



Tower Times

Rock Island District's News Magazine

June 2012



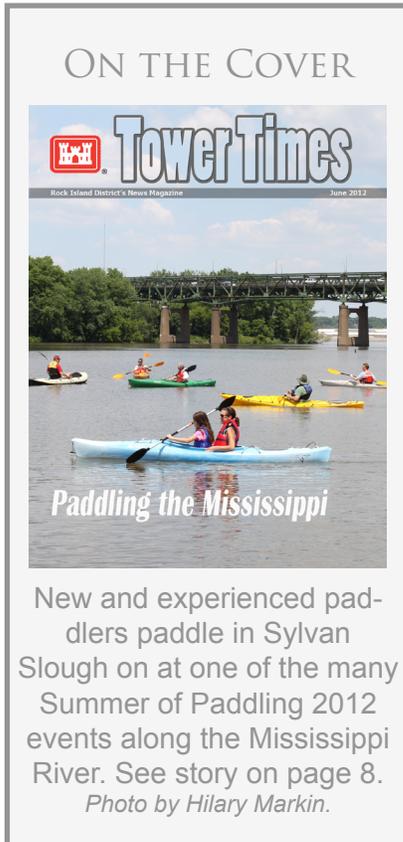
Paddling the Mississippi



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

Tower Times

June 2012



- 3 Being your commander has been one of the highlights of my career**
Col. Shawn McGinley, District Commander
- 4 District christens newest motor vessel**
Motor Vessel Clinton officially welcomed to the District
- 5 AmeriCorps group completes work for the Mississippi River Project**
- 6 WANTED: Asian carp**
- 8 Dipping your oars**
District partners for a Summer of Paddling 2012 event
- 9 Safety Corner - Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses**
- 10 2012 Corps Day highlights**
- 12 Spotlight on the District - Rob Germann**
- 14 Around the District**
- 15 Support & Sacrifice for Corps**
- 16 Rock Island District Blood Drive July 12**

Tower Times

Rock Island District, Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004
Email: cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil
Phone: (309) 794-5729

Commander: Col. Shawn P. rMcGinley
Deputy Commander: Lt. Col. Todd S. Reed
Chief, Corporate Communications: Ron Fournier
Editor: Hilary Markin

This publication is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Tower Times are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or the Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

It is published monthly by the Corporate Communications Office, Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should be submitted by the 15th of each month preceding publication. Circulation 1,500.

On the web at: www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/TowerTimes

A message from....

Colonel Shawn McGinley, District Commander



Being your commander has been one of the highlights of my career

It's hard to believe that it has been nearly three years since Maj. Gen. Walsh and I arrived via boat at the historic Quarters One on Rock Island Arsenal to take part in a change of command ceremony that ended with me as your new District Engineer and Commander. It was a great honor of my career at the time, and now that several years have passed and my time here is coming to an end, the honor of being your commander has taken on more meaning than I ever could have imagined.

When I arrived at the Clock Tower in June 2009 I had spent most of my Army career in Europe, commanding engineering units and overseeing a variety of missions related to the military mission. Civil works was a new world to me and I quickly found out that I would have a lot to learn. Thankfully, I had the Rock Island District workforce to guide me. There was a time when I didn't know about things like Section 519 projects or Civil Works Review Boards. Much of my first few months were spent learning the myriad of processes, programs, projects, funding and organizational functions that make up a civil works mission. As I leave this District, I may not be an expert on everything civil works but I am certainly far more knowledgeable and aware of the importance of the Rock Island District and the impact that you have on the Upper Mississippi River region. I have this professional and expert workforce to thank.



My time as your commander has been a fun-filled whirlwind both professionally and personally. During my time here my wife and I welcomed a son not long after we arrived. We bought a home and became immersed in a community that has been nothing short of amazing. The Quad Cities, the Rock Island District and the Arsenal communities welcomed us in and we immediately felt at home. When you spend much of your career overseas and spend very little to no time in areas like the Midwest, it can be a stressful prospect. But my family and I quickly became Quad Citians and it's with heavy hearts that we leave for our next assignment at Fort Belvoir, Va.

