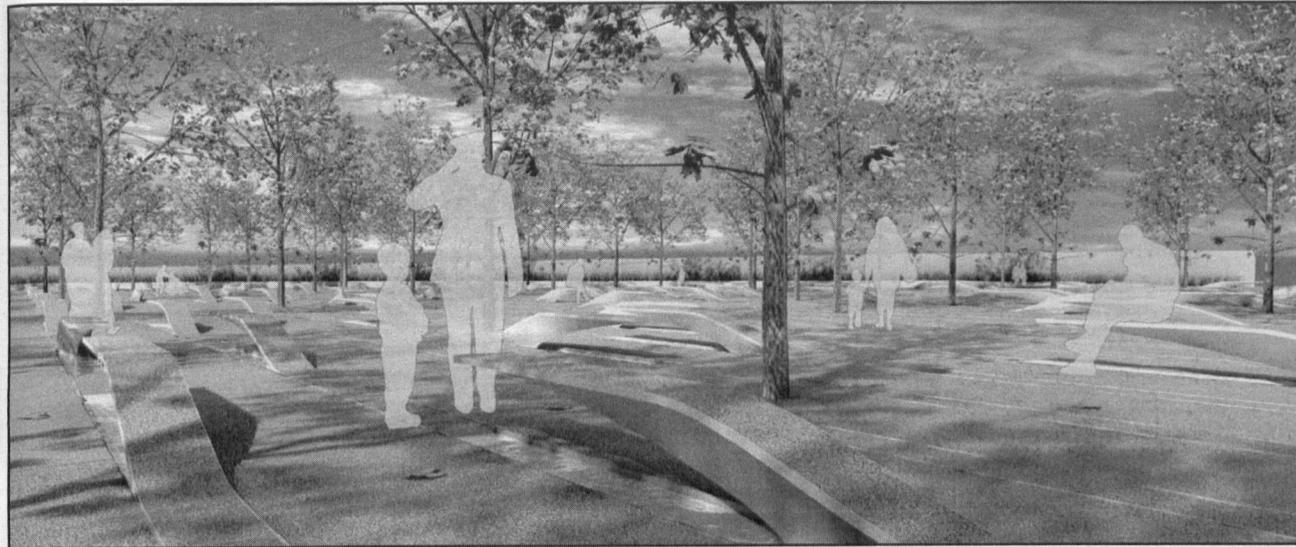




US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Engineer Update

Vol. 27 • No. 4 • April 2003



The winning design for the Pentagon Memorial will feature 184 benches in a park-like setting, one for each person who died at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001. (Artwork courtesy of Baltimore District)

Winning design selected for Pentagon Memorial

By Mary Beth Thompson
Baltimore District

A park-like field of 184 cantilevered benches set amid trees and walkways will honor those who died at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001.

The winner of Pentagon Memorial Competition was announced March 3.

"The successful completion of the Corps' part of the project brings enormous respect for all the energy, heart and work by the team, designers, jury, families, and loved ones," said Carol Anderson-Austra, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' project manager.

The winners, New York architects Julie Beckman and Keith Kaseman, were introduced by Terry Riley, chair of the Pentagon Memorial jury, at the March 3 news conference in the Pentagon Press Briefing Room. Riley is chief curator of design and architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The winning concept

Beckman, 30, and Kaseman, 31, stood behind their model as they gave details about their concept.

"The site is organized based on a timeline of the victims' ages, starting with the youngest victim, Dana Falkenburg, who was three years old, and ending at the eldest victim, (John) Yamnicky, who was 71," Beckman said.

Each bench will appear to float above a lighted pool of water and display the name of a person who was killed. The benches will be aligned parallel to the flight path of the jet that struck the Pentagon on Sept. 11, and will face toward or away from the Pentagon to indicate whether the person was on the plane or in the building.

The two architects explained their goals.

"First, this place had to be like no other place, and that is simply because Sept. 11 was like no other day," Beckman said.

They accomplished their second aim, to note the sheer magnitude of the event, by providing a solemn record of the lives lost.

"We wanted to provide 184 special, unique places,

each dedicated to an individual who had lost his or her life," Beckman said.

The materials they chose accomplished their last goal — to emphasize life. The stabilized gravel underfoot will be soft yet crunchy. The elements of water and light will reflect off the benches' aluminum surfaces. The benches will form a ripple effect across the grounds, and a canopy of trees will provide light, shade, and shadow.

"We wanted to fill this space with evidence of life, so we focused on a tactile, sensuous environment," Beckman said.

The jury

The Pentagon Memorial jury chose Beckman's and Kaseman's concept on Feb. 21 from the submissions of the six finalists who competed in Stage Two of the competition.

Besides Riley, jury members were:

- Former Secretaries of Defense Dr. Harold Brown and Melvin Laird.
- Family members Wendy Chamberlain and Jim Laychak.
- Artists Sheila Levrant de Bretteville and Mary Miss.
- Landscape architects Walter Hood and Roger Martin.
- Architect Karen Van Lengen.
- Carolyn Shelton, wife of former Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Hugh Shelton.

When the jury first met last September for the Stage One judging, Anderson-Austra gave short, direct advice to the jury. "You have two goals — to satisfy the families and to select a great design."

All six finalists that moved to Stage Two submitted impressive models and boards, making the jury's decision a difficult one, according to Riley.

"Our deliberations were long and thoughtful and quite spirited," Riley said. "But by the end of the day, it was a unanimous vote." Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld approved the design shortly after the jury made its choice.

Family members who were at the press briefing en-

Corps gets Iraqi oil fire mission

The Department of Defense has designated the Army as executive agent for implementing plans to extinguish oil well fires and to assess the damage to oil facilities during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Secretary of the Army assigned the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as the Army's executive agent in a memo dated Feb. 13. The plan encompasses the full range of activities that might be necessary to restore or continue the operation of the Iraqi oil infrastructure, which is vital to the future health of Iraq's economy.

Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Southwestern Division commander, is in theater in charge of this mission.

To carry out this mission, the Corps will rely in large part on contractors with the needed expertise and specialized resources. In the initial phase, the Corps' prime contractor will be Kellogg, Brown & Root (KBR) of Houston, which prepared the contingency plans for the government under the Army Field Support Command's Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP).

KBR further subcontracted the task to oil fighting specialists — Boots and Coots, and Wild Wells.

The Corps will perform a variety of activities, including extinguishing oil well fires, assessing damage to oil facilities, and is prepared to clean up oil spills or other damage at oil facilities.

The Corps also will perform engineering design, repair damaged infrastructure, operate facilities, and distribute products, if required.

As of press time, USACE does not have any other contracts or missions for reconstruction.

How many oil wells fires are burning now?

As of press time, seven fires were burning.

When will we start putting them out?

As soon as the area can be secured, water sources established, and equipment moved in.

How long does it take to put out an oil well fire?

We are making an initial estimate of an average of seven to 10 days per well in the north, and three to four days in the south.

What are the risks involved in extinguishing an oil well fire?

Extinguishing oil well fires is a high hazard occupation with many risks to humans, the environment, and expensive equipment. Caution must be taken to protect the health and safety of all involved.

How will we prioritize which wells to extinguish first?

Our top priority will be wells that pose the greatest threat to the Iraqi people, to the environment, and to coalition forces.

How much does it cost to extinguish an oil well fire?

Cost depends on many factors — extent of damage, what access is available, what water can be found and transported to the site and many other environmental conditions.

Continued on page three

'The best exercise for the heart is picking people up'

By Col. Lowell Moore
Chaplain, U. S. Army Corps of
Engineers

I have heard it said that the happiest day of your life is when the youngest child leaves home and the dog dies. This made me question my sanity when my wife, Betty, and I decided to take on the responsibilities of a pet and get a dog *after* our kids were gone.

