is always the first one to jump to the phone. He has had his hands in almost every volunteer or boy scout project in the area. Just a few months ago, Mr. Deutsch worked with Bill Levins's son, helping him finish his eagle scout

project by building and placing benches within the Riverlands area. Furthermore, recently Mr. Deutsch provided assistance for another boy scout group by purchasing trees and helping the scouts plant them within the Environmental Demonstration Area.

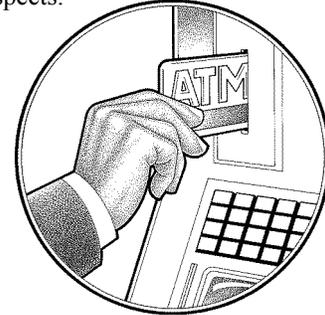
These projects are only a modest few Mr. Deutsch has helped with, but they have created better relations between us and the public, and provided greater diversity in the wetland areas. It is also noteworthy to mention that many of these projects required Mr. Deutsch to come in on weekends, which he normally has off. Beyond this, many of these hours were not even applied to his time sheet, since he stresses that more money will be available for project spending. In fact, just a few weeks ago, Mr. Deutsch and another ranger helped rescue a trumpeter swan from the Environmental Demonstration Area that had a penny logged in its throat.

This was during an extremely cold period and after duty hours, while Mr. Deutsch held the swan until a biologist from a local bird rehabilitation center arrived. Just last week, the swan was released back into the Riverlands area with Mr. Deutsch's help.

Mr. Deutsch, with his candid words and personality has created better relations with contractors around the project, making for a better work environment. Mr. Deutsch superintends 1200 acres adjacent to the Rivers Projects Building which receives unprecedented visitation during the winter months. In order to keep this area nice, and keep people coming back, Mr. Deutsch works very hard to keep the wetlands full of water for resting waterfowl, as well as other species. I truly feel that he should be named District *Employee of the Month.*"

ATM Scam

We've received information of an ATM scam which is operated by two suspects.



The first suspect will rig the slot on the ATM machine to capture the card of the next person who uses the machine. The second suspect is used as a "lookout" to warn of possible witnesses and/or potential victims.

Once a customer attempts to use his card in the ATM machine, his card is captured. The suspect reappears, pretending to render assistance by convincing the customer that with his PIN he will be able to retrieve the card by entering the PIN and holding down the "Enter" and "Cancel" buttons.

After several attempts, the customer is convinced the ATM machine has captured his card. Both the suspect and the customer leave, but the suspect returns to retrieve the card, and he now has the PIN. Armed with both, the card is able to be used to its maximum.

Do you have an old photo you're willing to share?



Esprit needs your help. Rummage for those old pics! Challenge your coworkers! Contact your Public Affairs office 314 331-8001 All originals will be returned.



Retiree's Corner



Bill would make deferred annuity more attractive

Recently introduced legislation in Congress would benefit federal employees who leave government service short of their retirement, and would like to take a deferred annuity option.

Under current law, federal employees who leave before they retire, and have served five years, are eligible for a deferred annuity, payable at age 62. Although the civil service trust fund invests the money, the annuitant receives a fixed amount based on his or her contributions. The government makes money off the employee's retirement investment without passing it along when the employee retires, since the annuity is not indexed to inflation.

The bill, H.R. 3521, the Deferred Annuity Fairness Act, was introduced by Rep. Nydia Velazquez, D-N.Y. It has been jointly referred to the House Committees on Government Reform and on Administration. The proposal-which the National Association of Retired Federal Employees has endorsed-would adjust deferred annuities, until the onset of payments, according to changes in the General Schedule for salaries. It would also provide a survivor benefit to the spouse of a deceased former employee eligible for a deferred annuity.

"This legislation corrects an inequity that goes largely unnoticed in federal employee retirement law," said Velazquez.