At work, there certainly was very little lull time. I found out quickly that the District had a significant workload and challenges to overcome. Flooding, maintenance backlogs, budget, funding, distraught residents, Asian carp and a collapsed lock wall; it seemed every day presented something new.

One thing always remained true – this

workforce was ready and reliable, adapting when necessary and always up to the task.

One of my initial goals when I took command was to make it out to all of our project sites and meet as many of you as possible. Whether it was visiting a lock and dam or cutting a ribbon as we celebrated the completion of an environmental restoration project, it was important to me that I understood everything you all work so hard to accomplish. Each visit left me impressed and getting out to our field sites will be one of the many aspects I will miss.

Being your commander has been one of the highlights of my 24-year Army career. Thank you to all who made my time here enjoyable and rewarding. Hopefully I leave the District having helped you meet challenges and posture for the future. It was my task as commander to lead but most importantly I wanted to ensure I put the District in a position to be successful in anything we work to accomplish. Luckily my job was made easy by this world-class workforce. It has been a privilege to be part of this Rock Island team. The honor I felt three years ago increases tenfold as I become a former District commander.

My wife and I will cherish the relationships and bonds we have built during our time here. Thank you for what you have done, what you are doing and what you will do in the future. The Rock Island District team is unmatched. I am grateful to have been a part of the team. Continue **BUILDING STRONG**®. 





Below, Honorable Mark Vulich, mayor of Clinton, Iowa, christens the Motor Vessel Clinton with a bottle of champagne.



Participants gather at the Clinton Marina in Clinton, Iowa, for the christening ceremony of the Motor Vessel Clinton on June 1.

District christens newest motor vessel

Story and photos by Allen Marshall, Public Affairs Specialist

The Rock Island District christened its newest vessel, the Motor Vessel Clinton, during a ceremony at the Clinton Marina in Clinton, Iowa, June 1.

Clinton Mayor Mark Vulich joined Col. Shawn McGinley, Rock Island District commander, in ceremoniously breaking a bottle of champagne to signify the boat's christening, a maritime tradition that has been carried out for centuries.

McGinley addressed the crowd which had gathered to witness the event. He told the attendees that the U.S. Army is an organization steeped in heraldry where tradition is important and honoring age old customs is part of the culture.

"Christening a maritime vessel is a time-honored tradition that goes back centuries," McGinley said. "The ancient Greeks and Romans performed christenings and many different cultures have their own versions of the event. But, more or less, all christenings serve one purpose and that is to ceremonially toast to good luck and safe passage. Today we honor that age-old custom by christening the M/V Clinton."

The M/V Clinton joins the Mississippi River Project Maintenance fleet located at the Mississippi River Project in Pleasant Valley, Iowa. The Project Maintenance crew performs strike removal (mechanical dredging) to maintain the nine foot navigation channel throughout the 314 miles of Mississippi River in the

Rock Island District. They are also responsible for construction and repair of wing dams and revetments throughout the same reach.

McGinley said the new motor vessel will be a welcome addition that will help the crews carry out their important missions on the Mississippi River.

"The Corps of Engineers has been operating vessels on the Mississippi River for nearly 175 years, since congress directed us to improve this great river for navigation," McGinley said. "The vessels themselves and the operations they perform have evolved with technology but the basic principles have always been the same – help keep the river thriving."

The M/V Clinton was delivered to the Rock Island District by Patti Marine Enterprises, an award-winning shipyard in Pensacola, Fla. She is 65 by 24 feet and is powered by two 600-horsepower C-18 Caterpillar Engines. It was designed and contracted through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Marine Design Center in Philadelphia.

The vessel, which replaces the previously named M/V Clinton, has two state rooms that can accommodate up to six crew members and a full galley on board. At the conclusion of the ceremony, tours of the vessel were offered. 



AmeriCorps workers paint a closure gate located at the Grant River Recreation Area near Potosi, Wis. Photos by Dubuque Park Rangers.

