

Spring Quarterly Issue 2000

*Detroit District*  
***Soundings***  
*US Army Corps of Engineers*



# ***Replacement Lock at Soo***

*—See story on page 2*



# Soundings

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On the cover: Aerial view of the new Soo Locks. Inset—View of the old locks.



# Replacement lock at Soo in the future

by Gary A. O'Keefe LRE

The St. Marys River (Soo Locks) project at Sault Ste Marie, Michigan, provides a vital link between Lake Superior and the lower Great Lakes to facilitate the efficient flow of commerce. The project includes four navigation locks, connecting channels, compensating works for the regulation of Lake Superior, and a 21 megawatt hydroelectric power plant. During the 1998 navigation season, over 86 million tons of commerce, consisting principally of iron ore, western coal, and grain, passed through this facility. Over 75 percent of the iron ore produced in the U.S. transits through the Soo Locks to the steel mills in Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Currently, only two of the locks, the MacArthur and Poe Locks, actively service loaded commercial vessel traffic. The Davis Lock is rarely used and the Sabin Lock is in disrepair and has been closed for several years. The larger Poe Class vessels, including the 1,000-footers, which

comprise 70 percent of the carrying capacity of the U.S. Great Lakes Fleet, are restricted to the larger Poe Lock. To alleviate the concern centering around a potential closure of the Poe lock, the 1986 and 1990 Water Resource Development Acts authorized the construction of a new Poe-sized lock to replace the existing Davis and Sabin Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

A Limited Reevaluation Report to reexamine the economic justification of the replacement lock was completed by a multi-District team in December 1999. Taking advantage of Huntington District's experience with lock design on the Ohio River system, the 1986 design was revised to reduce costs by over \$150,000,000, resulting in the presentation of a Hammer Award to the Detroit District in 1996. The partnership with Huntington District will continue in the detailed design phase of the project, which is being initiated this year.

# Chicago Regional Office to become Great Lakes Center

An announcement was made on January 25 that the Division office in Chicago will be known as the Great Lakes Center (GLC). The Division office will not close, but rather, personnel will be reassigned to alternate locations and the co-location of GLC in the Chicago District office space. The current reassignment plan is for 11 positions to stay with the GLC and the remaining 10 reassigned to Cincinnati.

Primary missions of the GLC will be Regional Interface and Customer Outreach. Other missions include FUSRAP Project Management, IJC Support and Planning Representation. The GLC will continue to offer service to the nation and the Great Lakes by leveraging the entire Corps Team — positioned for future success.

# Commander's Column

by Lt. Col. Robert J. Davis,  
 District Engineer



I do want to take a moment to acknowledge the great contributions of Mr. Jim Smith, our retiring Chief of Information Management. Jim is the epitome of public serve and is a wonderful example for all. He entered public service in 1960 and served admirably in various capacities for 40 years. I wish he and his family well as he enjoys his retirement years. He will be sorely missed.

—Lt. Col. Bob Davis

With the start of the year 2000, the District has many positive things to look forward to this year. As warmer weather approaches and the construction season begins in earnest, there are many opportunities for excellence. Many projects continued throughout the winter, as well. Most notably is the joint and gate repair work at the Soo. This work has been relatively accident free under harsh environmental conditions. The Poe lock was dewatered with the ambient air temperature of -20 degrees Fahrenheit!

As many of you know, the Division Commander visited the District in early February as part of his preparation for congressional testimony in March. At that testimony in Washington

DC, the Chief of Engineers and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, answer questions from the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee. All the Division commanders are present on the first row behind the Chief to answer specific questions about activities in their divisions.

I was left with three thoughts as General Griffin concluded his visit. First, we left him with the impression that the District is well led and managed. Secondly, that we are cultivating new work and the future for the District is bright. Finally, we are becoming more efficient through streamlining many of our business processes. I am very proud of all of you for all the hard work you are accomplishing in these areas. Keep it up!

Along the same lines, the Division Commander approved our plan to form an Engineering and Technical Services organization last December. This action merged the former engineering, construction, and operations pieces of the District into a single group. The planning branch was merged into Programs and Project Management to form a new organization called "PPPMD." My intent is for this new structure to do two primary things: (1) Enhance teamwork, communications, and cohesiveness in the engineering, operations, and construction areas to better support the Project Management Business Process, and (2) Improve integration of planning and outreach activities into the Project Management Business Process.

