

SOUNDINGS



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Soo workers remove and repair tug

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Soundings

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COVER: Workers hoist the 100-ton *Owen M. Frederick* out of the water for an inspection and hull repairs. The tug was placed on the deck of the barge *Huron*. (Photo by Kim Dautremont) Story on page 3.



Lt. Col. Michael C. Derosier

June is certainly a transitional month – spring moves to summer, the NHL season concludes with the Stanley Cup Finals, Major League Baseball and the Detroit Tigers take center stage, and the Detroit District moves many projects from planning and design into the construction/contract execution phase.

Our military, Army and Corps are also in the midst of significant transitions as Gen. Martin E. Dempsey serves briefly as the 37th Army Chief of Staff while awaiting confirmation as the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This opened the door for Gen. Ray Odierno's nomination as Army Chief of Staff.

Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp retired after culminating his service as the 52nd Chief of Engineers, while Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick awaits confirmation as our next chief. And within the Detroit District, we are scheduled to make a decision on a new Deputy Project Manager to fill the big shoes of Gary O'Keefe. It is notable that Gen. Dempsey has a clear focus on the responsibility of leaders, and of the difficulties in managing those transitions (www.ndu.edu/press/interview-martin-dempsey.html).

Teamwork and cohesiveness help organizations operate smoothly through leadership transitions and, in the case of NHL teams, overcome the challenges of a long and grueling season.

It is unfortunate that the Detroit Red Wings did not play in the Stanley Cup Finals, but it was a thrill to watch my beloved Boston Bruins skate with The Cup June 15. As I traveled to New

"...please know that I am inspired, each and every day, by you..."

England recently to meet my new niece, and soak up the Stanley Cup fever, a couple of notable things occurred.

First, I experimented in "discount" airline travel, and it was not a very good experience. The airline tagged on some additional expenses, including fees for carry-on baggage and seat selection. I was reminded that you often get what you pay for, and it never hurts to check for online customer satisfaction ratings and comments before making a decision to purchase. Had I done so, I would certainly not have opted to fly with this airline.

I believe this situation is relevant to our district because many of our customers come to us by choice. We want all our customers to walk away satisfied that the Detroit District has delivered projects that are commensurate with the fees they have paid for our services. With few exceptions, this is the case across the district as reflected in recent civil works and interagency and international support customer satisfaction surveys. I charge all project managers and project delivery teams to continue sustaining positive results and customer relationships, and also to pick up the pace where we may be falling back some.

Next, during game three of the Stanley Cup Finals, Bruins right winger Nathan Horton was knocked out of the game and playoffs (hopefully not ending his career) with a blindside and late hit from Vancouver's Aaron Rome. The Bruins organization is known for values that have endured since 1924: hard work, emotion, pride and teamwork. These values were in evidence when the team responded to the loss of one of its star players by routing the Canucks, 8-1, in their first series win after going down 2-0. That game caused me to reflect on our own values as a district in delivering value to the nation and the Great Lakes Region, satisfying our customers, and in

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Soo crews repair tug -- on the deck of a barge

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

Keeping the Army Corps of Engineers floating plant in good operating condition is an ongoing challenge, one that demands the skills and contributions of many people.

Recently, crews at the Soo took the 64-foot, 100-ton tugboat *Owen M. Frederick* out of the water and placed it onto the deck of the barge *Huron* for its five-year hull inspection and to repair two small holes found in the hull during winter operations.

“To take a vessel out of the water for hull inspections and repairs is fairly routine and common in the Detroit District, but to lift one out of the water and

place it on a barge for this work is not,” said Kurt Bunker, chief of the St. Marys River Section.

Workers wrapped four slings made of 1-inch chain around the tug and attached them to a spreader beam on the barge gate lifter *Bunyan*. The *Bunyan* then hoisted the *Frederick* out of the water and placed it on the *Huron*'s deck.

The hull underwent a routine five-year inspection, and workers repaired the two minor holes in the hull. Two less critical maintenance items – painting the hull and replacing the cutlass bearing

was on the *Huron*'s deck, Bunker said. There was no cost of putting the boat in a “dry dock” repair facility, and no need to pay outside contractors, as Corps employees performed all of the work.

Crews from the *Harvey*, *Bunyan* and *Nicolet* as well as the Shops, Yards and Mechanical Branch participated in the work.

The *Owen M. Frederick* normally is used to move the *Harvey* and *Bunyan* around the Soo Locks to support operations and maintenance work. It is also used for work such as strike removal in the St. Marys River, and scraping ice from the lock walls during winter operations.



Dan Ellis of the Soo Area Office welds the hull of the *Owen M. Frederick*. (Photo by Michelle Hill)

on the propeller shaft – were postponed until later in the year.

