



Tower Times

Rock Island District's News Magazine

Fall 2012

Lock receives facelift

New miter gates installed at Lock and Dam 20



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

Tower Times

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Fall 2012

ON THE COVER



New miter gates were installed at Lock and Dam 20 in October by the Mississippi River Project Structures Maintenance Unit. See story on page 11. The new gates replaced the original gates that had been in place since the lock opened in 1935.
Photo by Eric Johnson.

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Tower Times

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A message from....

Colonel Mark Deschenes, District Commander



Rock Island answers the nation's call once again

Emergency Management has been one of the District's top priorities in recent months responding to the aftermaths of Hurricanes Sandy and Isaac as well as focusing on key issues like dam safety and levee inspection.

Hurricane Sandy, often referred to as Superstorm Sandy, struck the Northeast wreaking havoc rarely seen. New York City became ground zero and within a few days, our District had boots on the ground to assist with unwatering efforts in the metro area.

The entire unwatering effort was a collaboration of Corps, city, federal and private industry professionals working hand-in-hand to complete our Federal Emergency Management Agency mission. The Rock Island team provided critical unwatering expertise gained from our wealth of experience unwatering the Greater New Orleans Metro area. We can all take great pride in the effort put forth by our District teammates in the wake of the tragic storm. Keep an eye out for the future edition of the Tower Times to get an in-depth look at how your coworkers assisted in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

Hurricane Sandy came on the heels of Hurricane Isaac just two months before. When Hurricane Isaac hit the Gulf Coast it represented the first real test for the recently completed Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System that protects the Greater New Orleans area. Rock Island District, through the Rock Island New Orleans Support office, played a critical role in helping complete the multi-billion dollar HSDRRS civil works project. And, although the system withstood Isaac's wrath, there was still a great need in the aftermath and Rock Island District employees were up to the task.

Forty-seven of your coworkers volunteered to deploy in support of the post-Isaac division-wide effort. Those employees assisted with the commodities mission, the task force unwatering technical mission and Geographical Information Systems. In addition to people, our District provided logistical help, delivering 25 diesel flood pumps within 24 hours of the request. That quick delivery was due to the outstanding support of Operations Division employees who loaded the trucks; and the ULA and Contracting staff who helped line up the truck drivers. It was a great team effort to support our regional teammates.


As the support to Hurricane Isaac slowed, many within the District were focusing on dam safety. A table top dam safety

exercise was conducted in Coralville, Iowa, on Oct. 4 at the Joint Emergency Communications Center for Johnson County. The exercise simulated a failure at Coralville Dam. The purpose of the exercise was to communicate risks and facilitate local, state and federal planning and preparedness. It was a proactive event that brought in the key partners and solidified those relationships. The contingency plan involved with a dam failure at Coralville had not been updated or rehearsed in many years so this table top exercise was critical to preparing for any future event. Many eyes were open and readiness was increased.

Exercises like the one at Coralville are a reminder that although we are an organization professionally equipped to respond to flood fights; we are also in the business of ensuring existing flood risk management efforts are effective.

The District employs 10 flood area engineers (FAE) who are critical to our efforts. Each of these employees are volunteers and each is assigned a geographic flood area. In those flood areas, each FAE has several responsibilities. They maintain a fully trained team, they execute flood fight operations, they oversee project modifications and they perform levee inspections. The District has 120 levee systems that are inspected on a rotating basis. As I mentioned, the FAEs are volunteers but their job is full time and they should be lauded for their commitment and willingness to take on the role.

I've now been on the team for about five months and I continue to learn and come away impressed on an almost daily basis. Everyone is doing incredible work for not only the District and Mississippi Valley Division, but also the Corps and the nation. I want that to continue and that can only happen if we have the whole team at work.

The winter months present different challenges for us professionally but we will also face different personal challenges. Be safe! Winter driving conditions are right around the corner. Temperatures are dropping and our environment is changing. Be thoughtful of risk reduction in the changing environment. We can't be great if you're not with the team. And, most importantly, your family and friends need you. Drive safe and be cognizant of the conditions. Thanks for all you do and continue **BUILDING STRONG®** 

Routine maintenance

Story and photos by Hilary Markin, Editor

The drought conditions have many people questioning the depth of the river and its reliability for moving cargo up and down the river. For the Upper Mississippi River, the locks and dams as well as other river improvement structures are doing their job of maintaining the 9-foot navigation channel authorized by Congress. On the lower river, however, the unusually dry conditions continue to be a burden threatening closures, reduced loads and major delays for the barge industry and partners.