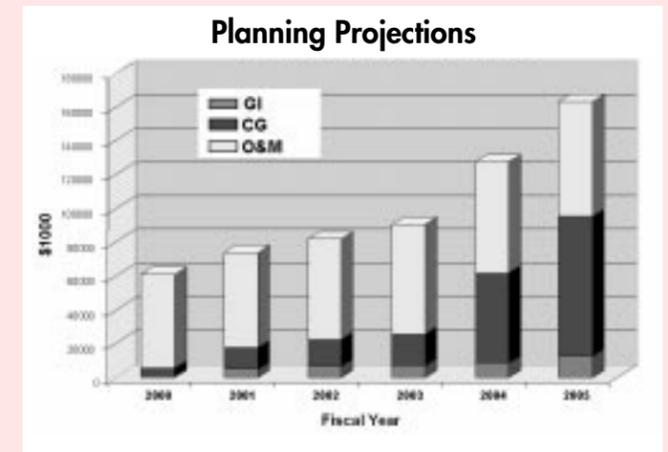
# Growth Trends

by Joe Wanielista  
 Chief, Planning Branch  
 Planning, Programs & Project Management Division

If you take a close look at the Planning Projections Chart, you will see our district experiencing some robust growth for the next few years through FY 2005. Even more outstanding, this growth is expected to continue as we move further into the 21st century.

Our growth is a result, in part of, new planning reconnaissance initiatives, mainly in the environmental dredging arena, autho-

rized in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999, construction projects for the Soo Replacement Lock and Oakland County, a sustained operation and maintenance program, and a Districtwide effort to promote our programs through outreach. The benefits of our efforts should be reflected in upcoming new WRDA bills, strong interest in our environ-



mental authorities, and increased success in the Planning Assistance and Continuing Authorities programs.

You can read more about our outreach and outreach

efforts by visiting the OutreachWorksheet Information site contained within the PAO intranet page at <http://lre42.lre.usace.army.mil/functions/pa/docs/sounddue.pdf>.

## Living the Vision... Emergency dredging contract awarded in record time

**D**etroit District team members pulled together accomplishing success in awarding an emergency dredging contract in record time.

According to Bob Erwin, project manager, the timeline for this project was 21 days from determining that dredging was required to advertising the project. Normally it takes 4-5 months. "The reduction was

due to the teamwork among the district team members involved," he said.

The team worked diligently to ensure emergency dredging on the upstream two miles of the federal channel located in eastern end of Lake Macatawa, Holland Harbor, Mich., would be completed during the early summer.

According to Erwin, the commercial shipping inter-

est identified a requirement and the district responded quickly. The dredging is scheduled for completion 3 months after the requirement was identified. Advertising is scheduled for the end of February, with the award scheduled for early April, and the project will be complete by mid-May.

If other project managers/leaders want to accomplish the same type

of results with their projects they should heed Erwin's advice.

He said, "Clearly identify the requirement. The Project Manager, PM, needs to show a willingness to work and cooperate with team members. The PM must make it clear that the team is doing the project together, not each individual is doing a little piece with the hope of a project resulting." **W&A**

## Winter work on the Poe Lock



**A** winter work project being performed on the Poe Lock consists of repairing the joints between the concrete monoliths on the North and South walls of the Poe (2nd) Lock. As you can see in one of the photos, the contractor, Durocher Dock and Dredge of Cheboygan, MI, has put up a temporary, movable building over part of the lock chamber. The building moves over an I-beam rail mounted on the top of the lock wall. The building is lighted and heated, which allows the contractor to work on a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week schedule. The project began after the Poe Lock closed January 15th and is expected to be completed by the middle of March. **W&A**



(Photos by Carmen Paris, Soo Area Office)