The dog we got is an energetic little Schnauzer named Sport. He is full of life, always on the go, and loves to play. Every day and twice a day on weekends and holidays, Sport will keep begging until I finally give in, get up off the couch, and take him for a walk that lasts about 30 minutes. And this is in addition to all the times he gets me off the couch to play ball, hide and seek, or our version of tag.

One day Sport and I had played until I was tuckered out, but he was still full of life and didn't want to stop. It seemed as if he had life to spare, and I wished there was some way I could take some of his energy and use it for myself.

This caused me to wonder if medical science will ever find a way to take life from one creature and give it to another. If so, we could raise animals and harvest their

lives to increase our own. I quickly dismissed this as a stupid thought, and I hoped it would never happen.

But not long ago, I was watching a TV program on health and heard someone say that walking just 30 minutes a day could increase your life by several years. I thought of the many times Sport has coaxed me off the couch to take him for a walk, and then it hit me. Sport may be adding years to my life, not because I'm *taking* life from him, but because I'm *giving* of myself to him. I was reminded of a lesson I keep forgetting, "Give and it will be given to you." (Luke 6:38)

If this is true with a dog, think how much more it would be true for a person.

Recently, Betty and I were reunited with a couple we had not seen for 24 years. During those years our friend, Dennis, had developed a cancerous brain tumor. His speech and motor skills were almost completely gone, and his wife, Patty, had to care for him.

Doctors said there was nothing else that could be done, but one doctor heard that the National Institute of Health in Washington, D.C., had an untried experimental procedure and thought it might help. Since they had nothing to lose, Dennis and Patty

agreed to the procedure.

Our hearts went out to our old friends, so Betty and I decided to have them in for dinner while they were in Washington, D.C. Then came the Presidents' Day blizzard. Not wanting to miss what might be my last chance to be Dennis' pastor, we went ahead with plans.

In spite of the fact that I had shoulder surgery about a two weeks earlier, I shoveled through the four-foot berm that the snowplow left in front of our driveway, and I cleared the snow from our walks so they would accommodate a wheelchair.

It was just the snowplows and me on the Beltway (the highway that encircles D.C.) when I drove to Bethesda to get Dennis and Patty, and then return to the wonderful dinner Betty had prepared. After a great evening, I pressed through the snow again to get them back to their hotel.

Now I ask you, "Who do you think benefited most from the effort we exerted to befriend Dennis and Patty?" I believe that Betty and I benefited the most. Although Dennis and Patty appreciated all we did and said they had a wonderful evening, Betty and I *really* felt good. Not only did we see old friends again, we knew we helped some hurting people, and when we



went to sleep that night we were at peace with the world.

John Holmes once said, "The best exercise for the heart is reaching down and picking people up." Every time I help others, I find this to be true. I suggest that the next time you are feeling down, help someone else and see what it will do for you. You will like the results.

Oh yes! Just a couple days after Dennis' surgery, he was up walking with a walker and talking again, and the doctors predict continued improvement.

(The opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.)

Letters to the Editor



Fort Autonomy vs. Fort Future

Pardon the cynicism, but the Fort Future article (*Engineer Update*, Dec. 8, 2002, "Fort Future: War-games help design Army facilities of tomorrow") implies that the Installation Transformation War-game team wanted to find out what installation concept would be the most effective.

But by choosing the names "Fort Autonomy" and "Fort Synergy," it appears to this reader that the choice had already been made. The word "synergy" has had all sorts of good connotations associated with it. "Synergy" also has received lots of good press in recent years.

While "autonomy" does not have as many negatives attached to it as "synergy" has positives, "autonomy" is an antonym, therefore it must be bad. Also,

Fort Synergy gets the "advanced telecommunications." What does Fort Autonomy get? The same telegraph wires that the old frontier Fort Apache had?

Is it any wonder, therefore, that Fort Synergy was the preferred installation? Apparently not, as Reynolds said, "Even if we wanted to go back to Fort Autonomy, it's too late now."

Wouldn't it have been a shock if Fort Autonomy had been the better choice and it was too late to go back? I'm not certain I believe Reynolds's expectations of what model the group would prefer; he must have known which model the group would choose.

My point is this. Why spend the money on an exercise with a pre-ordained conclusion? This study appears to be a justification exercise... "We did this, now let's perform a study with few controls and some built-in prejudices to bless what we've done."

Again, being cynical, this is poor way to spend the taxpayer's money. At worst, a jaundiced result is obtained which reached the wrong conclusions and hampers national security.

My personal gut feel is that the Fort Synergy model *is* probably the better choice; however, there are probably elements of Fort Autonomy that, if incorporated into the Fort Synergy model,

provides the *most* synergy. Did we identify those elements? Can they be easily incorporated? What weaknesses were discovered in the Fort Synergy model? Are we addressing those weaknesses?

That would have been worth knowing. How vulnerable is our virtual and physical networks that the Fort Synergy model relies on? If you believe the old Westerns, the Indians in the days of Fort Apache were constantly cutting the telegraph wires, and eliminating the soldiers placed to protect those networks.

Who or what are the Indians in 2015? I'm sure their increase in sophistication will nearly match ours.

It was an interesting article. Thanks for letting me vent a little.

Bill Hunter
Louisville District

(Thank you for your letter. I referred it to Steve Reynolds, the article's author. His response follows. Editor)

Thanks for your thoughtful comments. If the article encouraged others to think about the future needs of our Army's installations (as it did you), then it served its purpose.

In fact, the names and descriptions of the two extreme installation concepts played in the game were developed intentionally for that purpose.

As you point out, the names "Fort Autonomy" and "Fort Synergy" are *not* neutral. They were used deliberately to provoke debate by the players. I agree with you that "synergy" has good connotations (especially for our Chief of Engineers, who expects collaborative solutions). However, I submit that "autonomy" also has good connotations (especially for military commanders, who expect decisive control).

The purpose of presenting these two characterizations was *not* to force a choice between the two. Rather, it encouraged players to look at the pros and cons of each and move toward a creative balance.

As I pointed out in my article, I expected the events of Sept. 11, 2001, to lead the players to lean toward more autonomy. The fact that they did *not* automatically jump to that solution tells me that the process they went through to look at both extremes was worthwhile.

Again, I appreciate that you took the time to think about and respond to my article. By the time you read this I will have retired from federal service. I trust you, and the rest of the fine people of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to keep the Corps focused on doing everything humanly possible to serve the Army and the nation.



Rangers telling Lewis & Clark story

Article by Denver Beaulieu-Hains
Headquarters
Photo by Marti Hendrix
HECSA

When the Army recruited soldiers to explore the West with Lewis and Clark they said, "Married men, gentlemen's sons, and romantics need not apply."

Although that was 200 years ago, the values that made the strenuous journey from Virginia to the Pacific Ocean a success remain an Army mainstay. Now the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' park rangers are telling the story.

"I've been talking to the public unofficially about Lewis and Clark for 15 years," said Robin Norris, a park ranger at Bonneville Lock and Dam about 40 miles east of Portland, Ore. Norris works along the Columbia River, which is along the Lewis and Clark Trail. "We're expecting a higher turn-out of visitors just because of where we're located."

For the last couple of years, Bonneville Lock and Dam has held a Lewis and Clark Day each fall. The event commemorates the historic trek across Oregon. The event once needed just films and short talks, but now it requires extensive preparation.

"Not only are we preparing our interpretive services," said Norris. "We've got parking, restrooms, and increased traffic to consider."