As early as the 1830s, the federal government began improvements on the river in the interest of navigation. In 1930, after extensive studies by the Corps, Congress authorized the nine-foot navigation channel project on the Upper Mississippi River. This evolved into a stairway of water that maintains a 9-foot deep pool of water (in the navigation channel) behind each dam with the locks allowing vessels to go up or down the stairway. Contrary to some beliefs, the locks and dams were not built for flood control or to eliminate all the low spots caused by shoaling on the river bed (buildup of sediment causing a hazard to navigation).

Shoaling is a natural phenomenon occurring in all moveable bed streams and when it happens in the navigation channel of the Mississippi River dredging is required to keep the channel open.

Throughout the year the Corps conducts hydrographic surveys


of the riverbed and prepares a dredging schedule in anticipation of potential trouble areas.

“We use the surveys to lay out the dredge cuts and prepare a contract or use inhouse resources to remove the material,” said Karl Schmitz, dredging coordinator, Operations Division.

The amount of shoaling dictates the number of dredge cuts and the amount of material to be removed to maintain the 9-foot channel.

“The river is constantly changing which presents challenges but we are well equipped to handle them,” said Schmitz.

Even during the drought, dredging operations were normal for the District.

“The locks and dams are doing exactly what they were designed to do – and that is maintaining the 9-foot channel,” says Schmitz. 

Routine maintenance dredging was conducted below Locks and Dam 15 in September by St. Paul District's Dredge Goetz, removing 10,000 cubic yards of dredge material just below the main lock chamber.

Eric Carlson, a leverman (dredge operator) for St. Paul District's Dredge Goetz, points to the screen showing the dredge cuts prepared by the Rock Island District as he maneuvers the dredge's cutter head into position.



maintains channel



Left, a piece of an old barge cover was recovered from the bottom of the river during the dredging operations.

Below, Karl Schmitz, dredging coordinator, Operations Division, checks the discharge pipe at the Dredged Material Management Placement site below Locks and Dam 15 in Rock Island, Ill. After dredging, the material is made available for beneficial use to the City of Rock Island.



Heightening awareness of suicide

By Hilary Markin, Editor

In October the District conducted the Mandatory Suicide Prevention Stand Down Day in compliance with USACE OPOD 2012-62. Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Charles Rizer, now the former Army Sustainment Command Chaplain at Rock Island Arsenal, conducted the face-to-face training on October 3 to a standing room only crowd in the ABC Conference Room. During the training, Rizer shared some statistics to show the impact suicide has in the U.S. and worldwide.


"Statistics are important, only so far as to help us to think about some of the risk factors and how we might mitigate them. When looking at them think about what you can do to reach out to someone, maybe a friend, family member or colleague," said Rizer.

He shared that loss is the overarching reason for suicide - loss of a loved one due to divorce, death, or a break-up. Others include loss of job, financial, serious illness, depression, loss of status, drugs or alcohol abuse, fear of future, bullying, abuse, and loneliness.

One of the other statistics he shared that surprised some was that suicide rates are highest for people between the ages of 45-64. Using this statistic the class listed some of the risk factors for people in this age group.

"Let's look out for those folks," said Rizer. "Especially if they have had parents die, kids are out of the house, losing your job or retiring, or their health is not the same.

"There's a little piece of information that is important for us to know. We know some of the factors of what can lead to suicide especially of our family and friends that are closest to us...but what we don't know is when. What one doctor said is that from the time someone does decide to commit suicide from the time that they do, there is about 10 minutes of time, not very much time. We can save someone's life keeping alert, being vigilant, being compassionate and doing something on the spot to help them. It could just be calling 911."

"The intent of the training was to increase awareness that may someday save a life," said Sara Paxson, Professional Development Specialist, who organized the training. 

Suicide Prevention/Awareness Positive Actions

- Reach out with compassion to the people in your world: your family, friends, and co-workers
- Tell three people how they have made a difference in your smile: a family member, a friend and a co-worker.
- There are more "Good News" stories than defeats. Let's share the "Good News."
- Look at www.blueribbonmovie.com. Who you are, makes a difference.
- Feed and exercise your body, soul and mind.
- Listen to the laughter of a child.
- Peaceful sleep is a good thing.
- Enjoy your hobby ... that too is a gift.
- Smile, your co-worker could use a lift ... and it's good for your soul.
- Do you know someone who's hurting? They have a story to tell you.
- Make a plan on how to help someone in need: Ask them if they're hurting, care enough to listen, escort them to helping professionals if the situation is more complicated and dangerous than you can handle.
- How's your stress level? Conduct a self assessment at <http://www.militarymentalhealth.org>.
- Call, e-mail, text your faith community leader, counselor, good friend to thank her/him for the positive impact in your life.
- Has someone you love taken his/her life? Pause for a minute ... to also remember the positive legacy he or she gave.

U.S. Army Sustainment Command, Rock Island Arsenal



Can you name where this is? 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.



September Answer - Gate well to Milan, Ill. retention pond that flows into Eckert Creek and then to Mill Creek South Slough Project.


