

# TOWER TIMES

Rock Island District's News Magazine

July 2011



## Supporting others

Employees help other districts during natural disasters



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
Rock Island District

# Tower Times

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**July 2011**

ON THE COVER



Anthony Heddlesten, Environmental Engineering Section, Design Branch, monitors a ringed boil along a Lower Mississippi River levee near Clarksdale, Miss., during Operation Watershed. Heddlesten was one of 14 District employees who deployed and assisted with the flood fight.

*Photo by Corps of Engineers.*

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## *Tower Times*

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## Emergency response continues into summer months

A recurring theme throughout the spring and now into summer has been Mother Nature's affects on communities throughout the United States. From flooding on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers and smaller tributaries like the Souris River which flooded Minot, N.D., to the tornadoes and strong storms that have torn through places like Joplin, Mo., Mother Nature has spared few areas from her wrath.

These natural disasters bring Corps employees from throughout the organization out in full force helping the affected communities. Rock Island District has been integral in the Corps-wide relief effort and emergency management response. Although most communities within our mission area were minimally affected by flooding, numerous District employees deployed to various locations throughout the country to help those areas most affected.

- To assist the Kansas City District flooding, Brad Palmer deployed as a Geographic Information Specialist, providing mapping and GIS support to the District Emergency Operations Center for flood response. Also, Monique Savage is deployed as a Battle Captain, providing command level briefings and participating in stakeholder conference calls.
- To assist the Omaha District flooding, Roger Less deployed as a Technical Expert, providing technical expertise regarding flood-fight efforts. Jotham Povich and Joshua Hendrix deployed as a Geotechnical Specialists, providing geotechnical expertise for levees and flood-fighting measures. And, Faith Pinault deployed as an Emergency Management Specialist, providing ENGLink, timekeeping, and reporting support to the EOC.

- To support the Joplin, Mo., tornado recovery, Jeff McCrery is deployed as a Safety Officer, providing oversight and establishing the proper safety protocol for USACE personnel involved in the recovery efforts.

We even have folks helping internationally. For example, Anne Fleischman, Contracting Division, is in Japan providing contracting support in the aftermath of the tsunami that ravaged that country. The District-wide recovery effort being accomplished by our teammates is impressive. (Please see side bar for a more extensive list of District Employees who have deployed to assist various efforts.)

As I wrote earlier, most of our District was minimally affected over the past several months. The spring flooding that did occur in our boundaries resulted in several millions of dollars in damage to our infrastructure. Early estimates, within Rock Island District, point to critical repair needs of about \$2.1 million for operation and maintenance (O&M). Those critical repairs include dredging in various pools, machinery base repairs, replacement of Tainter valve limit switches, as well as some building repairs. We also have an estimated \$5.2 million in non-critical repairs to damaged (not overtopped or breached) Public Law 84-99 eligible levees on the Mississippi River.

Those estimates are nothing to take lightly but they do pale in comparison when looking at the damages to the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) system as a whole. A rough look at the magnitude shows that about \$2 billion will be needed to bring the MR&T system back to pre-flood conditions. Of that \$2 billion, nearly \$700 million is required for the most urgent repairs that need to be in place before the next flood season in 2012.

Needless to say, the damaging floods to the Mississippi Valley system are a bud-

getary concern. The Corps is addressing that concern by gathering surplus General Investigations and Construction funds that were scheduled to carry over into FY13 for transfer to the Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies account for nationwide flood fighting and recovery. Surplus Operations and Maintenance funds are also being gathered to supplement flood fight and recovery efforts on O&M projects and MR&T levees.

The gathering of the surplus means that Rock Island District funds have been identified for transfer. Nothing is final yet (when this article was composed) but early figures estimate that \$1.8 million have been identified for transfer from our General Investigations and Construction

*Continued on page 4.*

### **The following Rock Island District employees have assisted in emergency response efforts in 2011.**

#### **Tornado Recovery in Alabama:**

James McKeon  
Robert Meyers

#### **Tornado Recovery in Mississippi:**

Christopher Hawes

#### **Operation Watershed:**

Eric Hackbarth  
Corey Hardt  
John Hayes  
Anthony Heddlesten  
Donald Hocker  
Brad Houzenga  
Steve Johnson  
Sarah Jones  
Robert Lee Meyers  
John Quick  
Bryan Snook  
Jeff Tripp  
Brant Vollman  
Susan Yager

# Message from Commander continued...

funding. Another \$890,000 has been identified for transfer from our O&M funding. Districts throughout the Corps have to bear some of the burden to help defray the costs of this record-setting flooding. All the funds that are being identified for transfer are being considered carefully. Before the funds are rescinded or transferred, each District is being given the opportunity to identify how those funds would be used if no transfer occurs. Those findings will be taken into consideration as regional and national priorities are determined.