The Corps has about 2,000 park rangers who manage about 4,300 recreation sites at 463 projects. Besides managing natural resources and emergency response, the Corps' park rangers interpret American history for their visitors. Lewis and Clark interpretation duties have increased greatly since the commemoration kick-off on Jan. 18.

"I feel a little more comfortable with my knowledge of the whole Lewis and Clark trip and not just the local

story," said Norris. "I can be more specific now. My knowledge base has increased."

Lewis and Clark events are expected to boost visits to Corps recreation areas from the average 376 million to much higher numbers.

"There are interpretive presentations which discuss a variety of topics," said Jeanine Nauss, the Corps' National Coordinator for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. "Topics range from 'What Did Lewis and Clark Really Discover?' to 'Duty, Honor, and Respect in the Corps of Discovery' to 'Selfless service in the Corps of Discovery.'"

Army installations and major commands along the Lewis and Clark trail, or those that just want to educate their forces, can request Lewis and Clark interpretive speakers by contacting Nauss, at (402) 697-2532, or Ken Wilk, her deputy, at (785) 453-2338. Interpretive programs can be tailored to meet geographical and regional needs.

Speakers are available to any Army command, but travel, meals and lodging expenses would be paid by the requesting command, Nauss said.

The history of the expedition usually focuses on the two officers who led and accomplished their difficult mission, Wilk said. But there are dozens of stories including the role of the non-commissioned officers and soldiers who were also part of the Corps of Discovery.

"The Corps doesn't want anyone to forget that there is a major Army command that already has assets to support the Lewis and Clark mission," Wilk added.

For more information about the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, see the cooperative Web site at <http://www.lewisandclark200.gov>. Besides providing historical and current documents, the site features a map where users can click for information about all relevant locations in each state.



Tim Bischoff, St. Louis District park ranger, portrays George Drouillard, the Lewis & Clark Expedition's half-Shawnee, half-French sign-talker.

Pentagon Memorial

Continued from page one
dorsed the selection.

"It really satisfied the needs of the families for a place of comfort and beauty, yet it also satisfies the needs of those around the world and our nation by explaining what occurred here," Chamberlain said. Fellow juror and family member Laychak told reporters it would be an individual and a collective memorial, telling the story of what happened that day.

"When we're long gone and we can't describe who our loved ones were, we want people to be able to go to the place and feel their presence and feel what we lost that day," said family member Stephanie Dunn.

The team

For the Corps' project team members, the announcement of the winner was a proud moment that capped 17 months of intense and caring labor on a challenging and important project.

"This is the fastest any project of this type has been done," Anderson-Austra said. "But anyone could do it fast. The fact that we did it well, not missing any important step in a process that required a great deal of sensitivity and a comprehensive approach, is the reason we're proud of what we accomplished."

The Oklahoma City Memorial was completed in six years, which is widely considered to be a short time frame to build a memorial of national importance. The Corps turned the Pentagon Memorial project over to Washington Headquarters Services on a track to be completed well ahead of the Oklahoma City timetable.

Anderson-Austra modeled the Corps' process loosely on the Oklahoma City Memorial, which was noted for its compassionate, inclusive, and democratic approach. The memorials are similar in that they are both located where the tragedy occurred, and the victims' families' have been fully involved.

"When the project was first handed to me a few weeks

after 9/11, I knew that in order to succeed, we must have a small, tight, committed team and extensive family involvement," Anderson-Austra said.

She began with a focus group of stakeholders that included regulatory agencies and Pentagon officials and a Family Steering Committee of about 12 family members who wanted to be involved in planning a memorial. And Anderson-Austra built a Corps project team, calling on Counsel, Planning, Public Affairs, Programs and Project Management, Contracting, and others as needed.

"The site and design selection phase of the Pentagon Memorial project offered a rare challenge for an extraordinary team," Anderson-Austra said.

The process moved from site evaluation, to educating the Family Steering Committee about memorialization, to planning the competition and disseminating information about it worldwide. The team responded to thousands of competition queries, registered more than 2,500 potential competitors, held a media open house, and organized receipt of about 1,200 entries. It set up the exhibits and jurying for Stages One and Two, the Stage One press conference, and the finalists' information day.

The families

Throughout the process, the Family Steering Committee provided the guiding force. They served as liaisons with other family members, helped with site evaluation, selected the logo for the competition, and wrote the family statement, which many competitors said inspired their ideas for the memorial. Kaseman said that he and Beckman relied heavily on the family statement.

"They really outlined the idea that this place should be a place that allows for interpretation," Kaseman said. "It asks you to think but doesn't tell you what to think."

The committee members also met with the finalists during an information session and gave them the family perspective. The finalists used that input in developing their concepts for their Stage Two submissions.

"They first agreed to participate in the midst of their acute mourning and loss," Anderson-Austra said of the committee members. "They've been a valiant group, always looking at the big picture and the long term historical value. I think it's fair to say that the project team feels we've learned personal lessons from them."

The process

The memorial planning process that the Corps spearheaded has been praised in the media, from *the New York Post* to the *Japan Times*.

"From the start, the process was designed to encourage as many voices as possible. Entries were blind-judged, meaning that the jury did not know whose concept they were evaluating," the *Post's* Eric Fettmann wrote.

Beckman said the competition offered a forum that invited participation from everyone, not only the big-name firms. Their company, Kaseman Beckman Amsterdam Studios, is relatively new and unknown.

"It was completely anonymous," she said. "It was open to everybody and anybody in the world. It was very comfortable for us to feel that we could contribute something."

Fettman concluded his commentary by noting that it is often said that government simply cannot accomplish as swiftly, efficiently, and economically what the private sector can.

"In this case,...government has proved that it doesn't always deserve such a bumbling reputation," he wrote.

The Pentagon Memorial project is now under the management of Washington Headquarters Services, the agency that runs the Pentagon. The Pentagon Renovation Program is the construction agent.

"We will watch the project's fruition with great interest as the selected design is implemented," Anderson-Austra said. "The success of our portion of the project leaves us feeling grateful for the opportunity to have participated in this important effort."

Modern facility studies prehistoric sturgeon

Article by Russell Elliott
Photos by Alan Dooley
St. Louis District

The pallid sturgeon is an enigmatic, seldom-seen creature of Middle America's major waterways. The fish is a dinosaur, primitive, little evolved since the "thunder lizards" roamed North America more than 70 million years ago. It is ancient in appearance, yet totally modern in its impact on human activity on the rivers.

It is also the focus of an intensive study at the Applied River Engineering Center (AREC) at the St. Louis District's service base on the Mississippi River. There, more than 200 finger-sized pallid sturgeon, reared this year in captivity, and an equal number of closely-related but smaller shovel-nosed sturgeon reside in a series of aquariums.

Separately and together in various combinations, they are helping Corps scientists learn about their habits and habitats.

What do researchers hope to learn in this artificial environment?

Research

"We don't know exactly what we're going to learn," said AREC director Rob Davinroy. "We haven't had a lot of luck finding pallid sturgeon in the river. Perhaps it's because they're rare. Or perhaps we just aren't very good at finding them."

Many past surveys (there have been very few compared to the extent of mid-America's rivers) have consisted of efforts to analyze and measure specimens by shocking the fish.

"But the tool reaches down only a few feet into the river and has a range of about five more feet," Davinroy said. "It's unlikely to help us learn much of anything about fish on the bottom of the Mississippi's average 25-foot depth.

"We've had some remarkable results from better meth-

ods of surveying fish populations lately," Davinroy added. "Maybe the kinds of raw data we're deriving from this controlled study will help us better locate and study pallid sturgeon in the environment."