Winner - Andy Leichty, project manager

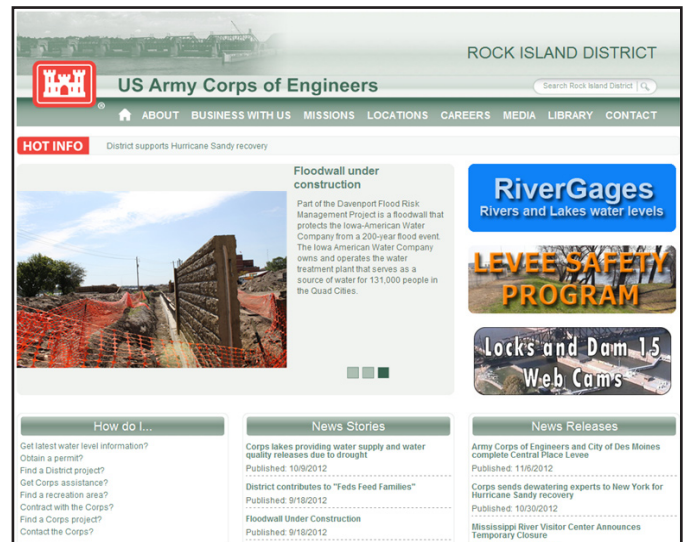
New District Web site

By Hilary Markin, Editor

The Rock Island District Web site has migrated to the American Forces Public Information Management System, a content management system run by the Defense Media Activity. The new Web site has a consistent look and feel, streamlines the content management process and delivers a rich end-user experience.

The District established a Web Migration Project Delivery Team to assist in the migration process and ensure a successful transition. Content managers and providers worked with the Corporate Communications Office to layout and design pages, provide content, built pages and approve content. As with any Web site it is never done.

The team continues to make updates and changes to the site to keep it fresh and new. If you have questions regarding the new site or suggestions please contact the Corporate Communications Office at (309) 794-5730 or cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil. 



A new tool at your fingertips

By Hilary Markin, Editor

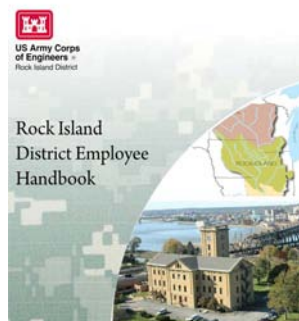
A new tool is a mouse click away – the Rock Island District Employee Handbook. It was unveiled on Oct. 1 through a series of Lunch n' Learns and has been distributed by e-mail, hard copy and is available through an icon on your desktop.

The 2011-2012 Leadership Development Program (LDP) team took on the handbook as their team project working on it throughout their year in LDP with many continuing to see the project through following graduation in August.

The handbook is designed to be a one-stop shop and a central location of information for new and current employees. It is designed to be user-friendly with an easy to navigate table of contents plus appendices where related information can be found.

"It is designed to be the first place employees go looking for information," said Charlie Bishop, LDP Team member. "We conducted a series of interviews with employees to find out what information should be included in the handbook."

The handbook is broken down into six main sections including an Introduction, District Mission and Organization, District and Employment Policies, News and Information Sources, Daily Activities and Processes, and Emergency Operations, Flood Areas




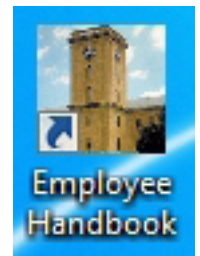
and Deployments. Appendices include information about District projects, programs, and the organization; as well as projects maps and floor plans of the Clock Tower complex, Knowledge, Skills, and Goals sheets; an intern handbook is also available, and other useful information.

There is an initial review period for the handbook through Feb. 1 when an updated employee handbook will be provided to all employees. Comments, suggestions, or changes can be sent to Andrew Goodall or call (309) 794-5179.

"Part of the implementation plan also included a review period for more employee input," said Bishop. "We wanted to provide an opportunity for more employee input to make this a truly valuable product for all employees."

The handbook is designed to be an electronic publication that can be easily updated as changes in the organization occur. A limited number of hard copies were also produced and distributed to field sites where computer access is limited.

The long-term maintenance of the handbook was laid out in the implementation plan that the LDP Team put together. Corporate Communications will be responsible for the yearly maintenance coordinating with the various subject matter experts to ensure the most recent information is provided to employees. 



Click the icon on your desktop to read the Employee Handbook.



John Snell, diver and lock and dam operator at Starved Rock, begins his submersion to pull bearings on the wicket dam in preparation for dewatering operations.