AmeriCorps group completes work for the Mississippi River Project

By John Knoble, Supervisory Park Ranger, Mississippi River Project

Sometimes partnerships with the Corps are hard to find, sometimes they find us. Recently the Mississippi River Project – Natural Resource Management Section (CEMV-ROD-MN) was approached by Stephan Silberman, the regional coordinator of the AmeriCorps Youth Employment program in Northwest Illinois, about hosting an AmeriCorps group for a week's worth of work this summer. The group was going to be in the area for six weeks from mid-May until late June, basing their camp out of the Mississippi Palisades State Park in Savanna, Ill.

The AmeriCorps group is made up of 11 college-age individuals from all over the country who can be requested by a regional coordinator to accomplish tasks for governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private citizens to do service to the country in exchange for work experience and modest accommodations. The group has their transportation and associated costs, meals and lodging provided by the hosting region. All members of the group have safety training in numerous tasks with the safety equipment provided by the AmeriCorps program.

While working for the Mississippi River Project for a week, the group was tasked with accomplishing a project directed by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Headquarters to standardize the marking of all recreation area closure gates. The Mississippi River Project has 42 such closure gates that all needed marking in the AmeriCorps service area. For OD-MN, that equates to work in 11 different recreation areas from Potosi, Wis., down to the Quad Cities in the states of Illinois and Iowa.

The project involved scraping off old reflective tape and paint, painting the metal gates, marking the gates

with the proper reflective tape, and affixing a standardized sign to the gates to make them conform to the new national USACE standards. OD-MN provided the materials, safety training, and guidance to the group to perform the work and the AmeriCorps volunteers (under the daily leadership of Calin Sterling – the group's work coordinator) did the rest. The logistics of the project and the time-consuming nature of the job saved the Mississippi River Project hundreds of dollars in labor costs to perform this necessary work. A real win-win situation for both the Corps and the AmeriCorps kids. 



A completed closure gate prepared by the AmeriCorps volunteers, conforming to new Corps standards, located at the entrance to the Grant River Recreation Area in Potosi, Wis.

WANTED!

FOR RIVER INVADIN'



DEAD OR ALIVE!

ASIAN CARP

By Hilary Markin, Editor

Something fishy has been in the news – Asian carp. It started as an issue in the southern part of the United States after flooding compromised retention ponds. The fish are now posing a threat to fisheries in the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes.

Originally from Southeast Asia, Asian carp were brought to the United States for use at aquaculture and wastewater treatment facilities. Flooding allowed the fish to escape into the Mississippi River system and they have slowly been migrating north to the Upper Mississippi River and tributaries including the Illinois River.

Asian carp have become a household name in a lot of areas as many work to restrict their spread while others have to protect themselves when boating or are working to find a market for them.

There are three species of Asian carp that are considered invasive: bighead, silver and black carp. Silver and bighead carp are filter-feeding fish capable of consuming five to 20 percent of

their body weight in plant and animal plankton each day. Plankton play a key role in the food web that many other fish species rely on. The average size of these Asian carp is 30-40 pounds; however, some can be as large as 110 pounds. Silver and bighead carp are established in the Illinois Waterway and the Lower and Middle Mississippi River.

Black carp are a bit different in that they primarily eat mollusks. They can grow as large as seven feet long and weigh more than 100 pounds. The carp pose a threat to already dwindling native mussel populations as well as sturgeon who also feed on mussels. Black carp are currently not established in the Upper Mississippi River Basin, but they do pose a serious threat to un-invaded ecosystems.

Populations of bighead and silver carp in the Illinois Waterway pose a threat to the Great Lakes due to the man-made connection, known as the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, connecting the Great Lakes to the Illinois River and Mississippi River watershed. The threat – destroying the ecosystem and native plant and animal species.

Asian carp have already harmed the ecosystem, economy, property and boaters in the Mississippi River system. Their diet is the same as many native species causing competition for food and silver carp are known as “the flying fish,” sometimes damaging property and injuring people.

The Corps is part of the interagency Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC) working to prevent further proliferation of the fish and most importantly, prevent the population’s spread and establishment from the Illinois River into Lake Michigan.