Study tank

When the juvenile sturgeons are not resting or eating in their tanks, individuals and groups of like and dissimilar species are placed in a 5,000 gallon tank shaped like a race track, filled with filtered, running water. There, they are observed and records of their movements are recorded for later statistical analyses.

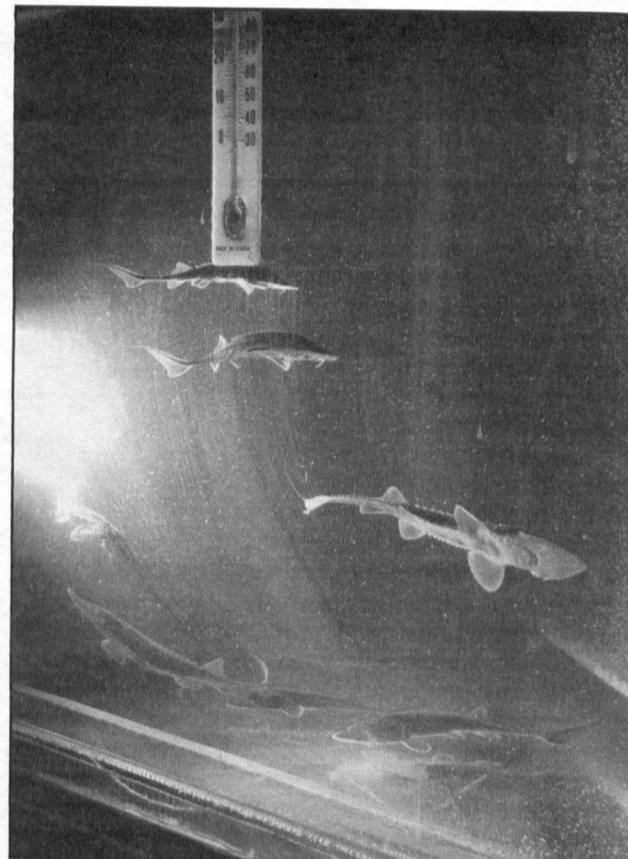
The tank's bottom has both flat and sloping surfaces, and includes various materials including gravel and sand. Its depth ranges from a few inches to nearly three feet. Water velocity also can be controlled.

Teri Allen, the lead Corps study biologist, said "This is basic research. It frankly has no direct correlation to what is happening in nature, in the deeper, more turbid river. But we hope to learn things in the laboratory that we can then relate to our studies in the natural systems. Hopefully what we see and record will help us develop hypotheses that can later be tested in the field. What we are observing may help us make better observations in the rivers."

Unknowns

Part of the pallid sturgeon's allure is its apparent rareness in nature. Few people ever see one. Most are either unaware of it or consider it unimportant in the grand scheme. But others see its small numbers as a "coal mine canary" portending the near-term demise of the river ecosystem.

Whatever the positions held on this fish and its future (and there are many) most people agree that one difficulty in assessing the pallid sturgeon's importance and the message we should receive, is the fact that we frankly don't know a lot about them.



Two hundred endangered pallid sturgeon are subjects of an intensive study in St. Louis District (Photo courtesy of St. Louis District)

The pallid sturgeon was not identified as a distinct species until 1905, and little data exists from commercial or other fishing records even in the last 50 years. We know that adults can grow to be seven feet long and 100 pounds. We know they don't breed for a long time after they are spawned, perhaps more than a decade.

We don't know how long they produce young, how often, what conditions they prefer, where they breed, where they spawn, or much else.

Crisis

We also don't know if they are as rare as they appear to be, whether they are getting rarer, are stable, or are increasing in numbers somewhere that we can't find them. And we want to know how changes to the environment influence their prospects.

Besides environmental factors, illegal catching of even a small number of large fish can gain poachers thousands of dollars when the eggs are sold as expensive caviar. Perhaps a heightened awareness and knowledge of these fish can help reduce or end that practice.

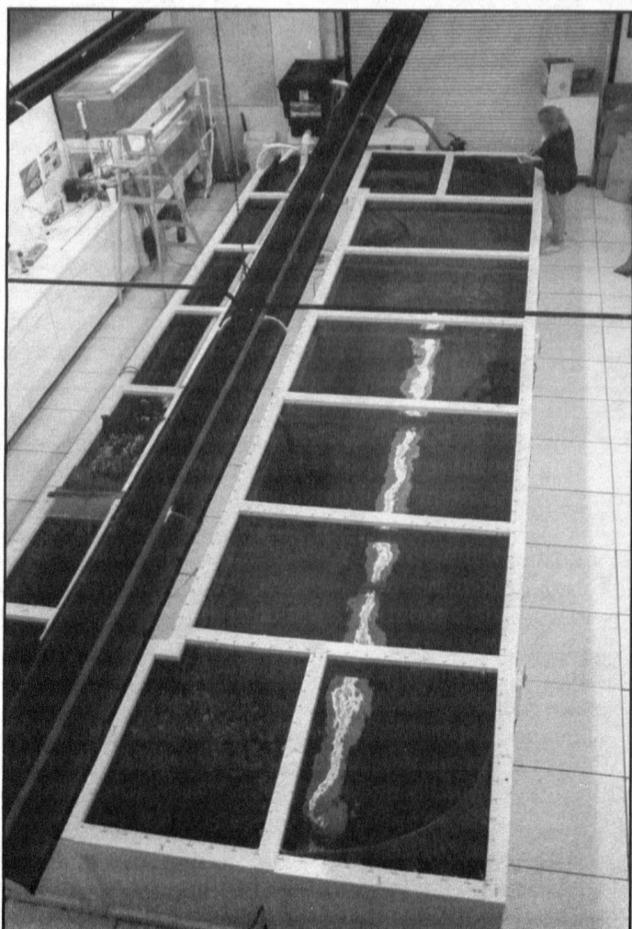
As recently as a few years ago, some scientists thought that natural reproduction had ceased in one region due to aging of the entire population. Yet recently, several young-of-the-year juvenile pallids were found in the area. Reproduction was obviously underway, and perhaps had been all along.

Importance

Identifying the types of areas used for spawning and rearing would greatly aid in protecting the remaining critical natural habitats, and would enhance our ability to provide technical advice and environmental leadership on St. Louis District projects such as ecosystem restoration.

It's important we learn these and other facts. Nobody wants to cause this fascinating species' extinction. At the same time, the pallid sturgeon has assumed near poster-child status as a species that can delay or halt development along the river. So it is also important that we learn to identify areas where they are *not* likely to be found naturally, where development may go forward with little or no negative impact.

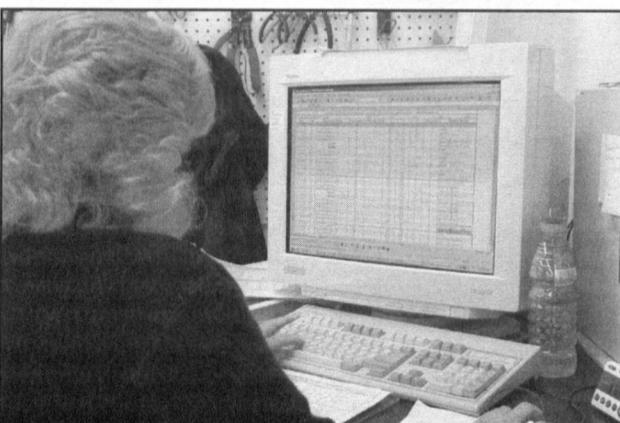
The study is a lot of effort on the Corps' part. But clearly, this is a fish that we need to know a lot more about to assess its relative importance in nature, as an indicator of the rivers' health and to help ensure that it endures into the future.