No one likes to see their funding go elsewhere but situations like this certainly seem to warrant some budgetary flexibility. And, there is the potential that those funds could be supplemented as the House Appropriations Committee added \$1 billion in emergency funding to the fiscal 2012 Energy & Water spending bill to respond to massive flooding in the Midwest. The bill needs Senate approval before it can become part of the FY12 appropriations. Until the FY12 appropriation bill is passed, the Corps is expected to initiate critical repairs within the funding now available.

I don't foresee the transferred funds causing much of a burden for our District but I do appreciate everyone's willingness to be flexible and work within any budget constraints that may result. Getting the MR&T system back to pre-flood condition is critical and we will do what it takes, as a District, to help make that happen.

Finally, thank you to all those who put in the hard work to make this year's Corps Day celebration (June 23) a resounding success. Corps Day is an excellent tradition but it doesn't happen without a lot of behind-the-scenes fundraising and coordination by a wealth of folks throughout the District. This year's celebra-



**Eric Hackbarth, Geotechnical Branch, rings a boil along a Lower Mississippi River levee near Memphis, Tenn., during Operation Watershed. Photo by Corps of Engineers.**

tion stayed true to the tradition and I think everyone enjoyed the day. It is a much deserved opportunity to step back, take a break and enjoy the camaraderie of our teammates. I enjoyed seeing all who were in attendance. Every one of you is doing great work every day and Corps Day is a small token of appreciation for everything you do, day in and day out. Thanks again and continue **BUILDING STRONG®**. 

## Have you clicked on ?

*Click on the star icon on your desktop and see what you have been missing out on.*

Quality Management System (QMS) is a formalized system that documents the structure, responsibilities and procedures required to achieve effective quality management. Basically, it is a toolbox of standard business processes that you can view, rate, comment on and much more. There is something for everyone. Next time you have a question about a process, procedure, letter format, etc., click the star on the computer's desktop. Type in your keyword and search the QMS documents. You can also use the numerous drop down menus to find what you are looking for. You can even add business processes to QMS, view announcements and submit ideas on how to improve USACE.

Check it out today and see what you can share and learn enabling the Rock Island District, Mississippi Valley Division and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to improve effectiveness and increase productivity while maintaining quality standards and improving customer satisfaction.

If you have questions please contact Marshal Dolan at 309-794-5648 or [Marsha.g.dolan@usace.army.mil](mailto:Marsha.g.dolan@usace.army.mil). 

A screenshot of the QMS homepage. At the top, it says "QMS Vision" and "A toolbox of uniform processes transportable worldwide as a framework continuously improving to deliver superior products and service by a ready bench." Below this are four small images: a construction site, a meeting, a sunset, and a bridge. There are two buttons: "QMS Tutorial" and "QMS Overview Presentation". Below these are sections for "Change Grouping of 'Published Processes'", "Location Chooser", "Published Processes" (with a table of process numbers and counts), "Business Process Search", and "Use these criteria to narrow your document search." with dropdown menus for "PROCESS TYPE" and "COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE".

**Screen shot of the QMS homepage - go there today and see what you can learn.**

# Reestablishing a partnership

By Hilary Markin, Editor

**M**aj. Gen. Michael Walsh, commanding general, Mississippi Valley Division, visited the Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque, Iowa, on June 21 to sign a Memorandum of Agreement reestablishing and continuing our partnership with them.

The Corps and the Museum first entered a partnership in 2004 with the purpose of establishing a mutual framework of cooperation between the two organizations. The new agreement continues that framework and promotes an effective working relationship through communication and cooperation among agencies to advance awareness and appreciation of ideas, technology, issues and needs for the Mississippi River Watershed.

"We have an East Coast, we have a West Coast, but most people don't realize we have an inner coast," said Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh, emphasizing the importance of the Mississippi River to American and world commerce during the ceremony.

Walsh stressed the need for people to view the Mississippi River as having a direct link to the sea.