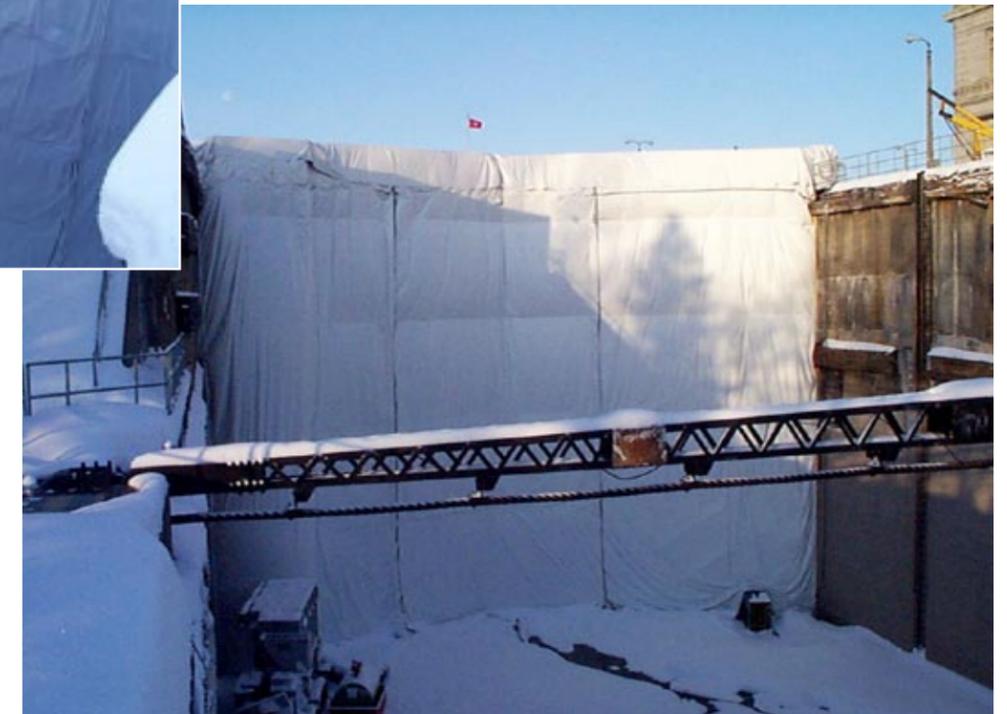


## MacArthur Lock winter project



**W**ork being performed on the MacArthur Lock this winter consists of sand blasting and painting Gates 2 and 5. The project got underway in December, 1999, and should be completed by mid-March, 2000. **W&A**

(Photos by Carmen Paris, Soo Area Office)



## USACE Electronic Commerce Initiatives Guidance

by Paul A Gibson, LRDOR

**F**ollowing is a brief summary of the current status of the electronic commerce initiatives:

**1** Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)— Electronic payments to vendors and travelers has been available in USACE since November 1997. EFT is the preferred method of payment to all public vendors and USACE employees for travel reimbursement payments.

● EFT for Travelers— Throughout the division 97% of our travelers (2481) that travel two or more times per year are signed up for EFT. The USACE average is only 76% so we are well above the average. 2% (or 60 employees) have requested waivers, and 1% (21 employees have neither

signed up or requested a waiver). USACE policy requires that all employees that travel two or more times per year either sign up for EFT or have an approved waiver on file.

● EFT for Vendors — All vendors that deal with the Corps are now required to register in the DoD Central Contract Registry (CCR). When they register they are required to accept EFT as the method of payment. Unfortunately there is not an automatic interface between CCR and CEFMS and the vendor EFT information does not always get into the CEFMS data base. We also have thousands of inactive vendors on our CEFMS data bases and there is no way to

delete an inactive vendor. As a result we're not able to get an accurate count of how many of our current vendors are actually getting payments made via EFT. We've made HQUSACE and the Finance Center aware of this disconnect, and they are working to resolve the problems.

**2** Remittance Express (REX)— This is a relatively new system that has been available since June 1999. REX allows us to accept collections from public vendors (e.g., cost share sponsors) through electronic fund transfers and dramatically reduces the processing time for the receipt, deposit and confirmation of sponsor funds. All district PM's are

aware of this new capability but so far the system has only been used in Nashville.

**3** On-Line Payments and Collections (OPAC)— This is a Treasury System that provides capability to transfer payment and collections between government activities without mailing bills or U.S. Treasury Checks. This system has been in use since November 1999 for Corps to Corps transactions. The Finance Center is currently negotiating agreements with other federal agencies to use this system for other inter-agency billings. All districts within LRD are setting up their customer/government orders in CEFMS to make maximum utilization of this system. **W&A**

# Black History Month activities conclude with museum tour



Left: Corps employees wait in the museum's spectacular rotunda before entering the first leg of the tour.



Above: The group waits in the "Hall of Educators" for the educational tour guide to take them through the core exhibit.



Right: Carletta Degroot shows Nora Williams, both from the Finance and Accounting Branch, the newest entry to the museum's golden circle of famous or history-making African Americans.