The initial prevention mechanisms are electric barriers that are designed to repel the fish, not kill or stun them. There are currently three electric barriers that cover a 1,500-foot section of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. Electrodes are mounted on the floor and recessed into the walls of the canal creating an electric field in the water. The ACRCC continues to look at additional methods while an intense monitoring program is underway to track their movements, habits and life cycles.

The Chicago District and the Great Lakes and Ohio Rivers Division are leading the Corps’ efforts on the barriers but the Rock Island District is also involved. Kelly Baerwaldt, a biologist in the Regional Planning and Environment Division North, leads the monitoring team for telemetry and manages the eDNA Program for the Corps.

eDNA is a genetic surveillance tool used to detect the presence of bighead and silver carp DNA in the waters above the barrier system. Telemetry is a more traditional monitoring tool, using transmitters implanted into fish species to track their movement throughout the system and behavioral response to the barrier field. Although eDNA is used as an important tool for early detection and also a trigger for rapid response actions, telemetry is also essential for demonstrating the effectiveness of the barrier.

“By fall 2011, individually coded transmitters had been surgically implanted into 182 fish, although no Asian carp were tagged

anywhere near or above the barrier. Thirty-two stationary receivers collect stationary tracking data, supplemented by monthly mobile tracking. To date, we have nearly 4.8 million detections from tagged fish with a 75 percent detection rate. No tagged fish had crossed any of the electric barriers in the upstream direction,” said Baerwaldt.

The known front line of adult Asian carp population is 55 miles from Lake Michigan. The ACRCC continues a vigilant monitoring program and shows no substantial Asian carp advancement since 2006.

“We are interested in what has prevented the movement of the adult population front in the Illinois Waterway over the last six years, and this year we are targeting our telemetry efforts to examine that,” said Baerwaldt.

On a recent excursion biologists met up with commercial fisherman near Starved Rock Lock and Dam on the Illinois Waterway to collect eDNA samples from Asian carp. One of the efforts of the ACRCC is to remove as many of the Asian carp as possible. To date more than 105 tons of Asian carp have been harvested this year.

“This is a pretty easy way to collect some genetic samples for our eDNA Calibration Study,” said Baerwaldt. “We are continually exploring and refining the eDNA technology. Our eDNA Calibration Study is an interagency effort that investigates ways to reduce the uncertainty around eDNA results. Right now, we can’t be sure if the DNA we are detecting came from a live fish, it may have come from other sources like a fish-eating bird, from a storm sewer, or perhaps from a dead Asian carp carcass that was discarded here. Additionally, we don’t fully understand the effects of environmental variables like light or temperature on the persistence or degradation of DNA. The calibration study is looking at all of these unknowns to help managers make the most



Kelly Baerwaldt, biologist, Regional Planning and Environment Division North, puts a DNA sample from a silver carp into a vial that will be sent to the lab for further testing. Photos by Kevin Irons, Illinois Department of Natural Resources.



Col. Shawn McGinley, commander, Rock Island District, poses with an Asian carp during a recent trip on the Illinois River near Starved Rock Lock and Dam.

informed decisions.”

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources contracts with the commercial fisherman who are assisting in the removal of the Asian carp and reimburses them for their catch when they are delivered to the market. Entrepreneurs continue to search for additional market sources for the fish. For now most are processed into various fertilizers and some into cat food. Only a small portion goes towards human consumption in the United States; however, some are working to change this.

In Asia, the Asian carp have been a popular food for thousands of years. However in North America many hear the word carp and think of the common carp who is a bottom-feeder and not very tasty. Asian carp have a pearly white meat that is said to taste similar to cod. To make it more appealing the fish have been renamed to silverfin or Kentucky tuna in hopes of increasing their popularity. 



Above, Pam Steinhaus, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, steadies the center of the canoe while event participants strategically plan how to get into the canoe to avoid tipping it.

Below, Lou Ann McCracken, Mississippi River Project, helps an event participant tighten the straps of her life jacket.



Dipping your oars

Story and photos by Hilary Markin, Editor

Experiencing the Mississippi River is what the Summer of Paddling 2012 is all about. On June 7, participants gathered on the shoreline of the Mississippi River at Sylvan Slough to learn paddling techniques and had an opportunity to paddle the river.