"If you put water in any one of the 31 states (of the Mississippi watershed), you're putting water into the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico," he said. "We need to think of this as a coast."

The museum is one of only two Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers on the entire river, the other being the New Orleans Museum and Aquarium. Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers are a designation bestowed by Coastal America (a virtual consortium of federal partners) on those facilities that demonstrate the highest level of commitment to address coastal resource protection and management via exhibits, outreach and education.

Throughout the Corps, and certainly within the Rock Island



**Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh (right), commanding general, Mississippi Valley Division, and Jerry Enzler, executive director, Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, sign the official memorandums of agreement, reestablishing and continuing the partnership. Photo by Allen Marshall.**

District and Mississippi Valley Division, partnerships are critical to the success of everything the Corps does.

"This partnership is a perfect example of that success. The professionalism, technical support and expertise that our two organizations have shared have netted outstanding results. Today, we recommit to growing and expanding our relationship," said Col. Shawn McGinley, district commander. 

*Erik Hogstrom, Dubuque Telegraph Herald, contributed to this article.*

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## Maj. Gen. Walsh holds Town Hall

Story and photo by Hilary Markin, Editor

**M**aj. Gen. Michael Walsh, commanding general, Mississippi Valley Division, conducted a Town Hall meeting for all Rock Island District employees on June 21. He delivered a "State of the Division" speech sharing some of the significant events occurring throughout the division. He discussed Operation Watershed and thanked those employees who provided support during the flood fight and the next steps in the recovery process. He also talked about the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System June 1 deadline and the hard work and dedication the region provided and continues to provide. Another topic was the volunteerism nature of the Corps when it comes to supporting Overseas Contingency Operations, thanking those employees who have and continue to deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The presentation concluded with an award presentation recognizing some District employees for their accomplishments and dedication to the Corps of Engineers. 



**Col. Shawn McGinley (left) and Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh demonstrate the Mississippi River as the 3rd largest watershed.**

# 2011 Col

## Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees



Col. Shawn McGinley presents Harlen Briggs his plaque in honor of being inducted into the Rock Island District Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees. Mr. Briggs began his federal career in 1968 and started with the Rock Island District in 1975 in the Program Development Branch of Engineering Division. He progressively moved up the career ladder with each position gaining in responsibility, culminating as the Chief of Construction Division. His technical and managerial skills, innovation, and commitment to people greatly contributed to the engineering excellence for which Rock Island District is known.

## Employees of the Year

Supervisor - Barbara Lester  
Professional - Shirley Johnson  
Administrative/Technical - Mary Scott  
Assistant/Clerical - Angie Gilbraith  
Trades/Crafts - Bryan Smith  
Public Contact - Marsha Dolan  
Community Contact - JoAnn Wilgenbusch

## Engineers of the Year

Brent Anderson  
Andrew Barnes

Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees  
Harlen Briggs



# Prps Day





**Before**

Above, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps members begin work on a portion of the Woodpecker Nature Trail at Coralville Lake.

Below, AmeriCorps team members put the finishing touches to the trail section. Photos by AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps team members.



**After**

# AmeriCorps team improving trails at Coralville Lake

By Hilary Markin, Editor

The to-do list always seems to grow and finding creative ways to get more done with less becomes an art. For the first time Coralville Lake teamed together with the Scattergood Schools in West Branch, Iowa, and submitted a combined project application to the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) North Central Region.

The projects were accepted and a team of 10 NCCC members spent two weeks working at Scattergood Schools and their remaining six weeks at Coralville Lake.

Jeff Peck, natural resources specialist, Coralville Lake, led the charge by selecting the site and laying out the work plan for the team.

The team worked on Woodpecker Nature Trail, a hiking trail located along the south side of Coralville Lake. The trail is part of a network of multi-use trails at Coralville Lake that total five miles in length.

“When the NCCC AmeriCorps team arrived we walked the Woodpecker trail system, looked at the issues that needed to be addressed, and came up with a plan of attack,” said Peck.

The team worked on widening the trail in places, removing excess material, fixing erosion issues and conducting general trail maintenance activities. They also worked at removing invasive species like garlic mustard and tree species competing with an

oak savannah restoration site.

“The AmeriCorps team successfully tackled and completed most of the objectives during their six weeks. The vast majority of the work would have never gotten accomplished if it weren’t for the AmeriCorps Team,” said Peck.