Right: Michelle Booker, Denise Gulley, and Dorothy Washington-Newell, from Engineering and Technical Services, talk over the highlights of the museum tour.



Left: Ken Drum, from Engineering and Technical Services, browses the many pieces of jewelry, handcrafted items, and imported pieces in the museum store.



Above: Corps members head back to the office after an intense, soul-searching presentation of American history.



Corps employees show off traditional fashions from various parts of Africa. Clockwise, from right: Yvonne Toney, Programs Management Office; Amber Shaad, Erica Howard, Carletta Degroot, and Shanell Wilkerson, all of Finance and Accounting; Clarence Kendrick, Information Management and LaMont Williams, Mailroom contractor. The men's hats and scarves were on loan from Vernard Moore's collection.



Corps employees participated in several activities for Black History Month throughout February to celebrate the memories, accomplishments and future of African-Americans. During a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sponsored activity, "Heritage and Horizons: The African American Legacy and the Challenges of the 21st Century," a large crowd listened to Rev. Charles G. Adams present "Economic

Development in the African-American Community." Later in the month, several Corps employees showed they know how to "strut their stuff" at a Black History fashion show in the McNamara Building, also sponsored by HUD. The elegantly, colorful garments and materials presented in the show were inspired by the nations of Africa. To round out the month, many feasted on the numerous dishes brought in by members of the federal employment

community for the potluck luncheon here in the building while being entertained by a choir. Later that day, a large crowd of Corps employees went on a tour of the Charles H. Wright Museum of African-American History on Warren Avenue in the cultural center of Detroit. Along with the permanent exhibit "Of The People: The African American Experience," in the 120,000 square foot facility, the world's largest African-American museum, visitors were able to expe-

rience exciting exhibitions of art in the other two changing galleries, and possibly buy distinctively African-American items in the museum store. "A big 'thanks' to all who supported us and helped make our Black History Month events a wonderful celebration," said the Black Employment Program committee.

# Kudos!



## 1999 Projects of Distinction Awards

The White Lake Harbor Reconstruction of the North and South Pier Projects receive more awards. On 28 October 1999, the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. of Wisconsin presented the 1999 Projects of Distinction Awards in Oshkosh, WI. Awards were received by the Contractor: Roen Salvage Company, Sturgeon Bay, WI; the Owner: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit, MI; and the Designer: Snell Engineering, Lansing, MI. Present for the festivities were Tom Drager, VP, and Kevin Feil of Roen Salvage Company; Tom O'Bryan, GHAO Construction Chief, and Scott Babcock of Grand Haven Area Office; and Tom Thumb of Snell Engineering.