The sturgeon are studied in a 5,000-gallon tank.



Biologist Teri Allen plots the fish positions every 10 minutes.



Plotted data is entered into a computer for later analysis.

April is Volunteer Month

Park ranger makes world better place

Article by Ann Marie Harvie
Photo by C.J. Allen
New England District

West Hill Dam park ranger Viola Bramel is a doer. She doesn't sit back when there's work to do; in fact, she seeks out work to make the world a better place.

Bramel chooses to volunteer for organizations that deal primarily with education and helping the environment. One such organization is the Eagle Eye Institute, which provides environmental education programs that touch the lives of inner city kids and helps the environment.

Bramel was honored for her dedication to these children and the environment with an official citation. The citation, signed by Senator Charles Hannon, recognized Bramel for her, "commitment to building awareness, developing responsibility, and cultivating leadership in urban youth."

During a volunteer session, Bramel works with about 15 children for an eight-hour session, complete with hands-on learning and hikes. Bramel runs two eight-hour sessions per camp period. During the sessions, children also participate in a stewardship service project to the host facility, and are treated to a picnic barbecue in the evening.

Bramel selects camp sessions outside her normal duty hours. As part of volunteering for the Eagle Eye Institute, she has led the "Learn About the Forest Program" at Harvard Forest in Petersham, Mass., and the "Learn About the Waters Program" at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Richard Cronin National Salmon Station.

"It's exciting because you're in the habitat that Eagle Eye coordinates with other agencies," said Bramel. "It gives the kids a sense of being away from the city and its distractions. They want to give them an experience of hiking, stewardship, and finding things along the trails."

Rangers and professionals from state and federal agencies volunteer as role models to these future caretakers.

Bramel has been volunteering for Eagle Eye Institute for three years during the summer, positively touching the lives of about 200 inner city youths. "You feel almost as if you're planting a seed," said Bramel. "You never know; they may become Corps park rangers someday."

Volunteering has been a part of Bramel's life since she



Viola Bramel talks with children about nature and the environment during one of New England District's "Take Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day" programs.

was a child, dating back to her Girl Scout days. Today, Bramel's volunteer work doesn't stop with the Eagle Eye Institute. She has served on the Blackstone River Watershed Association since 1991, and is its current president. Bramel contributes to the association at least once a week.

"Our primary mission is the preservation and conservation of the Blackstone, and its surrounding land and tributaries," said Bramel. "We do everything from public education to stream team monitoring to recreational events."

Bramel's favorite volunteer work is at Roger Williams Park and Zoo in Providence, R.I., where she has volunteered since 1999, and hopes to become a small animal handler. To prepare to serve the public and interact with the animals, she had to attend a 14-week training session.

"This is my favorite volunteer work because I deal with both people and animals," she said. "It's fun to share with adults and children a little bit about the animal they are watching, their behaviors, adaptive features, and their preservation. I call it my 'mental health day' because I just love it. I go there all year round at least once a month."

If Bramel achieves her goal to become a small animal handler, she will take small animals such as snakes and owls to schools, senior centers, and audiences that would otherwise not be able to see the zoo animals.

Bramel also volunteers at her church. She has served as

the treasurer and service representative of her local church support group since 2001. "I'm the point of contact for the group," she said. "I receive mailings on activities and events coming and make sure that the group is informed. I also lead group business meetings."

Recent volunteer work with her church includes an eye-glasses drive for Third World countries, and a Super Bowl canned food drive for the local food pantry.

Bramel is also a recycling advocate. Owing to her interest in the environment, Bramel has been a recycling committee member in Northbridge, Mass., since 1991. "I've worked in recycling since I was a Girl Scout," she said.

Bramel applied to serve on the board and was voted in by the Board of Selectmen during a town meeting. "We started out with our own drop-off center and we eventually built that up to a curbside program," she said. "Now we operate a hazardous waste drop-off center. We have all of our own buildings and we recycle everything from paint to antifreeze to mercury thermometers."

According to Bramel, her committee recently began an electronics drop-off program. "We can now take televisions, microwaves, and computers and various other electronic appliances."

Bramel has served as a Project Wild and Aquatic Wild Facilitator for Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife since 1997. Like her work at the zoo, Bramel had to go through a training program to become a facilitator.

"The training required learning their handbook, their teaching methods, and experiencing their activities and modifying them to the framework of Massachusetts," she said. "A lot of people who come to me for workshops are teachers, Girl Scout leaders and home-schoolers."

According to Bramel, she created her own kit made up with games, activities, markers, and all the things related to Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife.

"All of the games are related to conservation and preservation," she said. "They also have language art skills and vocabulary, so you can use them in a classroom or outdoors. It's a lot of fun. I have a good time with it."

According to Bramel, volunteer work is important and she plans on continuing to do it for a long time to come. "It accomplishes a lot and it makes a difference," she said.

Volunteering at school is 17-year tradition

Article by LaShawn Sykes
Photo by Jeannie Hall
Great Lakes and Ohio River Division

The employees of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division (LRD) know a lot about the benefits of volunteering. For the past 17 years, employees (new, old, and retired) have volunteered to help students at the Linwood Fundamental Academy in Cincinnati achieve academic success and learn about the engineering profession.

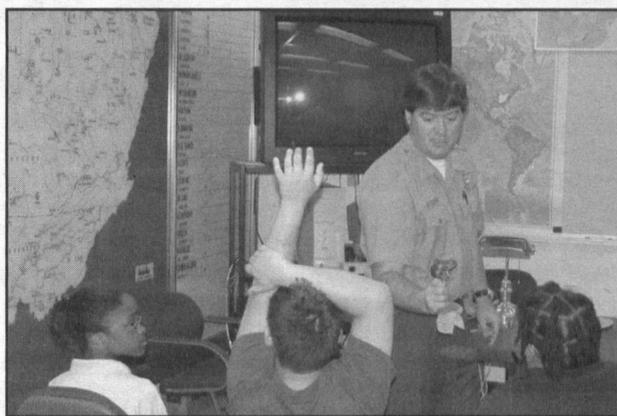
The partnership between LRD and Linwood grew from the National Partnerships in Education Program inaugurated by President Ronald Reagan in 1983. The idea behind its inception was to get both people and organizations involved in improving the quality of education in communities across America.

Linwood's principal Jay Parks said he is in total agreement with the partnership because it benefits a number of his students. The tutoring provided by the Corps volunteers has allowed those students to receive extra help that the teachers are unable to provide on a daily basis.

"The support for our students at Linwood from the general and his staff at the Corps has been rewarding for both sides, and we hope to have this great partnership continues for many years," said Parks.

Although LRD employees have different reasons for volunteering, they all are interested in helping the students in their community achieve academic success.

LRD's Geotechnical and Material Engineering expert, Dr. Mosaid Al-Hussaini, who has been volunteer-



With the help of his bullfrog, park ranger Jim O'Boyle teaches about wetlands and the kinds of animals that inhabit it.

ing in grades one through three for the last three years, said he volunteers because it is a tradition in his family to assist others...not to mention that he is living up to his first name, which means in Arabic "the one who helps others."

Former LRD employee Michael Tatum became a volunteer four years ago after hearing Linwood needed some assistance tutoring students in mathematics. Initially, Tatum thought he was just lending a hand, but before long he was hooked.

"I wasn't sure I was doing a very good job," said

Tatum. "But after a month of tutoring, I began noticing that my students were really showing improvement, and that was all I needed to keep going."

"Volunteering in school is nothing new for me," said LRD's administrative officer Katrina Lackey. She is also the Volunteer Program Coordinator, a position she has held for the past four years. "I did it when my children were in school, and I continue because I enjoy it and get much satisfaction out of seeing and working with the students."