District Divers work to repair aging wicket dams

Story and photos by Allen Marshall, Public Affairs Specialist

Eighty years of wear and tear can cause significant stress to any man-made structure. The wicket dams on the Illinois River at Peoria Lock and Dam and Lagrange Lock and Dam have weathered 80 years of relentless currents, barge traffic and the daily rigors of operation. The wicket dams have maintained their functionality through the decades thanks in large part to the efforts of the crews tasked with their upkeep. Crews like the District's dive team.

From August until December, dive crews are working at the Locks and Dams at Peoria and La Grange. Their mission is to stabilize the aging wicket dams so that the structures can continue to outlive their intended life cycle. During October, a crew of 10 or 12, made up of divers, boat operators and crane operators, has been working on the wicket dams at Peoria.

"We are working 11 days on and three days off, four months straight," said Jim Punkiewicz, District dive team leader. "We did



John Snell, with assistance from fellow dive team members, prepares for a dive.

half of the wickets at Peoria in 2010. Three quarters of the dam at La Grange has been completed.”

Punkiewicz described wickets as “unique” when considering navigation structures. The purpose of wicket dams, as is the case with the more common roller dams, is to maintain pool elevation to make the river navigable. One of the primary differences between wicket and roller dams is that wicket dams can be laid down on the river bottom, enabling boat traffic to navigate the river without using the lock.

Each wicket is four feet wide by 16 feet tall and is constructed out of oak timber and steel plating. One wicket weighs 2.5 tons and 108 wickets make up the Peoria dam and 109 at La Grange. The wickets are raised and lowered with a back hoe. When the river levels are high, a maneuvering boat positions the back hoe to lower the wickets flush with the river bottom. The back hoe raises the wickets when the pool above the dam must be maintained to navigable levels.

Over the years, normal operations of the wickets have caused deterioration to the mechanisms that help raise and lower the structures resulting in destabilization. The Structures Unit and dive team are using a 72,000-pound dewatering bulkhead in order to access the blocks which hold the mechanisms in place. The divers are grouting behind the blocks which will help keep the wicket stable.

“It’s important for us to maintain the dam or we could end up losing the wickets,” Punkiewicz said, “which will cause the pool level to drop.”

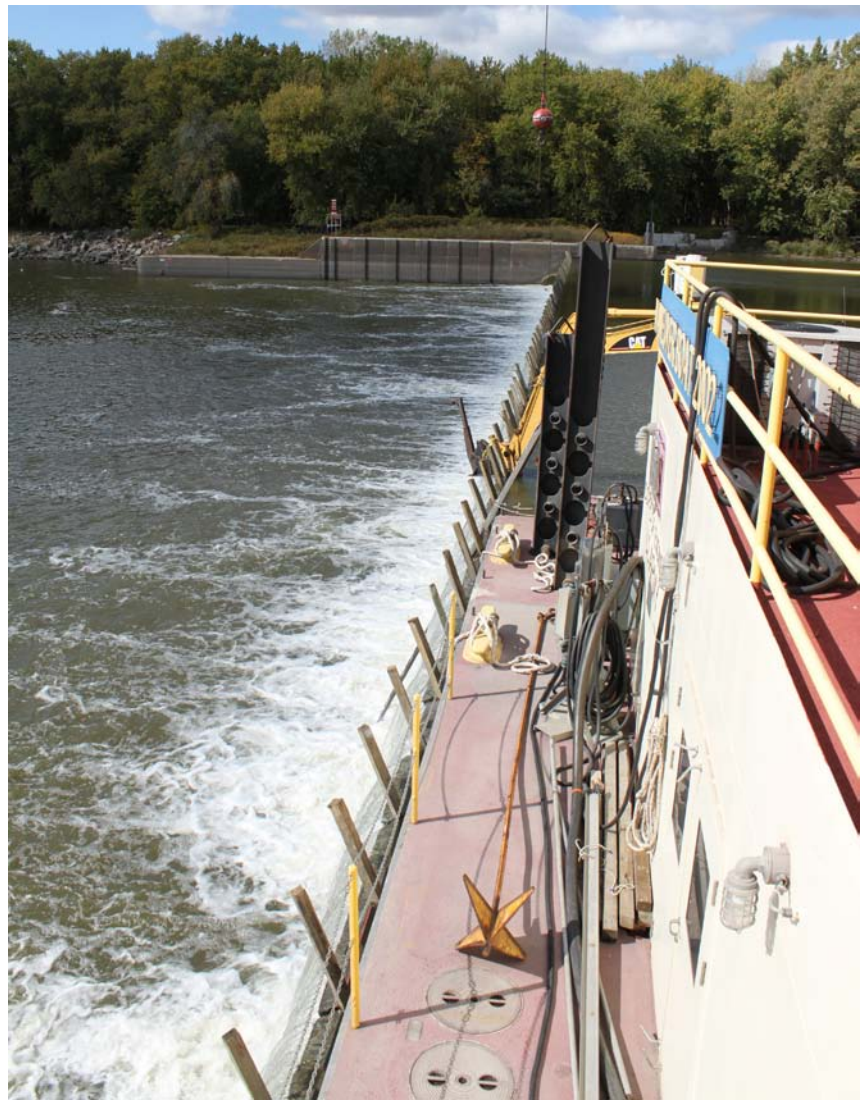
Losing the wickets is something that has occurred, according to Punkiewicz. That problem has usually happened when the wickets are laid down on the river bottom and boats are navigating over the wickets.