They also had the pleasure of helping to prepare for the Memorial Day Veteran’s Trail Dedication ceremony and attending the event.

“It was really cool to participate and help with the Memorial Day event. Seeing the veteran’s recognized for their contributions was very neat,” said Holly Elder, NCCC team member.

During their time at Coralville they were exposed to the staff and learned about the variety of missions the Corps of Engineers has. Part of the program also includes team members participating in independent service projects in the communities. A few of the team members spent the night on their feet participating in the American Cancer Society’s Relay For Life event in Johnson County.

A special appreciation lunch was held for the AmeriCorps team prior to them leaving Coralville Lake. The staff had gotten to know each of the team members during their six weeks of service and presented each of them with a unique hat that fit their individual personalities as a token of appreciation.

## AmeriCorps story continued...

The 10 member team, from across the county, follows up with a short break with their next project at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum in Madison, Wis.

The AmeriCorps NCCC is a full-time, residential, national service program in which 1,100 young adults serve nationwide each year. During their 10-month term, members ages 18-24 years old, work on teams of eight to 12 on projects that address critical needs related to natural and other disasters, infrastructure improvement, environmental stewardship and conservation, energy conservation, and urban and rural development. In exchange for their service, NCCC members receive \$5,550 to help pay for college, or to pay back existing student loans. Other benefits include a small living stipend, room and board, leadership development, and the knowledge that, through active citizenship, people can make a difference.

AmeriCorps NCCC is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Corporation improves lives, communities and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. 



**AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps team members (first row) Amanda Williams, Sophia Biggins, Melissa Haynes, Holly Elder, Megan Richards, (second row) Milton Ronan, Jarran Wilder, Joshua Menke, Michael Langen, and Matthew Wright pose at the head of Woodpecker Nature Trail before heading to work for the day.**

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# Increasing efficiency with FEM

By Rock Island District FEM Team

Over the past several years, the Corps has been implementing a maintenance management system titled Facilities and Equipment Maintenance (FEM). FEM's purpose is to help manage maintenance for all types of facilities in various business lines such as hydropower, recreation, navigation and flood risk management projects.

FEM's primary purpose is to help the maintenance staff at the projects. It can also be used as a warehousing/inventory system that manages spare parts, materials and supplies needed by the projects and can track applicable personal property.

A FEM national utilization plan is in development with its intent being to map the full implementation of the system Corps-wide. Rock Island District (MVR) was the first district to utilize FEM for the navigation business line. Multiple personnel from Operations Division were trained on the system in 2006 with some now considered expert users who are teaching the system to others. They also worked together to set up the correct FEM hierarchy for navigation which is used throughout the Corps. MVR has facilitated training in not only MVR but other districts Corps-wide, with usage levels ranging from beginner to advanced.

For the navigation business line the FEM database is used to manage maintenance of navigation facilities. It is used as a practical tool focused on helping to manage maintenance through the tracking of preventative maintenance schedules, generating work orders and tracking them to completion and the reporting of "unaccomplished maintenance."

In May a national team from headquarters, personnel from other districts and divisions and a consulting firm spent time at Lock and Dam 12 to gauge progress to date for the navigation business line. They interviewed all the personnel at the lock as

well as the some from the Mississippi River Project and the Chief of Operations. A report will follow summarizing their findings and the best practices noted during the visit.

Another business line that MVR is using FEM for is recreation. James Trail, Nathan Gorham, and Nick Hedden facilitated a workshop March 9-10 for personnel from the reservoirs and both rivers. Some employees from the Mississippi's Maintenance Section also were in attendance.

The workshop focused on how to use FEM during their daily business to improve processes and efficiency for the recreation areas, flood risk management infrastructure and federal land management. The training was hands-on allowing each person to become familiar with FEM and how to use it, as well as ask questions of subject matter experts. The attendees returned to their projects with the basic structure for its use, set-up and a better understanding of the system.

The current draft of the national utilization plan lays out milestones for FEM implementation. For the navigation business line the District is "fully utilized" meaning facilities and equipment maintenance data is available and analyzed in accordance with Life Cycle Asset Management Principles. The recreation business line is "basic utilized" meaning work, material/parts and cost data are being consistently captured and used.

FEM has already proven to be a valuable tool to help manage maintenance. By increasing the number of employees trained on the system, USACE can better examine cost and condition variances for facilities and equipment and make informed management decisions to improve effectiveness throughout all business lines, which is especially important in today's budget climate. 