The big seven: retirement planning errors

Some errors are more costly than others. With retirement planning, one or two mistakes could cause painful changes in your retirement plans. Here are some common mistakes:

1. Not considering long-term care needs. About half of us will spend time in a nursing home. While the average annual cost of long-term care insurance is \$1,700, it will protect your other assets and provide for adequate care should the need arise.
2. Failing to consider the effects of inflation and taxes. Many retirees find that they are still in a high tax bracket after they retire. And inflation could rob them of their purchasing power.
3. Not saving enough in the years immediately before retirement. An all-out effort leading up to the final day of work can make a big difference in the size of your nest egg. Some people save a third of the final total in the last five years before retiring.
4. Making big loans to family and friends. These loans have a way of becoming gifts (not always, but often).
5. Overestimating how much you can withdraw from savings. Most advisors are comfortable with 3 to 5 percent, though some approve of 7 or 8 percent in the early retirement years when you are most active.
6. Underestimating life expectancy. Most planners now use 90 or 95 years as a longevity figure.
7. Making risky investments. If 7 or 8 percent fills your need, don't try for 17 or 18 percent.



The little legacy that grew



Benjamin Franklin wanted to demonstrate to the public the great benefits of compound interest. In his will, he left 2,000 pounds, half to Boston and half to Philadelphia.

The money was to be loaned in amounts of 60 pounds or less to young craftsmen who wished to set themselves up in business.

Two hundred years later Franklin's fund still existed. In Philadelphia it was used for mortgage loans.

In Boston the fund continued to finance education, though apprenticeships gave way to loans to students attending colleges in the Boston area. After 200 years, the Boston fund was worth over two million dollars.

March is Irish-American heritage month



St. Patrick: Saint and hero of his time When he was captured and enslaved at the age of 16, Patrick would have been astounded to know what his life would become. He would have been even more surprised to learn that March 17 would be celebrated as his feast day by a large part of the world with prayer, gaiety, and parades. After his escape and many adventures, Patrick converted to Christianity, studied, and was ordained. He served 15 years in the church before his first nomination as bishop. He was ordained Bishop of Ireland in 432.

St. Patrick used the shamrock leaf to symbolize the Trinity, a symbol that is still held dear by the Irish and those of Irish descent all over the world. Many wear the shamrock on their lapels on St. Patrick's Day.

Last Century



A very special group of retirees.

Eight former District Engineers [DEs] a retired chief of Operations Division [now Construction-Operations Readiness Division, (CON-OPS) and District Comptroller, now (Chief of Resource management Office) joined COL Morrow for a special briefing. They are:

James B. Petersen [Operations Division, Daniel M. Wilson DE Aug '85 — Aug '88, James B. Meanor Jr. DE Jul '63 — Aug '66, Charles B. Schweizer DE Sep '57 — Jul '60, Michael R. Morrow DE since Jul '99, Isaiah [Ed] Mitchell [Comptroller], Leon E. McKinney DE Jul '76 — Aug '79, Guy E. Jester DE Jul '71 — Jul '73 and Thorwald R. Peterson DE Aug 73 — Jul '76.

“Together we can save a life”

March marks 50th American Red Cross Month



During the month of March we celebrate the work of America's most prominent disaster relief organization, the American Red Cross. In times of natural disaster or terrorism, the Red Cross is there to help victims and their families.

Its history

Twenty years before starting the American Red Cross, founder Clara Barton came to the aid of soldiers fighting in the U.S. Civil War. She became known as the “Angel of the Battlefield” as she distributed supplies and tended to the wounded and dying.

Barton documented the appalling carnage and medical conditions of the wounded transported to Fredericksburg from the Wilderness campaign. She served similarly in the Franco-Prussian War, in flood-ravaged

Johnstown, Penn., and in hurricane-battered Galveston, Texas. It is hard to imagine how the American Red Cross would have come into being without her dedication, reputation, and contacts.

How you can help

Aside from the work of aiding victims, collecting blood is one of the organization's primary activities. Blood is in particularly short supply during the summer months and the year-end holidays, but donations are needed throughout the year