

Europe District German engineer sent to New England as part of exchange program

By Ann Marie Harvie
New England District

A helping hand is sometimes found in the most unexpected, far away places.

When the New England District found itself with a lot of tasks to be completed at the Massachusetts Military Reservation Field Office located at Cape Cod, they found willing help across the ocean in the Europe District.

Reemt Pauw, a German National working for Europe District, went to New England as part of the European Exchange Program. The program was created by the Europe District to help manage the needs of manpower on a short-term basis by using temporary duty.

"A lot of personnel were hired for permanent detail in Europe in the past after using this program," said Chief of Engineering and Construction Ernest Drott, P.E., Europe District. "Due to the defense issues having priority, a lot of funds cannot be spent in Europe, and projects had to be postponed. A transfer of manpower from the Europe District to the States makes sense in some cases to lower the overhead costs at our District."

Drott said Europe District is being more innovative in how they save the customer money. Sending Pauw to the New England District shows the Corps' flexibility in taking care of the customer.

Pauw, who has worked as a cost engineer at Europe District for the past five years, is the first exchange program employee to come to New England District. "It was nice being offered a little change, and the program was a welcome opportunity," he said. "I was interested to learn about the way of life in the States and I wanted to gain some experience in the American work environment."

Pauw was chosen for the exchange program based on his resume, qualifications and recommendations. "Reemt was a career vocational trainer at German schools and worked at different Directorate of Public

Works as a civil engineer, environmental engineer, and environmental protection specialist," said Frank Fedele of the Massachusetts Military Reservation Field Office.

Since he arrived on Cape Cod, Pauw has seen many similarities to his native Germany. "The landscape, with its abundance of woods, lakes, and sandy areas are almost the same landscape in Northern Germany where I grew up," Pauw said.

During the three-month tour, he provided soil inspection at the thermal treatment plant, which included night work. Pauw was also checking the Site Safety and Health Plan for special items. Later in his tour, he provided scoping work and prepared Records of Action (needed for environmental and cultural consideration) for upcoming work. In addition, he worked on several smaller projects, such as the relocation of a Controlled Detonation Chamber, the clean-up and soil treatment at a smaller firing range and the installation of new Corps Office Buildings.

"Working at the MMR Field Office has been a refresher of my experience from my time working at the DPW," he said, speaking of past employment.

His New England District supervisor and co-workers have been pleased with the work that Pauw has performed. "Reemt works very professionally as an engineer," said Fedele. "European thoughts of engineering seem very similar to the States. His computer skills and command of our language made his integration into our office work out perfectly."

Likewise, Pauw has enjoyed his experience working for the New England District. "It was very valuable," he said. "I am prepared to volunteer for a detail again. New people and the new environments are always providing new aspects of life and work experience. This has made life colorful, confident, and gives me ... happiness."



U.S. Army photo

An aerial view of the thermal treatment plant, near Cape Cod.

Landstuhl schools upgrade environment for Learning



Photo by Brian H. Temple

(from left to right) Lt. Col. Angela Maria Lungu, Dr. George Carpenter, and Jacquelyn Jaeger cut the ribbon at the Landstuhl Elementary and Middle School annex in March. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Europe District, provided technical expertise to build an annex at the school funded by the Kaiserslautern School District and DoDDS.

Chanel S. Weaver **Maryland District**

Landstuhl Elementary and Middle School is a great place to learn these days. Its classrooms are large and comfortable and many of its facilities have recently been upgraded.

But Landstuhl was not always this way.

The school was suffering from many problems. The school's 10 classrooms were in desperate need of renovation, according to Dr. George Carpenter, the school's principal.

Carpenter said that mold in the classrooms was causing an unsafe environment for the people who attended the school each day.

"The buildings were old, and at times the teach-

ers complained of headaches and respiratory problems," said Carpenter.

Although the administration at Landstuhl tried to bandage the mold problem by spending \$150,000 to add a new roof and floor to the school, their efforts were in vain.

Environmental issues were not the only item to plague Landstuhl. The school was also suffering from limited space and overcrowding. The school, which was projected to have only 735 students in September, actually enrolled 868 and the size of the school's staff increased along with the student population from 58 to 82.

The solution to Landstuhl's problems came in December 2003, when the Army Corps of Engineers, in



Photo by Brian H. Temple

Dr. George Carpenter, principal of the Landstuhl Elementary and Middle School (right), shows Lt. Col. Angela Maria Lungu one of the former classrooms used at the Landstuhl Elementary and Middle School.

partnership with the Kaiserslautern School District and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools, began work to replace the 10 classrooms. The Corps provided the technical expertise to renovate the school and the Kaiserslautern School District and DoDDS funded the \$500,000 project.

In January 2004 the construction of the new classrooms was completed. Today, classes are a little more comfortable at Landstuhl Elementary/Middle School. The school's old classrooms now serve as storage.