Summer park rangers train in the use of pepper spray as a self defense tool during the week-long Visitor Assistance Training. Photo by Corps of Engineers.

# Rangers receive valuable training

By Hilary Markin, Editor

The District's recreation areas are very popular places to boat, swim, camp and picnic. Every summer the Corps hires summer park rangers to help the permanent ranger staff patrol campgrounds and parks during the busy recreation season. There are a lot of things a summer ranger has to learn in a very short amount of time. The District provides them with a 40-hour Visitor Assistance Program class while the projects provide on-the-job training.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Visitor Assistance Program was started during the 1970s to define and clarify the role and responsibilities of park rangers and resource managers. It continues to evolve and develop as policy changes occur and new tools are developed to help rangers execute their jobs.

"Unlike park rangers in the other land management agencies the Corps does not hire law enforcement rangers. As the name suggests we are assisting the visitors and leave the law enforcement situations to our local sheriff departments," said Sue Clevestine, outdoor recreation planner, Operations Technical Support Branch, Operations Division.

In June, summer park rangers spent a week at the Mississippi River Project Office learning about the Corps Visitor Assistance Program. Clevestine, who is the Visitor Assistance Coordinator for the District and an instructor, brought in the lead visitor assistance rangers from each project to help teach the class.

"The rangers are terrific instructors; we use real life scenarios and experiences. The students are taught that safety is paramount. We want our visitors to have a safe and enjoyable visit. We also want our rangers safe, which is why we have contract law enforcement at all projects," said Clevestine.

A great deal of time is spent going over Title 36, which are the

rules and regulations that govern federal lands. The rangers are required to know each section of Title 36. When warranted, rangers may write citations which may require them to go to court.

"During the training we take the students to the Federal Courthouse in Davenport, Iowa. The federal magistrate that hears Corps cases talks to the students, familiarizing them with how court is conducted and what is expected of them. The students get to sit in the courtroom where the Assistant U.S. Attorney and the Clerk of Court explain their roles," said Clevestine.

A large part of the training is tactical communications. Students learn techniques to gain visitor compliance and learn techniques for effective communication. Students are also trained in self-defense and receive pepper spray training, a tool that rangers can be authorized to carry.

The week also includes a one-day refresher that is required for returning summer rangers as well as full-time staff to complete each year. The refresher is used to update staff on Corps policies and procedures, changes in them and self defense training.

Rangers are also all trained in first-aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, and Automated External Defibrillator in order to help others if the need should arise.

Each summer the District hires between 10-15 summer rangers. Some stay on as Student Career Experience Program students and some eventually become fulltime Corps employees.

"It's a great way to get your foot in the door so to speak, to see if the Corps of Engineers is the right career path for you," said Clevestine. "The summer ranger program is where a lot of our current rangers got their start. It not only brings in employees but also provides extra manpower during the busy recreation season, many of whom return year after year." 

# It's all about communication

Below are some tips to help you become a better communicator with fellow employees, visitors, partners, customers, and stakeholders.

1. *Smile* – it's a simple but effective way to improve any conversation. This helps put the other person at ease and is a clear signal that you are happy to be speaking with the other person. Smiling also helps give you self confidence and puts you in the right frame of mind.
2. *Always be friendly and professional* – The first impression is the initial greeting that visitors receive whether that be over the phone or in person. Always use a welcoming tone, speak clearly and identify yourself if appropriate. Put yourself in their shoes and treat them the way you would want to be treated.
3. *Be polite and courteous* – especially when answering questions - it may be the second or tenth time you have heard the same question but remember it is that persons first time for asking it. If you are impatient or respond annoyed and frustrated a negative message will be sent to that individual and that may be their only contact and impression of the Corps of Engineers.
4. *Remain cool, friendly and cooperative* – Sometimes visitors or customers can be in a hurry and may even interrupt you or seem rude. Take the high road and treat the person with kindness and respect.
5. *Be a good listener* – Focus your attention on the visitor or customer and avoid distractions. Concentrate on what the person is saying and show interest and concern for the reason they have called or stopped by to visit.
6. *Ask questions* – Don't be afraid to ask questions to find out exactly what the persons concerns are. Do not needlessly transfer or refer the person because you did not listen to their question or problem. If you have determined you are not the person they should talk to, apologize and briefly explain why you are unable to assist them. If a phone call, make sure you have the caller's approval before transferring them to the appropriate person. Give the caller the correct telephone number and the person's name to which you are transferring them to. If you find that the person you are transferring them to is not available – DO NOT put the call through to voicemail unless you have asked the person if that is what he or she wants to do.
7. *Always take the extra step* – They may not say anything to you but people do notice when you make an extra effort and will tell other people. Rather than just transferring a phone call or telling someone where they can get information, follow-up with them - find a person they can talk to, leave them your contact information in case they would have more questions, show them where to find the information and ask if they have any further questions, personally escort the person to their destination, etc. Always remember that superior customer service = customer satisfaction. 