“It is a beautiful day,” said Sue Clevestine, outdoor recreation planner for the Rock Island District who helped organize the event. “We have a lot of people who are trying paddling for the first time.”

The event kicked off at 1 p.m. with various river partners sharing their roles in managing and promoting the Mississippi as a great place to recreate.

“Those of us who live along the Mississippi are lucky to benefit from the expansive bounty provided by the great river,” said Col. Shawn McGinley, commander, Rock Island District. “The Rock Island District has 65 recreation sites, many of which are located on the Mississippi River and all provide a chance to enjoy

nature.”

Event participants were provided a brief safety overview about paddling on the river and were all properly fitted with a life jacket before selecting a vessel. In all, nearly 60 people dipped their oars, some for the first time while others reconnected with the river seeing pelicans, great blue herons, lily pads and more.

“Paddling really allows you to get close to nature,” said Clevestine. “You don’t have the roaring engine noise, all you hear is the stroke of your paddle and nature around you.”

The Summer of Paddling 2012 is a series of events designed to get Americans outside to enjoy the Mississippi River via canoe, kayak or other paddle craft; and to take part in a summer full of paddling events on and near the river. The SOP2012 is aligned with the Presidential Initiative, America’s Great Outdoors, encouraging people to be active and get outside to experience nature. To learn more visit www.SOP2012.org. 

SAFETY CORNER

Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses

As summer starts, outside work picks up, and the chances of being exposed to tick-borne illnesses increases. If you work outdoors in heavily wooded or grassy areas, this is valuable information on common tick-borne illnesses—as well as the ways to prevent getting bitten.

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is the most recognized of the tick-borne illnesses. The disease is transmitted by ticks that have fed on certain deer and mice. They are found throughout the United States with the peak season being May through September. The areas of highest risk are the Northeast, Great Lakes Region, and an area in Northern California.

Current scientific estimates indicate that the disease is transmitted after the tick has attached to the individual for six to 24 hours. Between 15 and 30 percent of ticks are infected. The longer the tick is attached, the greater the probability of infection.

Early signs and symptoms of Lyme disease, three to 32 days after the tick bite, include a characteristic "bull's-eye" (red, circular) rash at the site of the tick bite (the most common sites are scalp, groin, and armpits), fever, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint pain, and swollen glands. Later signs and symptoms of Lyme disease, six to nine months after the tick bite, include weak facial muscles, stiff neck, irregular heartbeat, numbness, loss of appetite, dizziness, persistent fatigue, and double vision.

Babesiosis

Babesiosis is transmitted by ticks that typically have been infected by rodents, cattle or wild animals. These ticks are most commonly found in the Northeastern, Pacific Coast, and Upper Midwestern portions of the United States.

The signs and symptoms, which begin one to nine weeks after the tick bite, include fever, chills, profuse sweating, fatigue, dark-colored urine, nausea, abdominal pain, low blood count, and enlarged spleen.

Ehrlichiosis

Ehrlichiosis is transmitted by deer ticks and the Lone Star tick. Peak cases are from May to July and October to December. The first known cases were described in 1987. Reported incidences have occurred in individuals over 40 years old. The most prevalent areas of the country are the Southern and Northeastern areas of the United States.

The early signs and symptoms, which occur five to 11 days after the tick bite, include rapid onset of fever, acute headache, nonspecific rash (usually lower part of body), shaking chills, generalized fatigue, muscle and joint pain, cough, and vomiting. Individuals can become very sick, with up to 54 percent hospitalized.

Follow these steps to reduce the likelihood of being bitten by a tick:

- Encourage workers to wear light-colored clothing so ticks can be spotted easily.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Tuck pant legs into high boots. Tape area where pants and socks meet.
- Wear hats.
- Spray clothing and skin with repellents. Use Permethrin for the clothes and DEET for the skin.
- Wash clothes in high temperatures after working outdoors.
- Examine skin closely for ticks.
- Check body parts that bend (back of the knee, between fingers and toes, under the arms).
- Check areas where clothing presses against your skin (area beneath underwear elastic, belt area, neckline).
- Check other common areas where ticks hide (belly button, ears or the area around them, hairline, top of head).