“When the wickets are down, wheel wash from the tow boats can suck the wicket out of its block if it isn’t stabilized,” he said. “There have been times when we have had to fetch the wickets down river.”

Punkiewicz said the work he and the crew are doing is taxing, both mentally and physically. Working around the dam presents a unique set of challenges because the work is being performed under water and on top. The first and foremost concern, as always, is safety.

“This is the most dangerous diving we do,” Punkiewicz said. “Typical diving conditions are dangerous enough but stabilizing the wickets means a whole new set of safety issues. On the upstream side of the dam you have the suction that creates havoc. On the low end there is always the chance of being blown downstream. Both situations could cause serious injury. But, we are all very safety conscious and everything we do takes safety into account beforehand.”

Along with safety, Punkiewicz said it is important for his dive team to have an attention to detail. Punkiewicz said there are several new divers on the team and they maintain that attention to detail by adhering to a very specific check list. There is not a lot of situational knowledge when it comes to working on the wickets so it is important for the team to stay focus on their processes.




The District Dive team is stabilizing the aging wicket dam at Peoria Lock and Dam on the Illinois Waterway in Illinois. The team is performing this work through December at both the Peoria and La Grange Lock and Dams.

“There are probably more than 40 steps to the process of setting the bulkhead and pulling it,” he said. “We have lot of steps to follow, whether it is placing our ladders in the water, sand-bagging, pulling the needles or setting shutters – we stick to the process. In sticking to our check list, we are able to get anywhere from three to four sets of wickets grouted in our 11 day work period.”

Getting all 108 wickets stabilized will take the better part of four months but it is work that Punkiewicz said is critical.

“If you think about it, it is pretty amazing that these wickets have lasted this long,” he said. “A lot of people, both pleasure boaters and the barge industry, depend on these wickets being functional. Doing these dives presents a little more danger for us but it is work we are proud of.”

Teamwork is key, according to Punkiewicz. There is a lot of support from the river projects. “Without that support, it would be very difficult to complete the tasks in short time frame,” he said. 



Spotlight on the District

Larry Reeve

Lockmaster

Lock and Dam 20 - Mississippi River
Operations Division

Dedication to service describes Larry Reeve, lockmaster at Lock and Dam 20 on the Mississippi River. On July 30 Reeve retired from the Army Reserve as a Command Sergeant Major following 35 years of service including numerous deployments.

He enlisted in the Army on Feb. 11, 1977, and attended basic training in Fort Bliss, Texas, at the Air Defense Artillery School. Active duty assignments included the 1st Battalion 5th Infantry Combat Support Company, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; 4/61 Air Defense Artillery, Fort Carson, Colo.; 1st Battalion 17th Field Artillery, Fort Sill, Okla.; Battery 3rd Cannon Training Battalion Fort Sill, Okla.; and Company B, 4th Battalion 1st Air Defense Artillery Training Brigade, Fort Bliss, Texas.

He left active duty on January 4, 1985, and enlisted in the Army Reserve that same year. Reserve assignments included Platoon Sergeant, Company C 3/340/2nd Bde, 85th Division (Tng); Senior Drill Sergeant, Company E, 2/334th 84th Division (IT); First Sergeant, 226th Transportation Company, (Railway Engineer) Granite City, Ill.; Command Sergeant Major, 327th Military Police Battalion; Group Command Sergeant Major, 303rd Ordinance Group, Springfield, Ill.; Group Command Sergeant Major, 416 Facility Engineer Group, Darien, Ill.; and Command Sergeant Major of the 416th Theater Engineer Command.

Reeve's military career took him around the world deploying to Korea, Philippines, Hawaii, Kauai, Oahu, Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan.

After eight years of active duty Reeve looked to the Corps of Engineers as an easy agency to transition to from active duty plus

it allowed him to work on the river.

"I grew up on the river," said Reeve. "My dad was a commercial fisherman near Saverton, Mo., and I knew that I wanted to work on the river. I had heard the Corps was a great organization and I have found that to be true."

His first position with the Corps was at Marseilles as a lock operator. He then moved to Lock and Dam 22 where he was a lock operator and then to Lock 20 as a Shift Leader. Reeve then applied for the Assistant Lockmaster at 18 and was selected. He then became the Assistant Lockmaster at 21 before becoming the Lockmaster at 20 in 1995.