According to Lackey, tutoring is just one of the many things LRD does for and with Linwood throughout the school year. For starters, donations are taken up to purchase schools supplies and equipment for the teachers.

"Both the supplies and equipment provided by the Corps staff have been a great help to our teachers, who have little money to purchase supplies and often must wait years before they receive new equipment," said Parks.

LRD helps sponsor field trips and tours, such as the yearly visit to the Meldahl Lock and Dam in Felicity, Ohio, for fourth graders. LRD also provides classroom speakers and career awareness seminars for all students.

For every quarter that students make the honor roll, LRD recognizes their accomplishments at Linwood's Quarterly Award Ceremony. For students who make the honor roll for four straight quarters, the reward is even greater. They are inducted into "The General's Club." As new members, students are invited to spend a day at LRD, where they have a session with park rangers, receive a presentation from the deputy commander, and have lunch with the division commander.



When the dredge *Potter* got a \$20 million makeover, it also got a new galley. The cooks serve three excellent meals a day, plus a midnight breakfast.



Best restaurant on the river is a dredge

Article by Alan Dooley
Photos by Russell Elliott
St. Louis District

The best restaurant on the Mississippi River just might be an Army dredge.

The dustpan dredge *Potter*, oldest dredge in the U.S. Army Corps of engineers fleet, recently got a \$20 million makeover. The *Potter* hosts numerous guests while underway on the rivers of America's heartland. Some say they visit to see her new 2,000-horsepower diesel-electric power plant. Others ask to observe dredging operations as the *Potter* methodically tends to her mission of maintaining the nine-foot deep, 300-foot wide Mississippi River navigation channel.

But the 71-year-old dredge got more than just new engines, electrical system, and pilothouse. She also got a new galley (kitchen). What most visitors go away remembering (and some will honestly admit they came for in the first place) is the food.

Under the watchful eye of chief cook Darryl Heck, a small team feeds the *Potter* crew (and often several guests) three meals each day, plus a midnight breakfast. The dredge works 24 hours a day while underway, but nobody goes hungry regardless of their shift assignment.

Heck is assisted by Elvis Cargil, Roger Weaver, and night cook Joe Tanner, while

Tammy Mezo and Tony Harris serve meals, shuttling steaming platters and bowls of food back from the galley to the single long table that runs the length of the dining area on the second deck. If the servers aren't available, the cooks jump into those roles, too.

Provisioning is something of a challenge, because there are no food stores specifically serving people who live and work on the large commercial and government vessels plying the river.

"I make up my list, and the dredge clerk faxes in to the closest grocery store," Heck said. "I try to keep a two-week supply on hand, and I have to make it on a budget of \$9 per person per day. I've done that successfully for years now."

The only special shopping stop is at Fruitland Meat near Cape Girardeau, Mo. "They have really good meats, and give us slaughterhouse-direct prices," Heck said.

How much do the *Potter's* crew and guests consume every day? It varies, but Heck reports they go through six pounds of coffee a day, and that figure increases as the weather gets colder. If the crew has to work during the holidays, Heck roasts four 15-pound turkeys.

"Everyone enjoys fresh-baked rolls, too," Heck said. "So I make them six days a week in 60-roll batches. If the regular meals aren't enough, we keep a stash of

lunchmeat handy, too. Sometimes somebody has to work through a meal, or they just get real hungry between meals."

All this takes place in the *Potter's* new galley. State-of-the-art ovens with digital thermometers and a deep fryer that would make a McDonald's manager cry are centerpieces of the galley. A modern Hobart dishwasher ensures that every dish and utensil emerges sparkling and sanitary from that operation.

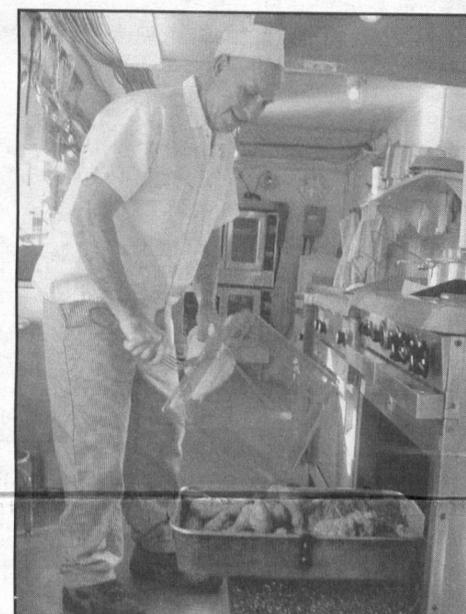
In fact, the entire operation, from freezer to table, is meticulously clean.

"We've never had a case of food poisoning here," Heck said. "That's a better record than some of those cruise ships can brag on."

The menu varies according to the day of the week. Perhaps the favorite meal each week is seafood on Fridays. Prime rib is a real vote getter, too, according to several crewmembers.

Whatever your favorite dish, you'll find it prepared with attention to detail and a sense of pride that runs deeper than the Mississippi River. You might even ask Heck for a recipe or two. Just in case you're expecting 32 guests, here's a list of what you'll need.

- 40 lbs. of chicken
- 10 lbs. of potatoes
- 3 quarts of gravy



Darryl Heck, chief cook on the dredge *Potter*, finishes a batch of his famous fried chicken.

- 8 cans of green beans (the large size, of course)
- 8 cans of carrots (also large size)
- 60 fresh-baked rolls
- four 9x13-inch sheet cakes
- 2 quarts of whipped cream topping
- 5 dozen deviled eggs
- Drinks and condiments in large sizes

HR Corner

Corps trains its first recruiter cadre

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers kicked off its first Recruiter Cadre training on March 5-6 in Aberdeen, Md. The attendees were a diverse mix of engineers and scientists who will recruit for their respective divisions.

The purpose of the training was to provide all USACE recruitment cadre with the USACE Corporate Outreach Recruitment vision, goals, and objectives. The training was part of the Strategic Human Capital Plan designed to align current and future human capital initiatives from the USACE Campaign Plan with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Human Capital scorecard.

The overall objective of this two-day session was to inform recruiters about the USACE Corporate Outreach Recruitment initiative and standardize the procedures and processes for working all career/job fairs throughout USACE.

The need for standardization was identified at the January 2002 USACE-wide recruiting workshop. Workshop participants decided to establish a corporate outreach re-

cruitment team tasked with developing a uniform corporate identity and to increase awareness of USACE as a civilian employer.

The recruitment team is made up of members from each major subordinate command, and the Human Resources and Equal Employment Opportunity offices at Headquarters. Team members attend college and conference career fairs for USACE. The ultimate goal is to expand current corporate college-relations and to improve hiring of well-qualified candidates.

The USACE-wide corporate outreach recruitment effort is designed to meet our short- and long-term workforce needs. Entry-level professional and administrative positions are the focus. Hiring decisions will continue to be made at the local level. The corporate outreach recruitment strategy will allow us to share our limited resources as we identify the recruitment opportunities of most benefit to USACE.

The theme for the training was "Effective College Re-

cruiting for the 21st Century," which was in keeping with our vision of being an employer of choice with a skilled and diverse workforce. There were 21 participants from Headquarters, Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, North Atlantic Division, and South Atlantic Division.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers provided the first day's training. The instructor, Julie Cunningham, has 27 years of experience in college recruitment at various levels, and has conducted similar training with other government agencies. Anthony Johnson of the Headquarters Human Resources staff conducted the second day of training, which focused on the vision, goals, and strategic objectives of the USACE Outreach Recruitment Program.