The proper way to remove a tick and deal with the situation if you find a tick on your skin.

- If a tick is present, use a fine-point tweezers to grasp the tick at the place of attachment, as close to the skin as possible. Gently apply a firm, steady pressure until the tick releases. Don't jerk, twist, squash, or squeeze the tick. Wait for it to release.
- Clean the wound and tweezers with antiseptic. Burning the tick with a cigarette or using petroleum jelly or nail polish to smother it are not effective methods.
- If you are bitten at work notify your supervisor right away. Make sure the bite is documented by the end of the day and include the area of your body that was bit.
- Watch the site of the bite and your general health for symptoms, which usually take several weeks to develop.
- If necessary, place the tick in a closed container, and take it to a local health provider or department for identification.



Why It Matters

- Tick-borne diseases range from mild to debilitating.
- All of the above can be avoided by taking proper precautions when working outdoors during tick season.

Information from United States Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, www.osha.gov. 

2012 Corps Day

Congratulations to the 2011 Employees of the Year

Supervisor - John Knoble
Professional - Hank DeHaan
Technical/Administrative - Paul Whitmer
Assistant/Clerical - Anne Ewan
Trades/Crafts - Fred Tazelaar
Public Contact - Sam Heilig
Community Contact - Steve Gustafson
Engineer of the Year - Jeff Dupont



Corps Day Event Winners:

Cornhole Tournament

1st Place - Corn Slingers (Larry Melaas and Kyle Melaas)
2nd Place - Team Left Right (Roger Less and Rick Nickel)
3rd Place - Board Meeting (LaShell Harper and Jason Harper)

Hobby Vehicle Show - Sue Robinson

Col. Shawn McGinley with the assistance of Charles Bauer, who recently returned from a deployment, unveiled the Rock Island District deployment plaque at Corps Day. The plaque represents every employee who has deployed in support of Overseas Contingency Operations. The plaque will be displayed on the first floor of the Clock Tower.



Former Rock Island District employees pose with Col. McGinley, commander, Rock Island District, during the annual Corps Day picnic.





Spotlight on the District

Rob Germann

Operations Manager

Illinois Waterway Project, Operations Division

By Hilary Markin, Editor

After seeing the world during a career in the Air Force, one District employee returned to the Midwest to establish roots.

Rob Germann grew up in the small farming community of Napoleon, Ohio. Upon high school graduation he attended the University of Toledo obtaining his bachelor's degree in civil engineering. Before college he joined the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps and the idea of travel intrigued him.

"I spent more of my Air Force career overseas versus CONUS (Continental United States)," said Germann. "My military career spanned a unique timeframe in history. When I came in we did more Cold War exercises compared to today's 'war' deployments."

During his Air Force career his path crossed with the Corps of Engineers quite a bit. Most of Germann's experiences were with the maintenance and operation of airbases, which included just about everything required to run a city.

He completed two long tours to England and one to Okinawa, Japan. He was also in Iraq, Kuwait and various other countries.

His time in England provided a unique opportunity. England is the only place in the world where the Air Force is the Department of Defense construction agent.

"Since I had top security clearance, I got an inside look into unique military construction," he stated. "This was good exposure in cradle to grave major military construction projects."

Germann was also an Air Force North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) program manager and worked closely with the 16 countries; which provided great exposure to various cultures.

"For a project to move forward, all 16 NATO countries had to agree. I learned how to be very diplomatic and became familiar with each of their cultures to a certain degree," said Germann. "I learned a lot about project sponsoring, similar to the Civil Works program of the Corps but with a more State Department flavor."

His final assignment was the Chief of Housing Privatization Execution at the Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment.

"I had the privilege of leading a seven person central office along with 17 field offices in privatizing over \$3 billion in Air Force Housing. We primarily packaged the privatization 'deals' for a 50-year performance period; which included construction,



From right, Rob Germann, Perry Jones, Dean Ritzmann, Ray Martin, and Steve Koenig pose for a photo following an inspection trip of the Joliet Wall.

operations and rental programs. I definitely learned a lot about the bond markets and financing from the private sector financing perspective."