As the Lockmaster he is in charge of all aspects of the lock and dam and the personnel who operate and maintain it. Lock and Dam 20 is unique in that the dam is one of the largest on the Mississippi and it sits lower in elevation than other locks making it prone to flooding.

"We lock boats until water is within one foot of the top of the lock wall to keep commercial traffic moving on the river," said Reeve. "The lock operating components can be disassembled in four hours – a process that has been standardized over time with everyone chipping in to complete the mission."

Working at the locks and dams takes dedication to service.

"The people who work at the locks and dams and for the Mississippi River Project are very dedicated to their work. The caliber of employees we have is incredible – they are all very

Continued on page 11.



Left, Command Sergeant Major Larry Reeve (center) briefs Soldiers prior to their deployment to Afghanistan. Right, Reeve helps a child at an orphanage put on new shoes during a humanitarian mission in Kandahar, Afghanistan.



Above, an old gate is mitered with a new gate following its successful installation by the Mississippi River Project Structures Maintenance Unit at Lock and Dam 20 in October. Right, Dan Guise (left) and Justin Carter help guide the pin being lifted by the Liebherr Crane into place securing the miter gate to the lock wall. Also in the photograph is Tim Scranton. Photos by Eric Johnson.



Lock receives facelift

By Hilary Markin, Editor

Lock and Dam 20 is the second location within the Mississippi River Project to receive newly designed miter gates. The new gates replaced the original gates that had been in place since the lock opened in 1935.


Engineers applied the lessons learned from the installation of new gates at Lock 21 last year to make this install even more successful.

"Having one under our belt really helped it go more smoothly," said Dan Guise, Structures Maintenance Unit, Mississippi River Project. "We had a few minor adjustments but overall it

went very well."

Due to the frequency of high water at Lock 20 the new miter gate's skin plate extends up past the top girder to the top of the walkway to facilitate locking barges during high water.

The new gates are designed to have interchangeable parts that can be stockpiled for easy replacement and repair, reducing costs and minimizing interruptions to navigation.

Lock 22 will receive new miter gates in 2013 followed by Locks 17 and 18. 

Spotlight cont. from page 10

talented and do an excellent job," said Reeve. "We are a huge family that supports and takes care of each other."

In addition to Reeve's dedication he is also customer focused.

"We are here to serve the public and we never need to lose sight of that. Our customers range from visitors to the towing industry and we, as public servants, need to remember to be courteous and do what we can to help them."

Reeve is married and has one son and three stepsons. His son and two of his stepsons have also served in the military.

"Something unique is that we all served in the same war at different times," said Reeve. "The oldest just returned from Afghanistan and another continues to serve as a civilian fire fighter in Afghanistan."


When not serving the country Reeve is hard at work being a good land steward. He spends a lot of time outdoors raising honeybees, an orchard of 55 fruit trees, raised garden beds of

vegetables, raspberry and blackberry patches and four different types of grapes. From the land, they make their own herbs, spices, candles, soap, wine and of course honey – giving it all away to the local community. He also has a woodworking shop.

"I enjoy working with the land and sharing what it provides with the community," said Reeve.

In looking to what the future holds he is looking forward to traveling with his wife who is a school teacher. Two places on the top of the list include Europe and the East Coast.

"I have traveled all over the world with the military," said Reeve. "I am now looking forward to traveling with my wife."

When asked about advice Reeve shared the three things that he lives by: "1 – always tell the truth, 2 – don't make a promise you can't keep, and 3 – treat everyone like you want to be treated, don't make someone do something you wouldn't do." 

An inclusive workforce

By John Punkiewicz, Disability Employment Program Manager


People with disabilities are a diverse group, crossing lines of age, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. It is important to remember that this is also the only minority group that anyone can become a member of at anytime.

The theme for the 2012 National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October was, "A strong workforce is an inclusive workforce: what can you do?" This theme was designed to capture the vital role that expectations play in our successes as individuals as well as society.

"Employers who ensure that inclusive workplace policies and practices are woven into the fabric and culture of the organization create an environment that encourages all workers – including those of us with disabilities – to work to their full capacity and contribute fully to the organization's success," said Kathy Martinez, assistant secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy.

There are many resources available to people with disabilities that allow them to equally contribute to the organization. Some of those resources can be obtained through the Equal Employment Opportunity Office by requesting a reasonable accommodation. There are other resources already available to you that you may not know about such as the accessibility options on your computer that make it easier to see, hear, and use your computer including ways to personalize your PC. See box for more information or go to www.microsoft.com/enable/products/windows7/.

Some disabilities are easy to see while others are not. It is important to use common sense and not to make assumptions. If you suspect a disability ask before you help and respond graciously to requests. Many are uncomfortable interacting with people perceived as different from us - take the short quiz to see how much you know about disability etiquette.