The recruiters learned the "art" of selling USACE as the employer of choice, and how to articulate the many benefits we have to offer prospective applicants. The next recruiter cadre training session is tentatively scheduled for the fourth quarter of this fiscal year.

Around the Corps

Army EEO Officer of the Year

Headquarters U.S. Army recently selected Marianne Price of St. Paul District as the 2002 U.S. Army Equal Employment Opportunity Officer of the Year.

Price received her recognition at an awards ceremony at the Pentagon from Secretary of the Army Thomas White on March 14. This award follows her selection last July as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Equal Employment Opportunity Officer of the Year.

Price received this award for managing an outstanding EEO program, and expert leadership in providing a workplace of excellence for a diverse workforce. Some of her accomplishments include implementing a pilot telecommuting program, recruitment open houses, and committees that work on diversity initiatives.

Malden River ecosystem

New England District has partnered with Malden, Medford, and Everett, all in Massachusetts, to find the solution to the ailing Malden River ecosystem.

The partners held a project agreement signing ceremony Jan. 15 at Massachusetts Electric's Offices in Malden. Participants signed symbolic wooden canoe paddles with the inscription, "Partners for a Clean Malden River" on one side, and a project description on the other.

The Mystic Valley Development Commission (MVDC) is developing TeleCom City, which will include office, research, development, and manufacturing facilities, plus about 60 acres of public open space. The site is a 200-acre brownfield parcel that includes a large portion of the Malden River.

Restoration of the Malden River is critical to project success, and to protecting public health.

"The Malden River Feasibility Study will focus on restoring freshwater wetlands, improving the migratory corridor, and remediation of contaminated sediment," said Col. Thomas Koning, New England District Engineer.

The study will cost \$356,600, cost-shared 50 percent Corps and 50 percent local sponsor.

Hall of Fame

Paula Simpson, the training program coordinator with the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL), was recently inducted into the Army's Leadership Education and Development's 1,000 Club of the Hall of Fame.

She is the first trainer inducted into the 1,000 Club of the Hall of Fame, which is the Army's way of recognizing excellence in training professionals.



Paula Simpson.

Corrections

The Thomas Jefferson Hall Library project at West Point, featured in the February *Engineer Update*, originally programmed for construction in fiscal year 2004 (FY04), has been deferred to FY05 by the Department of the Army. The current programmed amount for the library is \$59 million, and the designer of record is STV Inc. The construction contract will be awarded in January 2005, with the opening of the library scheduled for the 2007-08 academic year.

The soldiers pictured on page five of the March *Engineer Update* are pouring concrete for a road or runway, not conducting mine-clearing operations.

Wind energy permit

Winergy LLC, of Shirley, N.Y., is seeking a Corps

permit to install an instrument tower in the ocean about seven miles southeast of Nantucket Island to collect meteorological and scientific data.

The tower will support a 30x30-foot platform about 170 feet above water. The structure will collect scientific data to evaluate the location's suitability for wind power generators.

Public comments on the proposed project were accepted by the Corps through March 3.

"Any proposal for installing wind power generators will be evaluated separately with further opportunity for public involvement," said Larry Rosenberg, Chief of Public Affairs. "The decision on this application will not affect whether the Corps issues a permit for any future wind project at this site. This is the second permit application NED has received for a meteorological tower outside of Massachusetts's waters."

Flood-control construction

St. Paul District has begun building the final phase of the Portage, Wis., flood-control project on the Wisconsin River. This phase completes the flood-reduction system for Portage, under construction since 1997, while maintaining inter-basin flow between the Fox and Wisconsin river basins.

Features of this phase include levee construction between a railroad main line and spur line owned by Canadian Pacific Railway, raising the spur line and lining it with an impervious membrane to impede seepage, and drainage features.

Previously completed portions of the flood-control project in Portage include three miles of upgraded levee, a railroad closure, utility modifications, aesthetic and recreational features, cultural resource mitigation, and

modifications to the existing flood-warning system. Construction costs for the whole project is around \$12 million. The Corps will pay for about \$9 million, with Portage and Wisconsin paying the rest.



Col. Thomas Koning and Jerry Nunziato show off the largest donation to Toys for Tots that New England District has ever given.

Toys for Tots

The Marine Corps Reserve gave a Commander's Award to New England District for outstanding support of the 2002 Toys for Tots program. Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer, received the award on behalf of the district in a brief ceremony on Feb. 11.

This is the first time NED has received an award from the Marines for the program. In December 2002, NED broke its record of donations, collecting more than 200 unwrapped, nonviolent toys for the program.

Students track ecosystem research at Bay Model

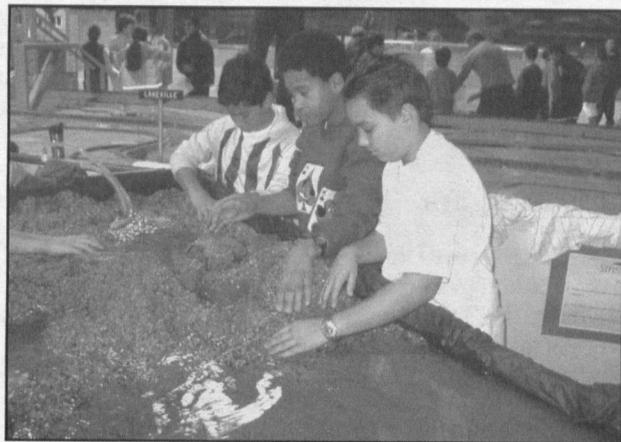
Article by Keley Stock
Photo by Gary Franklin
San Francisco District

Between Jan. 27 and Feb. 7, San Francisco District's Bay Model Visitor Center swarmed with more than 2,700 school kids hungry to learn about The Jason Project and the Channel Islands off the Southern California coast.

Since 1998 the Bay Model Association and the Bay Model Visitor Center have taken part in a multidisciplinary, interactive, science education program called The Jason Project. Each year, the project focuses on a specific ecosystem around the world. Scientists and selected students are sent to a chosen location to begin various research projects. The expeditions have ventured to the Mediterranean Sea, the Great Lakes, the Galapagos Islands, the Sea of Cortez, Belize, Hawaii, the coral reefs of Florida's Keys, Yellowstone National Park, Iceland, Bermuda, Monterey Bay, the Peruvian rainforest, NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston and Antarctica.

Bay Area Jason Project participants gather at the Bay Model for two weeks each year to interact with the researchers through a live satellite "telepresence" link and share discoveries across the globe.

For the Channel Islands expedition, the Bay Model transformed into Jason City where students could interact with multiple hands-on exhibits that explored the scientific concepts described in the live satellite broadcasts. Two exhibits that became instant favorites were the stream table and diving pinnipeds. The stream table allowed students to get up-close and personal with an active water system to create their own watershed. The diving pinniped exhibit offered students the chance to sculpt their own diving shape to be time trailed and tested for its efficiency and speed moving through water.



Students build a working watershed model at the stream table.

Another popular exhibit focused on remote operated vehicles (ROV). Underwater exploration is an important part of the Jason curriculum, so equipping each student with their own ROV gave them the opportunity to test their reflexes and hand-eye coordination.

Without the support of our sponsors, volunteers, and staff members, this project would not have been such a success. Team members from our division and district offices offered assistance, as well as volunteers from surrounding counties to staff exhibits and engage students.

Jason XV is already earmarked for the Central American country of Panama, known the world over for its tropical rainforest. The Bay Model will participate again studying human history and natural resource management in the Isthmus of Panama.

(Keley Stock is a park ranger and volunteer coordinator at the Bay Model Visitor Center.)