Germann retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force in 2009 after 21 years of service.

Following his honorable retirement, he joined the Rock Island District as the Chief of Locks and Dams for the Illinois Waterway (IWW) and became the Operations Manager two years ago.

One of the key things that Germann has done throughout his career is making sure the people he supervises have the tools; whether they be resources or funding to accomplish their missions.

He likes to make things happen and challenged the IWW to be more focused on the mission and 'getter dun.'

"We have accomplished a lot in the last few years and my hats off to the supervisors and employees for taking on the challenge and running with it," said Germann.

They have really accelerated the pace. It has been five years since the IWW had rehabbed a miter gate and this summer Starved Rock's rehabbed gates will be put back into service. The crews will then move on to Marseilles gates, bringing them back to Peoria Yard to work on them over the winter months.

The maintenance units have also been supporting others

outside the District. Based on prioritized regional efforts; IWW crews have been up and down the Mississippi River providing critical skills and capabilities. Germann said he has received a considerable amount of praise from those districts for the great support the crews have provided.

“We are really plugged-in to the inland waterway system and all of us are working together to leverage internal resources in an effort to be the most efficient,” he said. “There is a tremendous amount of backlog maintenance projects. The key is providing prioritized funding to aid us as we manage the aging infrastructure of our rivers.”

On the locks and dams side, the lock staff continues to work hard and smart to ensure safe navigation as well as managing some of the oldest locks in the national inventory. Most IWW locks are approaching 80 years in age, to keep these facilities operational takes competent operators and maintainers.

“I salute all their efforts out in the field; they keep the Illinois flowing,” said Germann.

Germann spends a lot of time communicating with industry regarding navigation conditions and issues.

The IWW is one of the few northern tier inland waterways that is typically open during ice season. Usually there are lock restrictions due to ice on the lock walls and in the chambers. This can be a very dangerous time of year for industry and the lock and dam staff.

“We have a very active, open and friendly working relationship,” said Germann. “When an issue does come up we are able to work out the details pretty quickly.”

A unique thing about the IWW is the coordination within the Chicago area especially with the threat of Asian carp.

A lot of time and energy has gone in to coordinating lock operations, participating in study groups, communicating with industry, biologists and others interested in Asian carp.

One item that has surfaced is Asian carp carcass control. As barges travel the rivers oftentimes fish and other aquatic species end up hitching a ride. In an effort to limit their spread, deck hands are requested to scan their tows before lockage, placing any carcasses in a bag and providing it to lock staff for disposal. This is expected to reduce the number of eDNA false positives occurring during sampling efforts in the Chicago Area Waterways.



Jeff Griffin, supervisor, Structures Maintenance Unit, Illinois Waterway, provides Rob Germann a progress update on the repairs of Starved Rock's upper miter gates.

Although the IWW does not have a large recreation mission, the rangers and staff have created and built great partnerships to make the most of the resources available. The Visitor Center also conducts a variety of outreach programs that educate the public about natural resources, the IWW and the Corps.

Germann has hit the ground running since joining the District and looks forward to continuing to challenge his staff in accomplishing the missions of the IWW.

In relating his experiences in the Air Force to his current job he said “It’s all the same philosophies just a different set of vocabulary is used.”

Germann is married and they have a 10-year old daughter. They have been settling in, growing roots and enjoying watching their daughter grow up.

When asked about advice he shared; “Treat others how you would like to be treated and show respect.” 

‘My Biz’ is a cool employee tool

By MVD Public Affairs

Need to send your employment information securely to a business or a bank in order to get that home loan processed in a hurry?

Well, there is a cool employee tool located on the Department of Defense’s DCPAS (Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service) website that is sure to get that process rolling.

The Self Service Employee “MyBiz” module provides DoD employees the ability to access their DCPAS employment related information and submit this information to an external organization such as a business or a bank directly from DCPAS. This

information is sent in an email via a secure internet connection.

To access “MyBiz,” you must log into the DCPAS Portal. After successfully accessing your region via the DCPAS Portal, the “MyBiz” home page displays. Selecting the “MyBiz” link will open the “Functions” menu of available tasks.