The district achieved significant cost savings by repairing the tug while it

Commander's column (continued from page 2)

working hard for our district teammates, just as the Bruins did on June 6 and through the remainder of the Stanley Cup Finals.

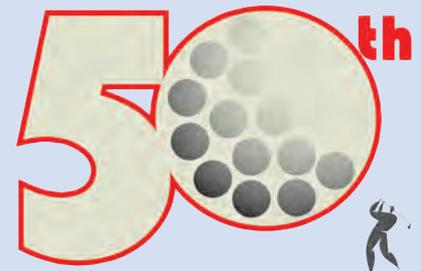
As such, there are a few things I ask you to focus on during this transitional season as we process the multitude of tasks required to execute our mission:

- Work hard - every day and every task;
- Seek input from your supervisors, customers, and colleagues - establish mentoring relationships across the team, your Community of Practice, the Agency, or even industry;
- Embrace the team – as I mentioned at Engineers Day on June 15, there are many things we all do, not because they are in anyone's duty description, but because we care about each other as a team. These are the things that reflect our District values and

are essential in finding GREAT amongst the good;

- Start brainstorming ideas for FY12 OPLAN Development – the planning process for the OPLAN will kick off early August. Think about developing your own MyPLAN – identify the key things that you do for mission execution, and identify quantifiable and measureable ways to improve your support for the priorities of your Section, Branch, Division and district; and
- Stay focused on keeping SAFETY in mind in all that you do – both on and off the job. Plan for safety, and consciously mitigate risk!

Finally, please know that I am inspired, each and every day, by you – the terrific employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District. Building Strong!!! Essayons!!!



Corps golf league plans birthday celebration

Current and former members of the Corps of Engineers Detroit District golf league are invited to attend the mid-year outing to celebrate the league's 50th anniversary, July 15 at the Rolling Meadows Country Club in Whitmore Lake, Mich.

Golf begins at 11:30 a.m., with a cookout slated afterward. Cost is \$27 for golf and cart rental, and \$5 for the cook-out.

For more information, contact Dave Wright, 313-226-6766.

Buxbaum visits Detroit District

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Buxbaum of the Corps of Engineers Headquarters Office visited the Detroit District March 8-11, conducting site visits and meeting with district personnel.



From left, Soo Area Office employees Chris Albrough, chief lock master; and Dan Ellis, master of the tug boat Owen M. Frederick, join Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Buxbaum. (Photo by Lt. Col. Mike Derosier).

Buxbaum attended a Ypsilanti scoping meeting of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study, interacting with Maj. Gen. John Peabody, Commanding General of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, and district commander Lt. Col. Mike Derosier, as well as

members of the public. Buxbaum also visited the Detroit Area Office and floating plant, and the Soo Area Office. Derosier joined Buxbaum in meeting with employees and answering their questions during the site visits.



Saugatuck Ribbon Cutting

U.S. Rep. Bill Huizenga, R-Holland, and Detroit District Commander Lt. Col. Mike Derosier cut the ribbon April 28 at the newly refurbished Saugatuck Harbor revetment project in western Michigan. Repairs were made to both the north and south revetments of the federal channel connecting Lake Michigan to Kalamazoo Lake. Workers installed about two miles of steel sheet pile walls, concrete, scour and splash stone for erosion protection. The original structure, built about 100 years ago, consisted of concrete blocks placed atop wood pilings.

We're ISO Certified – Now What?



Scott Thieme

As a result of the February 2011 surveillance audits in LRE, LRC and LRP, the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division remains ISO-9001 certified. This is great news and is one more verification that as an organization, we are moving along the path from Good to Great. The key thing

to remember is we don't just stop here. ISO certification requires continual process review and is just one initiative among many that embody a Culture of Quality in the Detroit District.

Our Quality Management System (QMS) is one of the key pieces of our commitment to quality. The system provides documented processes to ensure we are doing the right things in the right way. While the audit went well, we need to continue improving our system. We all do that by using the system on a daily basis to complete our work. One comment I frequently hear is that people don't use the system because it doesn't reflect the way we really do business. It is our responsibility to fix that. When you find processes in the QMS that don't follow the way we work, write up an



“Opportunity For Improvement (OFI)” to correct or adapt it. This is required for sustainment of certification, ensures continual process improvement and shows ourselves and the auditors that we utilize our system. You can only find the errors in the processes by using them. And don't forget, we have an OFI incentive program where you can earn \$100 for helping improve our processes.

Many of our processes are already documented; you just have to look in the QMS for them. Since starting my developmental assignment in Planning, Programs and Project Management, I have twice found processes already in the system for things we said we needed to improve. It was noted that we need to improve our strategic communication plans for key projects – there's a process for that. We recently talked at PRB about needing a process for approving changes to project schedules – there's a process for that too. So there is no need to reinvent the wheel, we just have to follow our process. I have learned to check the QMS to be sure I am following correct procedures. I hope you will all do the same and help us make Quality a part of what we do every day, not just something we address during an occasional audit.