If you would like more information please contact John Punkiewicz, Disability Employment Program Manager, at (309) 794-5484 or the Equal Employment Office at (309) 794-5471. 



Al Ayew-ew, blind independent living skills specialist, Illinois Iowa Center for Independent Living, demonstrates a device for persons with hearing impairments at a Lunch and Learn in October. Photo by Rachal Deahl.

Disability Etiquette Quiz

Scenario 1 - As you are meeting or being introduced to someone, you notice as they reach out to shake your hand that they have prosthesis. You should:

- Withdraw your hand and continue to introduce yourself.
- Offer your left hand as you would with anyone.
- Offer your left hand.

Scenario 2 - When meeting someone who is deaf and is accompanied by an interpreter, you should:

- Maintain eye contact with the person who is deaf.
- Maintain eye contact with the interpreter.
- Look back and forth between them.

Scenario 3 - You see someone using a wheelchair or a cane who appears to be struggling. You should:

- Move on and leave them alone.
- Offer to assist the person.
- Assist the person without asking.

Scenario 4 - You are conversing with a person who has trouble speaking. You are only able to understand a few words and phrases. You should:

- Pretend you understand what was said.
- State what you understood and ask the person to repeat the rest of the information.
- Smile and walk away as fast as you can.

Scenario 5 - When conversing with a person who uses a wheelchair, it is preferable to pull up a chair, if available, and converse at eye level.

- True.
- False.

Quiz answers on page 14.

Accessibility in Windows 7

Go the Start Menu - select Control Panel - select Ease of Access Center. Find things on how to add a narrator that reads on-screen text, learn keyboard shortcuts, how to enlarge portions of your screen, use an on-screen keyboard and more.

You can also learn more at www.microsoft.com/enable/products/windows7/.

SAFETY CORNER

Fire Prevention


Make your home and workspace safer by eliminating potential fire hazards. In 2011, fire departments across the United States responded to 384,000 home fires, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These fires claimed 2,640 lives and injured another 13,350. Approximately four out of 10 home fire deaths occur in homes without smoke alarms. The main reason smoke alarms fail to operate during home fires is missing or disconnected batteries - have you tested yours?

For home: Now is a great time to make sure your home is ready in case of emergency. A quarter of U.S. households lack working smoke detectors. There should be at least one smoke detector on each level of your home, and inside and outside your bedrooms. You should test them every month and replace their batteries annually. If your smoke detectors are old, they should be replaced every 10 years. If you have a fire extinguisher, it should be placed at your home's exit, and make sure you and family members know how to use it.

For work: Fire hazards are often difficult to spot. They may be hidden from view, or they may involve chemical processes you are not aware of. A fire needs fuel, oxygen and ignition to burn. You might be surprised at some of the types of fuel, sources of oxygen and causes of ignition which can start fires.



Here are some diverse examples of hidden and unexpected fire hazards:

- Trash which misses the garbage container can linger long enough to meet a source of ignition in an out-of-the-way corner.
- Oily rags left on work benches or in corners are serious fire hazards. They can catch fire as a result of spontaneous combustion without an outside source of ignition. Oily rags must be placed in an approved metal covered container which is emptied regularly.
- Fine dusts and powders can burn and cause explosions when they are confined to a poorly ventilated area and exposed to ignition. The source of ignition can be as seemingly insignificant as a spark from static electricity or friction. Even a substance as ordinary as lint from the clothes dryer will burn rapidly if ignited.
- Materials or furniture placed near an unused heating device can catch fire when the heater is later turned on in cold weather. Ordinary combustibles like fabric, cushion foam, paper, wood and cardboard not only burn but give off noxious gases which could poison or smother you before you notice the fire.
- Flammable liquid vapors can catch fire far from the container they leaked from. The fire flashes back along the trail of vapor to the original container which can then explode. Store flammable liquids such as cleaning solvents in a well-ventilated area away from an ignition source.
- A fire ordinarily uses the oxygen in the air. But a category of chemicals called oxidizers also supply oxygen to a fire and cause it to burn violently. This is one of the reasons it is important to store chemicals correctly and to separate certain substances so they cannot mix by accident.
- Overloaded electrical circuits and electrical equipment in poor repair are responsible for countless fires. Do not attempt to draw power in excess of the rated capacity for the electrical system. Maintain all electrical equipment carefully, keeping it free of moisture which can damage insulation and having repairs done only by qualified persons.
- Poorly adjusted machinery also causes fires. The machine overheats when it is running poorly because it is dirty, jammed or incorrectly aligned.
- Don't forget that paper is an excellent fuel source for a fire. Make sure you keep your old and archived files away from sources of ignition. 