## GHAO represents District in National Engineers Week

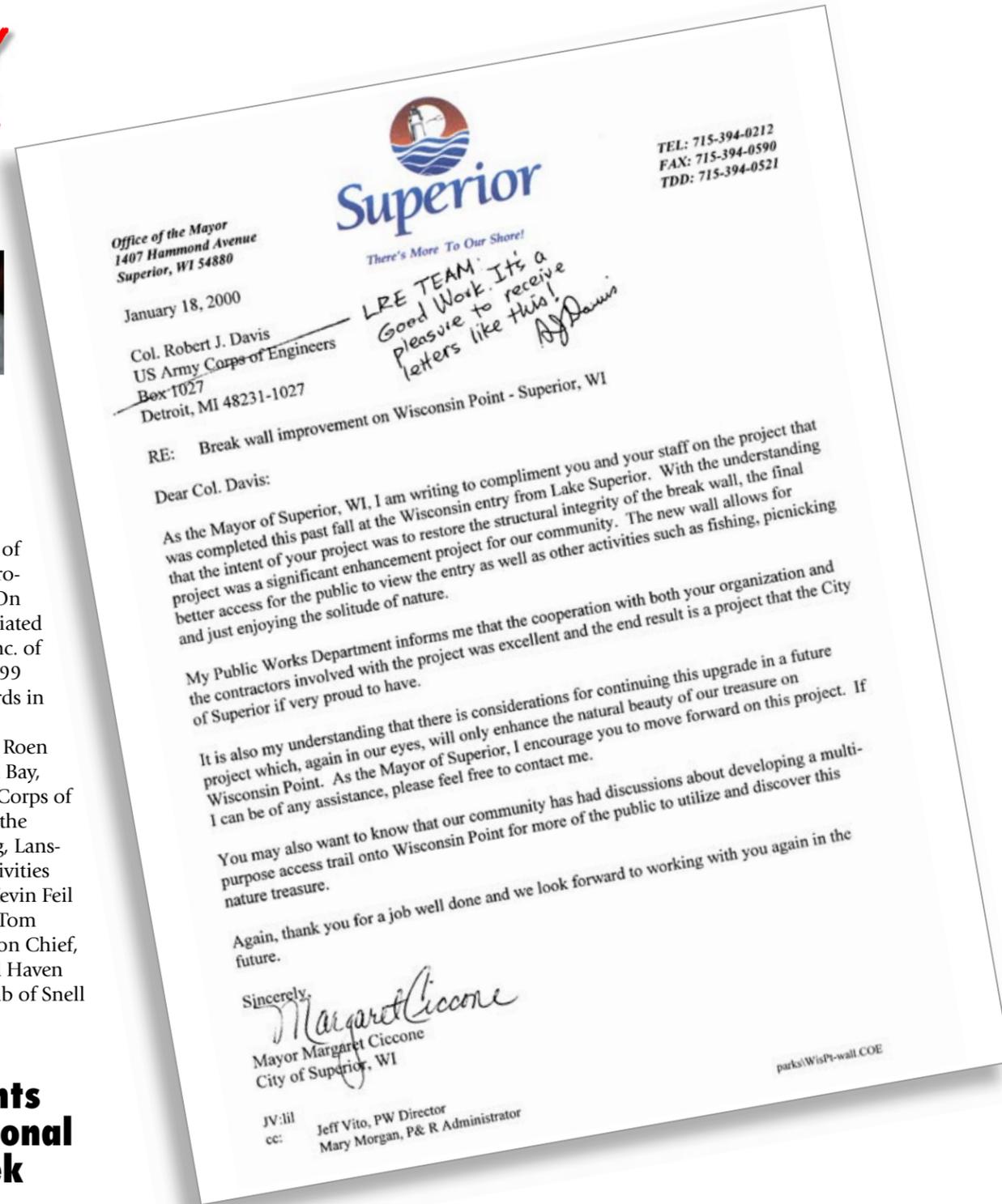
The Grand Haven Area Office represented the Detroit District Corps of Engineers for the Detroit Regional Future Cities Competition, which is the feeder to the National Engineers Week Future Cities Competition. This

year, Pat Klever, PE, Chief of Operations and Maintenance at GHAO, was a Presentation and Model judge at the competition, which was held at the Spirit of Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI.

GHAO has worked with the competition — locally sponsored by ESD (Then Engineering Society, Detroit) — for the last three consecutive years in one way shape or form. In the competition, junior high school students design a

city in the future using SimCity 2000, build a scale model, prepare a presentation on their city, and write an essay describing an engineering solution to a problem.

(Kudos continues on next page)



## Kudos! (continued)

### Regulatory Awards

On 27 Jan 2000, Nancy Peterson, Regulatory Branch, and Gary Segrest, Counsel, received certificates of appreciation and Commander Coins from Lt.Col. Robert Davis in recognition of their work with the Environmental Law Class, University of Detroit Mercy. Regulatory Branch personnel and Counsel have on a recurring basis made presentations and given field training to environmental law students on the Corps regulatory program, wetland delineation, and recent case law involving regulatory issues. The awards were made in recognition of Nancy's and Gary's work with the law school students during a training exercise held on Belle Isle in October of last year.



Recipients of certificates of appreciation receive their awards from Lt. Col. Robert Davis: Left—Nancy Peterson; below—Gary Segrest.



### Team of Excellence Award

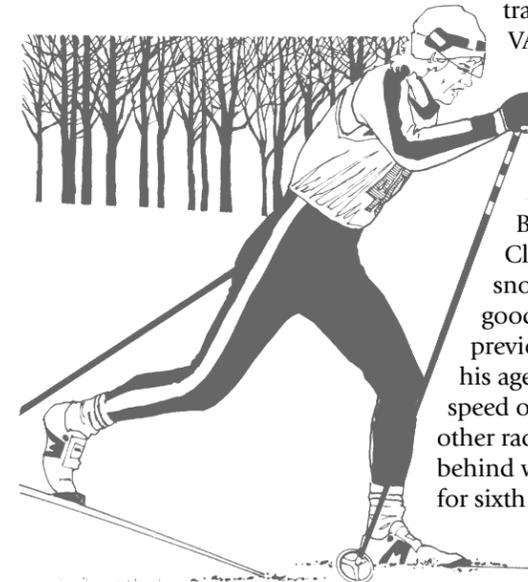
Sharon Lawrence has been recognized among the "Commander's Small Business Team of Excellence for 1999" for her outstanding contributions, professionalism and hard work in making the FY 99 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Small Business Program a success. The Team of Excellence honors those whose enthusiasm, expertise and noteworthy accomplishments are recognized in providing small business entrepreneurs with viable opportunities to assist the Corps in accomplishing its mission.