Planning Associates Program

Continued need for planner training gives old program new life

Article by Bernard Tate
Headquarters
Photos by Bruce Sexauer
Seattle District

Never be too quick to hold a funeral for a good program.

It's liable to kick the lid off its coffin and rear straight up because its day isn't done yet.

That's what happened to the civil works Planning Associates (PA) Program. After operating for more than 30 years, it was discontinued in 1995, then revived again this year.

"The Planning Associates program is a training program for high-potential journeyman-level planners," said Russ Rangos, a water resources planner at Headquarters. He is also the Planning Associates Program Administrator. "After this training they should be able to guide and lead complex studies, and have some basic leadership skills."

On-the-job

According to Rangos, such training necessary because "Corps water resource planner" is not a career field that one can train for.

"Anyone who contributes to a planning study is technically part of the planning function," said Rangos. "So we have people who know hydraulics and hydrology; we have economists; we have engineers; we have geographers; we have just about any discipline you can imagine.

But there are few opportunities in universities, especially at the bachelor level, to study something called 'planning,'" Rangos continued. "It's as rigorous as any academic discipline, but there are few opportunities to gain that knowledge in school, so planner training is done mostly on-the-job."

Early program

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' formal Planning Associates Program first began in 1962 with one student, and quickly developed into a rigorous 11-month residential program. Planners were based at Fort Belvoir, Va., where they worked with a staff reviewer who served as a teacher and mentor. The PAs were trained to write planning reports, and helped their mentor to review actual reports from the field. They also had formal classes in planning and visited projects throughout the Corps.

"It was a valuable program," said Rangos. "An incredibly large number of those PAs reached senior levels. We have a number of SESers who were planning associates, and several planning chiefs at the major subordinate command (MSC) and district levels were also PAs."

Several factors led to the end of the old PA program, according to Rangos. Funding the program became difficult due to Congressional changes in handling budgeted funds. The Corps also adopted the program management model, so the Planning Associates Program had to

present PM modules as well.

The old PA program ended in 1995, but the need to train planners did not go away. As the baby boomers retired, senior leaders and institutional knowledge began leaving the corps.

'You've got a problem'

"In 2000, the Engineering Inspector General looked into the planning function and told senior leaders, 'You've got a problem here,'" said Rangos. "You're losing planners, they're not getting training, the quality of reports is going down, and the time to produce reports is getting longer.' So something needed to be done."

Jim Johnson, chief of the Planning and Policy Division in the Directorate of Civil Works, formed a task force that presented a report in Jan. 2001. The report laid out a path for training planners up to the journeyman level, from the person's first day on the job through five years.

"Of course, in that report we called it the 'Expert Planner Program,' because we didn't know what else to call it," said Rangos. "But we knew what we really wanted — 'Wouldn't it be cool if we could start up the Planning Associates Program again?'"

But the task force members knew the previous 11-month residential format could not be done today. Travel costs would be prohibitive, most offices cannot spare a person for almost a year, and today's families are unwilling to uproot or lose a spouse for a year.

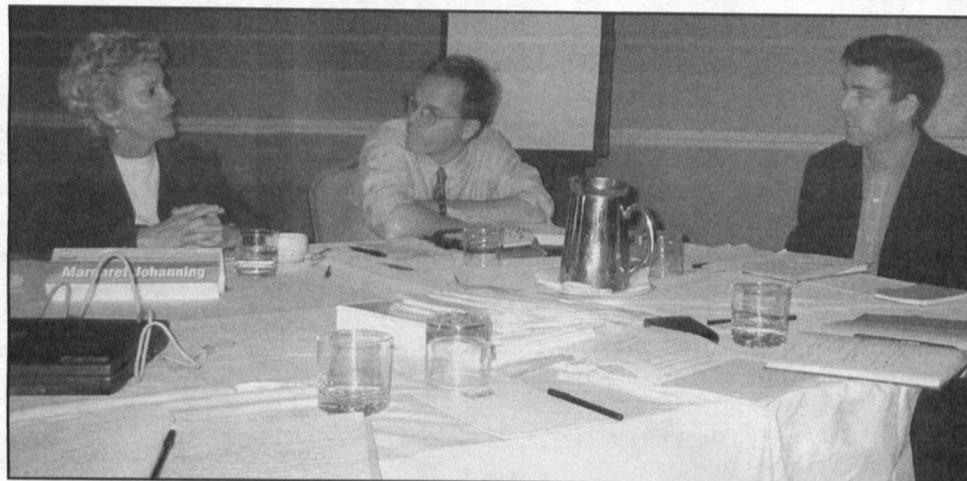
New program

"We've distilled the best from the old Planning Associates Program, and we kept the networking," said Rangos. "We wanted the PAs to be in constant contact with senior people — not just senior technical people, but also senior leadership. The old PAs met with generals quarterly, and got out to see other parts of the country and how they did things differently."

The task force devised a series of seven training modules, each hosted by a different Corps MSC. The training involves 15 weeks of TDY (temporary duty), spread out over about eight months. Each training module is about a week long, though a few cover 10 days to two weeks.

"We've got them crisscrossing the country," said Rangos. "We've placed each training module in a district or division that does a lot of work in that subject area. So they'll spend a week in a city working on a mission area, then over the weekend fly to a different part of the country. For instance, they'll have a week in Phoenix, then a week in Louisville. Then a few weeks later they'll have a week in Galveston and a week in Rock Island."

The training at each site is concentrated and in-depth. For example, while in Washington, D.C., they (among other things) took a basic civics course; toured Corps Headquarters, the Pentagon, and Capitol Hill; met with special interest groups; got in-depth advice on advanc-



Margaret Johanning and Steve Pugh talk with Mike Grunwald, *Washington Post* reporter.



The planning associates met with the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and the Chief of Engineers after the Chief's FY04 Civil Works appropriations testimony. (Left to right) Margaret Johanning, Steve Pugh, Brad Thompson, Les Brownlee, the Acting ASA(CW), Kayla Eckert, Jon Brown, and Lt. Gen. Bob Flowers, Chief of Engineers.

ing their careers, and spoke with lobbyists and the news media.

Motivations

Eight people from throughout the Corps are taking part in the pilot program this year, all selected by their divisions.

Each current planning associate joined the program for different reasons.

"I'm an avid life-long learner," said Margaret Johanning, a physical scientist and lead planner from Tulsa District. "This was a chance to enhance and strengthen my planning capabilities, and to be able to mentor and lead the younger people coming into the organization."

"I wanted to get a national perspective," said Brad Thompson, a community planner from Rock Island District. "I wanted to see other successful projects, and learn from the experience of others what worked successfully in other parts of the country. And for the contacts, getting to know other people from other parts of the country who I can call and say, 'Can you help me out here?'"

"What we're really crossing our fingers for is that the planning associates will become sparks for other folks," said

Rangos. "That they will go back to their districts and say, 'This is what they told us at Headquarters,' or 'This is how they did it in Portland,' or 'I think the Rock Island situation applies to this project, and here's how to do it.'"

"And if I were working here in another 10 years, I'd expect to have one of these guys as my boss," Rangos added. "I'd like to see them get into leadership positions, like the folks in the earlier PA program did."

Mandate

The current PAs have the same idea.

"You have to invest in the future," said Bruce Sexauer, the General Investigations Program coordinator in Seattle District. "In order for the Corps of Engineers to be the organization that the taxpayers are paying us to be, we need to develop the core skills of our organization. Planning and plan formulation is one of those core skills that the people have told us to maintain. So I believe that this is not only a valid use of taxpayers dollars, I believe there is a taxpayer mandate for us to promote these types of skills and abilities."