A self-service user guide on how to access “MyBiz” is available at the following link: http://www.cpms.osd.mil/hrbits/self-service/selfservice_userguide.aspx. You can also log into CPOL at <http://cpol.army.mil> to access this information. 

Around the District

Sympathy ...



Janice Jager, 76, passed away June 2 at Clarissa C. Cook Hospice House in Bettendorf, Iowa.

Jager worked for the Corps of Engineers before moving to Texas and working for the Internal Revenue Service. She then returned to the Quad Cities and worked with the Joint Munitions Command.

Retirements ...

Charles Spitzack, supervisor civil engineer, Plan Formulation Branch, retired June 1, after dedicating 38 years to the federal government.

George Ofslager, chemist, Technical Branch, Engineering and Construction Division, retired June 3, after dedicating 32 years to the federal government.

Randy Peters, work leader, Peoria Lock and Dam, Illinois Waterway Project, Operations Division, retired June 30, after dedicating 30 years to the federal government.

Congrats ...



Congratulations to Felix Castro, Geotechnical Branch, Engineering and Construction Division, and his wife Amber on the birth of a baby girl, Lila Eva, May 4. She was seven pounds 15 ounces and 20 and one quarter inches long.

Clarence Buchanan, lock and dam operator, LaGrange Lock and Dam, Illinois Waterway Project, Operations Division, retired June 30, after dedicating 37 years to the federal government.

Retiree Corner

Annual Retirees' Luncheon – Sept. 5

The annual retirees' luncheon will be Wednesday, Sept. 5, at the Quad City Botanical Center, 2525 4th Avenue, Rock Island, Ill. 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.

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 27, no refunds will be granted after this date. If there are any questions, contact Bonnie Donelson (563) 381-3143, LaVeta Bear (309) 794-0710, or Sandy Dixon (309) 787-5782, DIXONS3JSS@AOL.COM. 

Support & Sacrifice for Corps



Thanks to our employees who are deployed to the Afghanistan Engineer District - North (AEN) and the Afghanistan Engineer District - South (AES)!



Andrew Barnett, AEN



Chris DePooter, AEN



Mark Hoague, AEN



Celeste Iverson, AEN



Lisa Kantor, AEN



Brian Lane, AEN



Mark Miller, AEN



Kurt Reppe, AEN



Gordon Rush, AEN



Richard Rupert, AES



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.



April-May Answer - Brandon Road Lock and Dam
Winner - Matt Zehr, Engineering and Construction Division

Rock Island District Blood Drive - July 12

Story and photo by Hilary Markin, Editor

Giving the gift of life through blood donation takes a minimal amount of time and can make a big impact.

For the first time in April the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center brought equipment to the District blood drive to allow donors to “double their giving” by donating two units of red cells at one time. The double red cell donations take place through an automated donation procedure that collects only the desired blood component (red blood cells) and returns the remaining components (platelets, plasma and white blood cells), as well as a fluid replacement solution to the donor.

“The machine was really interesting,” said Donna Hardy, District blood drive coordinator. “We had one person double give and hope that more will consider it.”

Most often a patient needs to receive two units of and by donating this way both units given are from the same person diminishing the chance of the body having adverse reactions.

Double Red Cell donation is not always appropriate for every blood type. Most donors who have an Rh-negative blood type, particularly O-negative donors, are ideal for Double Red Cell donation because there is always a strong demand for Red Blood Cells from such donors.

The next Rock Island District blood drive will be on Thurs-



John Dengler, Contracting Divison, donates double red blood cells at the Spring Blood Drive in April.

day, July 12 in the ABC Conference Room at the Clock Tower. Donors can sign-up for an appointment in advance by visiting the Web site at <https://www.bloodcenterimpact.org/index.cfm>. You can also give blood at any local Mississippi Valley Blood Center donation center, just mention the Corps of Engineers code 030 and your donation will be attributed to the Corps yearly tally. Please contact Donna Hardy, (309) 794-5382, to discuss the possibility of a Double Red Cell donation and to get your appointment scheduled. 