### Wise Weisers

Jeff Weiser (Project Management Branch) is proud to announce that his son Todd is one of this year's five valedictorians for the 2000 Berkley High School graduating class. In addition to his 4.0 grade point average, Todd is the president of the National Honors Society and co-captain of the swim team. Todd will follow in his brother Matt's footsteps and attend the University of Michigan in the fall. Matt, a film and English major, will graduate from U of M in April 2000 with honors. Matt is currently one of three finalists in the American Cinema Editors national editing contest. The winner will be announced in Hollywood on February 27th.

### Skiing Winners

In what has become an annual tradition for these two GHAO athletes, Tom O'Bryan and Brian Bouwhuis traveled to Traverse City for the VASA cross country ski race series. With various distances and types of races, this event brings together approximately 600 cross country skiers from around the region and nation. Both Tom and Brian entered the Classic 27 kilometer race, with the snow and weather providing some good skiing. Capitalizing on his 8 previous performances, Bouwhuis won his age group with a time of 1:55 — a speed of almost 9 mph. O'Bryan, with 10 other races under his belt, was not too far behind with a time of 2:07, good enough for sixth in his age group.



### Michigan Top 10 Projects

The Soo Locks was named, by American Society of Civil Engineers, as one of the top ten civil engineering achievements for the State of Michigan in the 20th century, and was presented the award at a ceremony held in Lansing on December 14. The Soo Locks came in second only to the Mackinaw Bridge.

(Kudos continues on next page)

*Rudos!* (continued)

## Co-op Education/ Employment— A Win-Win Program in Detroit

**T**he cooperative education program has always provided students with an opportunity to learn by doing meaningful work while earning money to help pay for their education. Co-op students are hired based on projected work requirements, through universities with which the district has Co-op Agreements. We are able to accomplish real work, efficiently, while providing not only a learning opportunity, but also a chance to build relationships. Co-op students in the CP-18 program for engineers and scientists interested in a Corps career automatically become candidates for conversion to permanent employees through the engineer and scientist intern program. Each year, graduating engineers and scientists are interviewed by the CP-18 Intern Committee to fill a limited number of available internships.

The current CP-18 Intern Committee members are Darlene Bennett, Dave Schweiger, Gary Mannesto, Mike O'Bryan and Neal Gehring. They wish to extend their congratulations to **Martin Kuhn**, who graduated in Dec 99 and has been offered an internship; and **Shelley Tule** and **Mary Jesionowski**, who have been offered internships upon graduation in May 00. Coops students graduating in the July 00 to June 01 time period will be interviewed in the spring of this year. **WH**



*City of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan*

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Lori J. Clarke  
City Clerk

January 4, 2000

Mr. Stan Jacek, Area Engineer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
St. Mary's Falls Canal  
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Dear Mr. Jacek:

On behalf of the Mayor and City Commission I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your efforts for the Millennium Fireworks. The fireworks were well received by the community and all of the comments were positive. We thank you for coordinating the fireworks with the Fire Chief and Wolverine Fireworks. Chief Eagle is very appreciative of all the work put forth from the Corps and the crew that works directly with him. Without their help this celebration would not have happened. Please share our thanks with the employees. Thanks again for all your efforts.

We look forward to the 4th of July!