## Rock Island District - BUILDING STRONG®

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Campaign Plan – Goal 4 – Recruit and Retain Strong Teams

Build and cultivate a competent, disciplined, and resilient team equipped to deliver high quality solutions.

“We will deliver superior performance every time through disciplined people, thought, and action.”

**ONE DISCIPLINED TEAM** - in thought, word, and action - meeting our commitments, with and through our partners, by **“SAYING WHAT WE WILL DO, AND DOING WHAT WE SAY.”**



**June Answer: Wicket Dam at La Grange Lock and Dam, Illinois Waterway**

**Winner: Raymond Martin, Illinois Waterway Project Office**



**Can you name where this photo was taken? If so, send your answer to Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil. The first correct answer will receive a special prize and be recognized in the next Tower Times.**

# SAFETY CORNER

## Potential Hazards Outdoors

The summer is the perfect time for outdoor activities but it also comes with potential hazards. Being aware and knowledgeable about these hazards will help prevent harm. Things such as poison ivy and sun burns can affect anyone, so being prepared is key to avoiding these hazards.

### Lyme Disease/Tick-Bourne Diseases

Is transmitted to people by bacteria from bites of infected deer (blacklegged) ticks. With Lyme disease, most victims will develop a “bulls-eye” rash. Other symptoms may be similar to flu-like symptoms.

- Wear long sleeves, a hat and light-colored clothing (to see ticks easier).
- Wear high boots or closed shoes that cover your feet (tuck pants into socks or boots).
- Use tick repellants, but not on your face.
- Shower after work, wash and dry your work clothes at high temperature.
- Check your body for ticks.



**Black-legged tick.**  
Photos courtesy of CDC  
Public Health Image Library.

Remove any attached ticks promptly and carefully with fine-tipped tweezers. Do not use petroleum jelly, a hot match, or nail polish to remove the tick.

### West Nile Virus

Is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mild symptoms include fever, headache, and body aches.

- Apply Picaridin or insect repellent with DEET to exposed skin.
- Spray clothing with repellents containing DEET or permethrin. (Do not spray permethrin directly onto exposed skin.)
- Wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks.
- Avoid dusk and dawn (most active time).
- Get rid of sources of standing/still water (this will attract mosquitoes).

### Poison Ivy-Related Plants

Poison ivy and poison oak are three leafed plants that have poisonous sap in their roots, stems, leaves and fruits. When you have direct contact with the plant or contact with contaminated objects a rash can develop. It can also be contracted if it is inhaled through smoke.

- Wear cloth or leather gloves, long-sleeved shirt, and long pants (tucked into boots).
- Apply barrier creams to exposed skin.
- Know how to identify these poisonous plants ([www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/plants](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/plants)).
- Know the signs and symptoms.
- Keep rubbing alcohol accessible. It removes the oily resin up to 30 minutes after exposure.

### Sun

Sunlight causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans. Be especially careful in the sun if you burn easily or have any of the following physical features: numerous irregular or large moles, freckles, fair skin or light colored hair.

- Wear loose fitting, long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30.
- Wear a hat (a wide brim hat works best).
- Wear UV-absorbent sunglasses that block 99 -100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation.
- Limit exposure. UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