Scott Thieme, assistant director of Planning, Programs and Project Management, serves on the Detroit District ISO Quality Assurance Team.



Congratulations To ...

Three Detroit District employees recently passed the Professional Engineer exam, one of the final steps in the arduous process of becoming a licensed P.E.

Robert Stanick, chief of Operations and Maintenance with the Kewaunee Sub-Office, Lake Michigan Area Office, took the exam in April, while **Cindy Jarema**, a hydraulic engineer in the Hydraulics & Hydrology Branch, and **Josh Hachey**, a mechanical engineer in the Contract Administration Branch, both took the exam last October.



Robert Stanick

Stanick took the Civil: Construction exam, which focused on the areas of construction,

geotechnical, structural, transportation, and water



Cindy Jarema

resources and environmental.

Half of Jarema's exam involved environmental, geotechnical, structural,

transportation, construction, and water resources topics. The other half involved an in-depth focus on



Josh Hachey

water resources issues.

Hachey's morning session included fluid dynamics, thermodynamics,

heat transfer, machine design, and properties of materials. His in-depth afternoon exam dealt with HVAC and refrigeration issues.



Amanda McCallister

Amanda McCallister, a biologist in the Environmental Analysis Branch, is now a Certified Hazardous

Materials Manager, CHMM, having met requirements of the Institute of Hazardous Materials Management.



Kevin Sprague

Kevin Sprague and **John Larson**, area engineers at the Soo Area Office and Detroit Area Office, respectively,

recently earned their Administrative Contracting Officer, ACO, warrants. They completed the required 13 contracting classes on a compressed time schedule.

An ACO warrant is granted by the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting at the Corps which allows the ACO to execute construction contract modifications/changes not to exceed \$500,000 under the delegated authority of the District Contracting Officer.



Woodruff wraps up three decades of service

By Tom Black

Public Affairs Office

Carl Woodruff, a civil engineer in Hydraulics and Hydrology, retired in April after 30 years with the Detroit District. His colleagues honored him with a retirement cake April 27.



Carl Woodruff

Woodruff's career included stints at the Detroit Area Office, in Construction Operations, and with the Soo Area

Office as assistant area engineer.

Improvements in technology had a tremendous effect on how he did his job, Woodruff said. For example, availability of the Internet beginning in the mid-1990s greatly facilitated data gathering and compilation as well as dissemination of water level projections.

"All that information we have available today is fantastic," he said.

In recent years, Woodruff's work focused on carrying out mandates of the International Lake Superior Board of Control and the International Joint Commission. This involved regulating and monitoring Lake Superior outflows through the Compensating Works, hydroelectric plants and the navigation locks at Sault Ste. Marie.

Carl and his wife Laura enjoy reading, plan to do some traveling, and have their hearts set on a trip to Hawaii later this year.

KUDOS!

Detroit District celebrates Asian-Pacific Islander Heritage Month

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

“Leadership, Diversity, Empowerment and Beyond” was the theme for this year’s Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month, celebrated in two separate events sponsored by the Equal Employment Opportunity Office.

On May 19 in the McNamara Building basement cafeteria, Dr. Jeffrey Vang, a local pharmacist, described his perspective as a member of the Hmong community who came to the United States from Laos as a 13-year-old refugee in 1986.

He provided a brief history of the Hmong people, and mentioned some key people of Asian descent who have figured prominently in American history or are making significant contributions today.

The Hmong were forced out of their native China in the 1800s and ended up living in Laos, Thailand, and

Vietnam. In the early years of the Vietnam War, the Central Intelligence Agency organized Hmong fighters to oppose the North Vietnamese.

Vang mentioned several notables of Asian-Pacific descent including U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii, a World War II Veteran; current Energy Secretary Dr. Steven Chu; former Labor Secretary Elaine Chao; and Northern Michigan University President Les Wong.

A strong work ethic has helped Asians succeed when they come to



Detroit District Commander Lt. Col. Mike Derosier presents a certificate of appreciation to Jeffrey Vang, guest speaker during the district’s May 19 observance of Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month. (Photo by Cassandra Kardeke)

the United States, Vang said. Many have founded and run successful small businesses, bringing from their former countries a prevailing attitude of, “We’ve got to work harder,” Vang said, adding, “There are no weekends or holidays in Southeast Asia.”

Vang serves on the board of directors of the Hmong Community of Detroit, Inc., and is an active member of the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission.