*Lori J. Clarke*  
LORI J. CLARKE, CMC  
City Clerk

## Fort Wayne Flood Insurance

**T**he residents of Fort Wayne received a late Christmas present this year, courtesy of the Detroit District's flood control project. The Federal Emergency Management Agency approved flood plain revisions which result in about 2,000 homes and businesses being taken out of the flood plain. These homes are located in the area protected by the first two phases of the flood control project, east of the St. Joseph River and north of the Maumee River. The revision allows the affected property owners to eliminate or reduce their annual flood insurance payments, and removes restrictions on property improvements. City officials estimate the insurance cost savings to the property owners in this area could be as much as \$700,000." **WH**

## Corps Speaks...

**O**n September 30, **Les E. Weigum**, as a 'scientist,' spoke and answered questions from several 6th grade classes at Birmingham Derby Middle School. He was one of 10 scientists who spoke about their work, ie, what they did, how they got into it, etc. Presenters included a physical therapist, physicist, veterinarian, naturalist, cancer researcher, radiation expert, marine biologist, exercise physiologist, and a NASA astronaut. The kids were very lively and were most interested in the Soo Locks, and Weigum's jungle experiences in Malaysia. The purpose was

to expose these children to scientists early in their educational process. Several of the kids asked for his WEB site ... it certainly is a new world!

**Dave Bowman**, of the Environmental Analysis Branch, made a presentation to the American Association of Port Authorities' Harbors, Navigation & Environment Seminar in Miami, Florida, on February 2. The presentation was entitled "Innovative Management of Dredged Material in the Corps of Engineers, Detroit District."

**E**d Hallquist made a presentation on February 16 at the 59th Annual Michigan Society of Professional Surveyors conference in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Presentation was entitled: "Construction of the Soo Locks and Connecting Waterways."

**Trudi Britz** of the Soo Area Office Construction Office made a presentation on February 17 at the Soo Post SAME meeting. Her presentation was on the current repairs being completed on the MacArthur and Poe Locks.

**John Love** from the GLH&H Office/WHB volunteered for the Hickory Island speaking engagement.

**T**wo experts on Great Lakes water levels delved into the topic February 24 at the Macomb County Michigan State University Extension Office. **Frank Quinn** of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's Great Lakes Research Lab and **Adam Fox**, a scientist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented a program entitled "Mystery of the Great Lakes Water Levels." **WH**

## Taconite Harbor of Refuge

**A** contract for construction of a small harbor of refuge at Taconite Harbor, Minnesota, was awarded on 3 December 1999 to Hoover Construction Company of Virginia, Minnesota. Contract price is \$2,907,815.

This project will provide a harbor of refuge along the north shore of Lake Superior. The project involves the construction of two new breakwaters to create a 1.5 acre harbor outside of the existing Taconite Harbor, a private commercial harbor owned by LTV Steel Mining Company. The Minnesota DNR will contribute 50% of the costs of the harbor construction, and will also construct a boat access and other land based facilities as part of a separate, 100% locally funded project. Some of this State work is included in our contract with Hoover. The work is expected to be completed in November 2000.

Project Manager is Gary O'Keefe; Contracting POC is Sammie Hart; Construction POCs are Al Klein and Curt Anderson. **WH**



Ray Zomparelli shows two of the many children participating in the kid's clinic at Detroit Boat Show 2000 how lake-levels are measured with a water levels gauge and stilling well. Almost 100,000 people attended the show over the nine-day event, and we would estimate at least 10 percent or 10,000 people visited our booth during that time — wide range exposure for the Corps projects. We were told the booth was a huge hit, thanks to the many volunteers from around the district.

# Employees of the Month

## FEBRUARY

**Jackie Peot**  
Office Automation Clerk,  
Kewaunee Area Office

Jackie's work is continually done with timeliness and detailed accuracy. She is willing to accept new assignments and challenges and is a valuable team player.

Recently, Jackie has become very involved with property management for the O&M section of the office. She continues to be a valuable asset by tracking property, completing paperwork for excessing property, and entering information for inventory management. Some of the other duties which she performs timely and accurately include entering vehicle usage information on VIMS and tracking personnel actions on PPI.

Jackie is always focused on customer satisfaction and maintains an excellent working relationship with her fellow employees at Kewaunee and the district, as well as outside contacts.

Jackie, congratulations on a job well done! 



## MARCH

**Paul Baxter**  
Environmental  
Analysis Branch

In addition to his regular work in the sediment testing section, Paul is often called on by Regulatory Branch to

evaluate permit dredging. He is an excellent coordinator, responding to requests in a pleasant and timely manner. Because of his field expertise, he is often called on to train sediment testing field people. This has included both EPA and contractors. He currently took on the scheduling of volunteers for the Boat Show and also volunteering his time to work. Congratulations, Paul, and well deserved! 



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