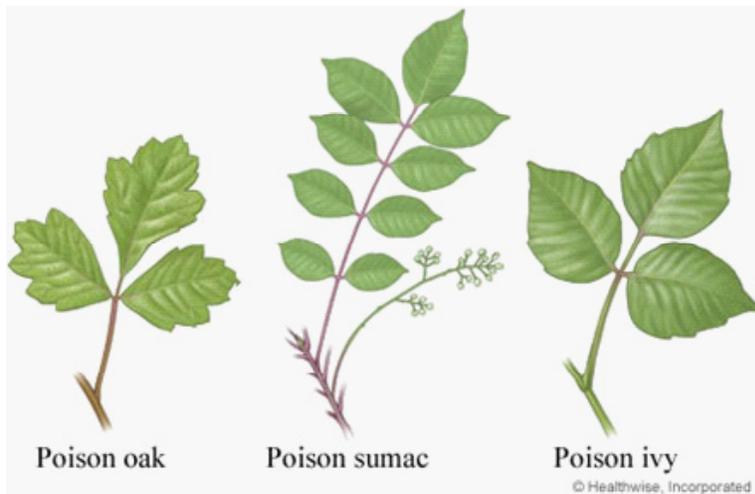


### Heat

The combination of heat and humidity can be a serious health threat.

- Drink small amounts of water often and take frequent short breaks in cool shade.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting and breathable clothes.
- Eat smaller meals before work activity.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and sugary drinks.
- Work in the shade.
- Know if your medication reacts with heat.
- Equipment such as respirators or work suits can increase heat stress.

Three major heat-related disorders: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. 



# PROJECT UPDATES

## Illinois Waterway Project

Illinois Waterway Park Ranger assisted a local rescue agency with finding a woman and children lost in the Farmdale Reservoir area. Ranger Ernenputsch talked to the woman by cell phone, determined her location and led the local fire department to the scene. No injuries.

## Saylorville Lake

Saylorville Lake was home to another bow fishing tournament in June as the sport is becoming increasingly popular. There were 13 teams involved harvesting over 280 fish in one night with a bow. The largest fish harvested was a 18.1 pound buffalo carp.

## Mississippi River Project

Training was held the end of June at the Project Office to recertify ranger staff in American Heart Association standards for First Aid and CPR.

## Coralville Lake

The first annual Coralville Lake Turkey Vulture Festival on Saturday, June 18 was a success even if the birds didn't cooperate. Only a handful of vultures were on hand (lower number than is typical), but that didn't stop over 100 attendees from enjoying face painting, coloring and tattoos and presentations by local birding groups.

## Lake Red Rock

In June, recent heavy rains coupled with downstream constraints have resulted in forecasts of Lake Red Rock utilizing 80 percent of flood storage. Several levee gate-wells and gravity outlets within Red Rock remedial works are closed. Pumps that capture interior drainage are on-line at SE Des Moines and Avon levee systems. The Red Rock staff is conducting daily surveillance of flood control features.



The Corps has recently developed a new partnership with a program called "Operation Honor Cards." Operation Honor Cards is a joint project of Blue Star Families, the American Red Cross, and ServiceNation: Mission Serve, working together with the Veterans Administration, the Corporation for National and Community Service, Joining Forces, and the Department of Defense. The program aims to create an atmosphere of 'shared service' by encouraging Americans to perform volunteer service in honor of military families and veterans.

This program will promote and collect virtual Honor Pledges of volunteer service through the Web site [www.honorcards.org](http://www.honorcards.org). Individuals or organizations fill out an Honor Card stating what act of volunteer service they will do to honor a service member, veterans, wounded warrior or military family.

The Corps is participating by pledging one million volunteer hours for the program in 2011.

Individual volunteers for the Corps can also pledge and track their hours via the Web site, and choose the service project they will be doing to honor a service member and/or military family. When filling out an Honor Card online, tell what the service project will be and include the code: "USACE" to indicate that

the volunteer hours are for the Corps of Engineers.

Service project events such as those held on National Public Lands Day are a great opportunity to gather your volunteers and ask for their participation in the program by personally pledging hours on a Honor Card and writing words of support that will be delivered to military community members, military members, veterans, or their families.

More information about the program can be found on the Web site at [www.honorcards.org](http://www.honorcards.org) and by downloading the Operation Honor Card Kit that includes a step-by-step guide, templates and sample letters to get you started. Through this program, you can show your community's pride for our military by building an "Honor Wall" at your next event, in your office, or visitor center which will enable everyone to see the direct results in your community. An "Honor Wall" in a visitor center can also be a great way to advertise the program and recruit volunteers beyond those serving during a special event day.

This is an opportunity for the Corps and our volunteers to show our support of military Soldiers, wounded warriors, veterans, and their families by pledging community service in their honor, as a token of appreciation for their service to the nation. 

# Around the District

## Retirements ...

**Michael Coltrain**, lead natural resources specialist, Saylorville Lake, Operations Division, retired June 3, after dedicating 34 years to the federal government.