Following Vang’s speech, Bangkok Crossing, a downtown Detroit restaurant, offered a food-for-purchase taste-fest featuring Thai cuisine.

Six days later, May 25, the district’s EEO Office presented the film “Vincent Who?” in the Lake Superior Room. The documentary focuses on the 1982 hate-crime murder of 27-year-old Vincent Chin, a Chinese-American who lived and worked in Detroit, a crime that led to a major Asian-American civil rights movement.



DOGGONE GOOD CAUSE

Patty Jeske of Logistics Management poses with her assistance dog Carley, fellow volunteers and their dogs at the Detroit Kennel Club Dog Shows, March 5-6 at Cobo Center. Working in a booth, they sold apparel and merchandise to raise money for Paws with a Cause (www.pawswithacause.org), which trains assistance dogs to help people with disabilities be independent. Jeske was

born deaf and received Carley, now 7 years old, from the organization in 2005. Carley serves as Patty’s morning alarm clock, and also provides alerts when someone’s at the door, the washer or dryer turn off, or her teenage daughter on the next floor needs something. Carley also recognizes emergency sounds such as the smoke detector and carbon monoxide alarm.



Eshani Malhotra, daughter of Sheetal Malhotra of the Cost and Engineering Branch, and Renell Hansen, daughter of Staff Sgt. Andrew Hansen of Security & Law Enforcement, inspect snapping turtle eggs in a jar. Hal Harrington of the Environmental Analysis Branch brought in his personal collection of animal pellets and specimens for the children to see. (Photo by Mikaila Duerod, daughter of Lynn Duerod, PAO)

Corps kids ready to take over

By Tom Black
Public Affairs Office

Learning about where Mom or Dad works is more fun than going to school – at least for a day. That seemed to be the consensus of 17 children who participated in Bring Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day, April 28 at the Detroit District Office.

The children’s busy agenda included meeting with several presenters and learning about the variety of things the Corps of Engineers does.

The curious boys and girls moved around the office for 20-minute presentations on such specialty areas as hydraulics and hydrology, the

environment, computers and engineering services.

“I liked it because we got to see the different branches and projects,” said Genevieve Smith, daughter of Jan Smith from Engineering and Technical

“I liked the sea lamprey; I liked it because it was really gross,” said Jordan Smith

Services Division. “It gives me an idea of what I could do in the future.”

District employees did their best to make things interesting.

Hal Harrington created a popular display by laying out his personal collection of animal furs, skins and skeletal parts in the Environmental Analysis Branch.

A Soo locks replica demonstration, given by Jim Selegean of Hydraulics and Hydrology, was the favorite attraction of Collin Follet, son of Jeffrey Follet of Programs and Project Management; and Eshani Malhotra, daughter of Sheetal Malhotra of the Cost and General Engineering Branch.

But a few others favored Harrington’s makeshift science museum, which also included a preserved sea lamprey.

“I liked that we got to see all the different animal hides, and we got to feel them,” said Olivia Gould, daughter of Chuck Gould, of Programs and Project Management. Her sister Madeline also enjoyed touching the animal furs.

“I liked when we got to see the teeth of the different animals,” added Jasmine Altamimi, daughter of Alaa Jafar, Geotechnical and Structure Branch.

“I liked the sea lamprey; I liked it because it was really

gross,” said Jordan Smith, niece of Phyllis Williams, of Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

Jim Starks of the ACE-IT Project Management Office got the most votes as the best presenter.

“He was funny,” said Renell Hansen, daughter of Staff Sgt. Andrew Hansen, of Security and Law Enforcement. Starks amazed Hansen with this statistic: The Army Corps of Engineers has 49,000 computers, and every day, these busy machines process 10 million emails. *Contributions by the children were included in this article.*

April 28 was a day of learning and discovery for these children of Detroit District employees. They learned about operational aspects of the Army Corps of Engineers. (Photo by Lynn Duerod)





Corps Day



August 19, 2011
at Belle Isle
For more information, call
Pam Horner, 313-226-6748



Getting together in Afghanistan for a cookout and camaraderie are, from left, Detroit District Office employees Steve Check, Angelique Bartreau, Christine Weisenberger and Patrick Kuhne. All except Weisenberger deployed with the Naval Reserve Construction Battalion, aka "Seabees," which sponsored the outing.

Home from Afghanistan

Christine Weisenberger, an administrative assistant with Programs and Project Management, recently returned home for a three-month respite after nine months of deployment in Afghanistan. Her husband Mike knew she would be coming, but she surprised her children. Fifth grade student Jason beams after his mother shows up at school unexpectedly, and his second grade sister Samantha is overcome by emotion after seeing her mother for the first time since last September. Weisenberger will return to the Afghanistan Engineer District in September for another nine months. (Photos by Tom Black)