The administration at Landstuhl said they are pleased with the recent renovations at their school.

"We are very happy to get upgraded facilities," said Carpenter.

Just as Carpenter was pleased with the new facilities, Leslie Bearden, the Corps contracting representative for this project, said she was pleased with the record speed in which the contract was awarded for the project.

"This was the fastest (award) that I have ever experienced in over 20 years with the Corps of Engineers," said Bearden.

Bearden's department received the scope of work on Sept. 23 of last year, and had the contract awarded by Sept. 30.

"What normally takes 45 days took a grand total of eight - an unbelievable schedule," said Bearden.

Tom Titus, a facilities engineer who also worked on the project, said he was

pleased with the Corps' timely completion of the annex.

"The timeline was met in four months, ahead of schedule," said Titus. "Based on our experience with this project, we would like to work with the Corps again."

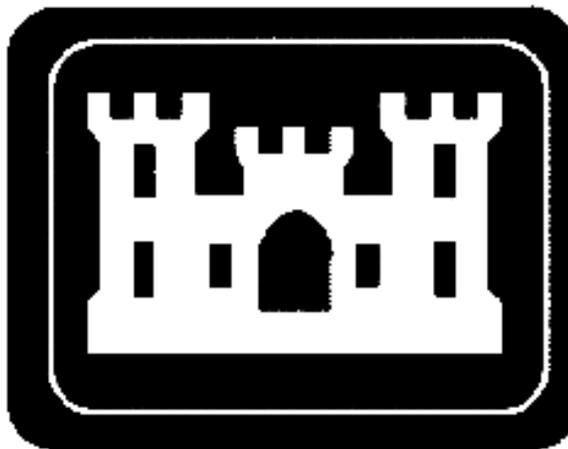
Titus may get his wish soon. The DoDDS is always looking for timely ways to improve the conditions of its schools. The recent experience with the Corps in the construction of the Landstuhl annex may pave the way for the Corps of Engineers to be included on more school renovation projects.

Bearden credits the committed workers of the Corps for the success at Landstuhl Elementary/Middle School. She said Corps employees exhibited a personal commitment to revitalizing the school.

"The entire project delivery team performed their responsibilities quickly and efficiently, under some stressful time constraints," said Bearden. "Each member of the team employed daily communication and feedback to ensure that nothing was missed or forgotten."

Bearden said the project management business process was successfully implemented to keep the customers happy.

"The team did an outstanding job of ensuring the successful completion of the new classrooms at the school," said Bearden. "This is what PMBP is all about."



One stop shop

New Employee Support Office allows for a seamless in- and out-process experience

By Brian H. Temple

Employees no longer have to wander the floors of the Amelia Earhart Building, searching for the vast array of offices to take care of their in-processing or out-processing needs. In Wiesbaden, if you need this kind of assistance, the Employee Support Office is there to help.

The ESO is the brainchild of Col. Lee Staab, commander, Europe District, and offers “one-stop shopping” for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees who find themselves in-processing or out-

processing in Germany.

To accomplish this, a specialized workforce was selected from different directorates such as Resource Management, Logistics, and Human Resources to staff a remodeled office centrally located on the first floor.

A timely concept for prompt and friendly service, the ESO staff handle issues of all types such as transportation, identification cards and passports, appraisals, ration cards, pay and leave issues, and overseas allowances. But, working in this customer service business has one prerequisite. “No one here is allowed to have a bad hair day,”

said Staab.

For those in-processing, the ESO saves a lot of time and energy, which enables new employees to spend more time focusing on the customer. The confusion employees have faced in the past has been resolved by placing a new employee’s sponsor in one central location. A relocation specialist creates a customized schedule for each new employee.

After being greeted at the airport in Frankfurt, a new or returning employee is immersed in a week-long series of briefings and appointments from getting an identification card to the driver’s license test. A tour of Wiesbaden and the surrounding area is included to help an employee acclimate to their new surroundings. The office staff even provides travel information or suggestions for family vacations.

One arrival, Carol Haynes, chief, Equal Employment Office said, “I didn’t have to struggle finding people and locations, or miss important appointments. I had my IDs, a list of potential apartments, facility tours, and even passed my driving exam, all in the first week.” Haynes also said one ESO staff member “even rode the bus with me until I felt comfortable on my own.”

“Taking care of the basic needs of the workforce up front enables them to focus on their jobs,” said Bridget Brackett, an ESO relocation specialist. “Getting started over here can be stressful at



Photo by Brian H. Temple

Bridget Brackett, an Employee Services Office relocation specialist, jokes with Brig. Gen. Merdith ‘Bo’ Temple, North Atlantic Division commander, about not being able to give him the office tour unless he signs in. Brackett is one of several employees in Europe District’s Employee Services Office that specialize in taking care of employees’ needs.