**Sharryn Jackson**, social scientist, Rock Island Environmental and Economics Branch, Regional Planning and Environmental Division - North, retired June 3, after dedicating 34 years and seven months to the federal government.

**Kiran Patel**, civil engineer (structural), Structural Section, Design Branch, Engineering and Construction Division, retired June 30, after dedicating eight years and three months to the federal government.

### NOTE

Please send achievements, births and obituaries for this page to the editor at: [Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil](mailto:Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil).

Without your input, we may not receive the information that enables us to inform the District.

## Sympathy ...



**Bonnie Vorel**, of Morris, Ill., passed away on June 22.

She began her career at Joliet Arsenal and was later employed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers where she served for 30 plus rewarding years prior to retirement.

## Congrats ...



Congratulations to Angie Freyermuth, outreach specialist, and her husband Tyson on the birth of a baby girl, Olivia Grace, May 23. She was 7 pounds, 4 ounces and 19 inches long.



Rock Island District employees were honored by the Quad Cities Federal Executive Association Chapter during a "Federal Employees of the Year" awards program in May. From left, Mr. Joel Himsl, Garrison Manager, U.S. Army Garrison-Rock Island Arsenal; Col. Shawn McGinley, district commander; Angie Gilbraith; Barb Lester; Mary Scott; JoAnn Wilgenbusch; Bryan Smith; Marsha Dolan; Brig. Gen. Gustave Perna, commanding officer, Joint Munitions Command and Randoe Dice, vice president, Federal Executive Association - Quad City Chapter and Regional Director, Social Security Administration. Shirley Johnson was unable to attend.



# Spotlight on the District

## Buddy Beaver

**B**uddy Beaver shares water safety messages much the same as Bobber the Water Safety Dog. Although Bobber gets a bit more face time, Buddy also has an important message to tell - swim with a buddy.

"I enjoy reminding visitors to always swim with a buddy but I also share other important water safety messages like reminding them to wear their life jackets," said Buddy Beaver.

Buddy focuses his water safety messages on swimming safety and spends a lot of time at area beaches to

ensure Corps visitors are staying safe.

"It's important that swimmers don't take chances. They should never swim beyond their skills, choosing safety over impressing friends or winning a challenge," said Buddy.

Buddy can also be found hanging out at the boat ramps reminding visitors to swim in designated areas such as North Overlook Beach at Lake Red Rock.

"Swimming in designated areas provides you a safe place away from boats and a nice sandy beach," said Buddy. 



Buddy Beaver welcomes a visitor at North Overlook Beach at Lake Red Rock. During his visit he shared water safety messages reminding visitors to swim with a buddy and to always wear a life jacket. Buddy's partner Park Ranger Junifer Kruse, handed out water safety goodies to beach goers during the visit. *Photo provided by Lake Red Rock.*



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ROCK ISLAND  
CLOCK TOWER BLDG. – P.O. BOX 2004  
ROCK ISLAND, IL 61204-2004

## District Alumni Corner

Rock Island District retirees gathered at the 2011 Corps Day picnic for a photo followed by an update about the District from Col. Shawn McGinley. Photo by Hilary Markin.



## Annual Retirees' Luncheon – Sept. 7

Retirees sign up now for the annual retirees' luncheon Wednesday, Sept. 7, at the Quad City Botanical Center, 2525 4th Avenue, Rock Island, IL. Social hour begins at 11:30 a.m. with the luncheon following at 12:30 p.m.

The menu for the buffet consists of: lemon pepper chicken breast, carved Iowa ham, whole russet potatoes, green beans, pea salad, macaroni salad, toss salad with choice of dressing, fresh fruit medley, dinner rolls and butter, and a coffee/tea station. Cost of the luncheon is \$15 per person, which includes tax and gratuities. The cost also includes access to the Botanical Center's patio,

sun garden and east lawn. All retirees and their spouses or guests are cordially invited to attend. It is a lot of fun, so we hope to see everyone there.

Checks should be made out to Sandy Dixon and mailed to 8109 9th Street W., Rock Island, IL 61201-7733. The deadline for reservations and payment is August 29. Please contact Bonnie Donelson (563) 381-3143, LaVeta Bear (309) 794-0710, or Sandy Dixon (309) 787-5782, DIXONS3JSS@aol.com, if you have questions. 