Watch for hidden fire hazards, and follow the instructions for handling and storage of chemicals to prevent fires.

Around the District

Sympathy ...



Catherine DeJonghe, 95, passed away Sept. 25 at Friendship Manor, Rock Island, Ill.

DeJonghe worked for the Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, D.C., as well as the Rock Island District, and retired from the former U.S. Army Weapons Command in 1974.



Harry Bottorff, 66, of Geneseo, Ill., passed away Oct. 10 at Hammond-Henry Hospital in Geneseo.

Bottorff began his career at the Rock Island District in 1989 in the Planning Section. He transferred to PM-M Branch in 1998 and worked in the GIS group until he retired in 2009.

He also served in the Army during Vietnam.



Ted Zaleski, 84, formerly of Rock Island, Ill., passed away Oct. 28 in Mission, Texas.

Zaleski worked for the Army Corps of Engineers and then the Moline Daily Dispatch before opening his own real estate agency.

He also served in the U.S. Navy from 1945-1949.



Michael Harper, 69, of Savanna, Ill., passed away Nov. 2 at his home.

Harper worked for the Department of Defense for more than 40 years. Most recently he was the Chief Historical Researcher for the Rock Island District.

He also served in the U.S. Navy.

Congrats ...



Congratulations to **Larry and Beth Bernauer** on the birth of a baby boy, Larry Wayne Bernauer III, on August 30. He was six pounds 13.9 ounces and 18.5 inches long.



Congratulations to **Kelly Baerwaldt**, and her husband Brad, on the birth of a baby girl, Avery Jade, on Sept. 24. She was eight pounds 12 ounces and 20 inches long.

CFC Chili Cook-off Results

The 16th annual Combined Federal Campaign Chili Cook-off brought in \$899.48, thanks to the volunteers, chefs and consumers. The winners were: 1st place - Doug Mason, Rock Island Arsenal; 2nd place - Mike McKean, Mississippi River Visitor Center; and 3rd place - Jerry Skalak, Program & Project Management. The People's Choice Award went to Eric Hackbarth, Geotechnical Branch.

Retirements ...

Charlie Lovell, lock and dam repairer, Maintenance Section, Mississippi River Project, Operations Division, retired Oct. 1, after dedicating 33 years to the federal government.

Dennis Padakis, engineering tech (Civil), Engineering and Construction Division, retired Nov. 2, after dedicating 42 years to the federal government.

Richard Doyle, maintenance worker, Mississippi River Project, Operations Division, retired Nov. 29, after dedicating 25 years to the federal government.

Samuel Hively, lock and dam operator, Lock and Dam 19, Mississippi River Project, Operations Division, retired Nov. 30, after dedicating 26 years to the federal government.

Disability Etiquette Quiz Answers: 1. b, 2. a, 3. b, 4. b, 5. a

Support & Sacrifice for Corps

Thanks to the employees who are deployed to the Afghanistan Engineer District - North (TAN) and the Afghanistan Engineer District - South (TAS)! To learn more about volunteering contact Emergency Management at (309) 794-5595.



*Eric Aubrey, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Kenneth Beck, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Randall Braley, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Peter Corken, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Chris DePooter, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Richard Eberts, AES
Regional Planning
Division - North*



*Mark Hoague, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Paul Holcomb, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Perry Hubert, TAS
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Celeste Iverson, TAN
Resource Management*



*Lisa Kantor, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Robert Meyers, TAS
Operations Division*



*Mark Miller, TAN
Operations Division*



*Kurt Reppe, TAN
Real Estate Division -
North*



*Richard Rupert, TAS
Engineering &
Construction Division*

Volunteers needed to support Overseas Contingency Operations

By Beth Crutcher, Emergency Management

The Corps of Engineers continues to assist in rebuilding both Iraq and Afghanistan's infrastructure in support of Overseas Contingency Operations. To date, the Corps has deployed approximately 9,000 civilian employees including more than 900 from the Mississippi Valley Division. The Rock Island District has deployed 75 individuals for a total of 137 cumulative deployments.

As the mission continues, so does the need for volunteers. There is currently a need for engineers, construction representatives, engineering technicians, and project and program managers. There is also a need for HVAC technicians, powered support mechanics and journeyman electricians. If you have the skills and are considering deployment, contact the Emergency Management office to find out what the next steps are.

Vacancy announcements can be found at www.usajobs.gov or www.armycivilianservice.com. More information on deploying can be found at www.usace.army.mil/Careers/CivilianDeployment.aspx or www.tam.usace.army.mil/UDC.

For more information contact Emergency Management at (309) 794-5595. 



Cathy Hall, deployment coordinator administrator, Mississippi Valley Division, discusses the need for employees to deploy to Afghanistan during a Lunch and Learn in October. Photo by Hilary Markin.