

Tower Times

Rock Island District's News Magazine

March-April 2013



Engaging youth in STEM

District participates in iExploreSTEM festival



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

Tower Times

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Tower Times

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A message from....

Colonel Mark Deschenes, District Commander



Sequestration: Thank you for your patience during uncertain times

The past few months have been trying times for many who work for the federal government. First, it was the threat of sequestration looming. Then the sequestration occurred followed by the real possibility of furloughing employees for a significant period of time. I'm sure many within our District felt a deep concern for how a furlough would affect themselves and their families. Amazingly, throughout these past few months, I haven't noticed any effects in carrying out our missions and that is testament to this dedicated workforce which knows how to persevere through tough times.

A few weeks ago it was announced that employees funded through civil works appropriations would be exempt from the federal furloughs which are still pending. That was great news for a high percentage of our employees since most are funded through civil works dollars. But, we do have about three dozen employees funded through defense appropriations and most likely those employees would be affected if the furloughs occur. We will support those affected employees in every way possible.

It should also not be forgotten that even though a high percentage of District employees are exempt from the pending furloughs, there are thousands of fellow Army civilians working within

walking distance of our headquarters building who are still dealing with the possibility of a furlough. Most Rock Island Arsenal employees, whether at the various headquarters or garrison, are not exempt. Those employees are carrying out missions just as important as the ones we do within the District.

These have certainly been trying times. Working for the federal government has meant struggling with budgetary concerns for several years now. We have been tightening our purse strings and doing more with less for quite some time. Those budgetary restrictions seemed to crescendo with the sequestration. Every federal agency, whether it is the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy, is having to make sacrifices and figure out how to make their budget stretch farther.

Thank you all for your patience during the sequestration process. Your patience has made my job much easier. It is evidence of the professionalism in our workforce that our stride has not altered during these times and we will continue to do everything within our power to work in the best interest of our people. There is no question that the value we deliver to the region and nation is appreciated and needed. Continue **BUILDING STRONG®**. 

Re-energizing the District

By Hilary Markin, Editor

Energy usage is at the forefront both in our homes and in the workplace. The District recently re-energized the Sustainability and Energy Conservation Management Team to implement sustainable and energy conserving efforts across the District.

"There has been a number of key drivers that have put a greater focus on the measurements and usage of energy in the District," said John Punkiewicz, Sustainability and Energy Conservation Team member.

The key drivers include the most recent Operational Order 2010-71, "Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan Execution and Reporting," and the follow-up of five fragmentary orders, as well as the Executive Orders that have been issued regarding sustainability.

For many years the District has been working to be good environmental stewards and in recent years those efforts have ex-

panded to include sustainability – a broader concept that includes climate change and the environment to ensure what is done today doesn't negatively impact tomorrow.

"We have been doing good things," said Punkiewicz. "We just need to do a better job of giving ourselves credit where credit is due."

One of the first things the team looked at was the data being collected. In the past, tracking the energy conservation efforts has been sporadic and inconsistent.

In 2010, the Corps developed their own tracking system and the team has been working to establish baseline data. Prior to that, the Corps was using the Army's energy tracking system which did not align well with civil works projects and data analysis.

"Now that we have our baseline data entered, we will be able to see trends develop and establish a glide path," said Julie

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Townsend, Sustainability and Energy Conservation Team member who oversees the data entry. “The new system also allows field site personnel to directly enter their data – streamlining the process.”

In 2011, the Corps conducted a study on energy usage and the results showed Rock Island as having three of the 51 covered-facilities identified that consume 75 percent of the Corps total energy use.

The facilities identified in the report were Saylorville Lake, the Mississippi River Project Office complex and the District’s Headquarters. These facilities are now required to undergo an official energy audit that will be coordinated through USACE Headquarters and the Huntsville Support Center.

Saylorville Lake was the first facility to undergo the Corps energy audit through the Huntsville Support Center in March.

“Based on the audit results – key energy conservation measures will be identified for Saylorville,” said Punkiewicz. “The measures will serve as a guide to prioritize and budget for energy conservation improvements.”

Ahead of the official audits, the District took advantage of MidAmerican Energy’s BusinessCheck program – a program that is similar to the home audit program provided by many energy providers. MidAmerican Energy is one of the main energy providers within the District and the provider for the three designated “covered facilities.”

“These initial audits gave us basic information on our energy usage especially from a seasonal standpoint showing the peak energy usages during the summer for example,” said Punkiewicz. The Team has already started to complete some smaller energy reducing projects.

“We have started to go after the low-hanging fruit,” said Townsend. “In the Clock Tower, light fixtures are being replaced as well as the installation of low-flow faucets just to name a few.”

The District has already been using new technology, greener and more energy efficient products whenever possible.

“As we work to modernize components of our infrastructure we are using energy efficient technologies. From the lighting to the heating and air conditioning systems to the windows being installed – all are being replaced with new, more energy efficient models,” said Punkiewicz. “Tracking all of this is a challenge given the number of facilities we have.”

The Corps is in the process of developing tools to aid Districts like Rock Island in measuring and tracking the various energy conservation-saving measures being implemented.

There are also bigger projects that are being looked at. As part of the Corps’ sustainability efforts – money is available to help Districts complete energy projects. Saylorville Lake has already completed the replacement of heat pumps at their office complex. Other projects for this year include the rehab of the hydropower turbine at Locks and Dam 15 as well as solar panels for the Starved Rock Visitor Center.

The Corps has outlined its strategic sustainability performance goals, objectives and metrics in the 2012 Sustainability Plan. This plan is in accordance with Executive Order 13514: Federal Leadership in Environment, Energy and Economic Performance, outlines energy, water and waste reduction targets for the federal government.

Col. Mark Deschenes, District commander, is the designated Sustainability Champion for the Mississippi Valley Division. He is working with Division and District staff to identify program metrics to be implemented throughout the region.

The team continues to refine the objectives and action items that move the District toward meeting the energy efficient goals. “Energy conservation is everyone’s responsibility,” said Punkiewicz. “This is a team effort and everyone can do their part in increasing our energy efficiency and sustainability – together we can make a difference.”

Find out more at www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Sustainability/GoingGreenCampaign.aspx. 

Become more energy efficient

- Turn off the fan, lights and TV when you leave a room
- Buy compact fluorescent light (CFL) or light-emitting diodes (LED) to replace less efficient incandescent bulbs
- Install programmable thermostats and ensure they are set properly according to the season
- Use ceiling or portable fans to circulate air to make it feel cooler
- Purchase energy efficient products and appliances - check the label for the ENERGY STAR® logo
- Plug home electronics (TVs, DVD players, etc.) into power strips; turn off the power strip when not in use
- Reduce your use of hot water - take shorter showers, use cold water to wash clothes, etc.
- Install low-flow showerheads and faucets
- Lower the thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees
- Centralize and share personal appliances in the workplace
- Don’t let the water run - report all leaks and have them taken care of by a professional plumber
- Air dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher’s drying cycle
- Air dry clothes

Your local energy provider may also have tips, a home energy audit program or rebates for upgrading to more energy efficient items in your home. Visit energysavers.gov for more energy saving ideas.

Did you know...

According to the Environmental Protection Agency - the energy used by a building to support just one office worker for a day causes more than twice as many greenhouse gas emissions as that worker’s drive to and from work?

District Headquarters undergoes updates

By Hilary Markin, Editor

Many have noticed the recent changes to areas in the Clock Tower and Annex. Windows are being replaced and the bathrooms are being remodeled.

The changes and updates are part of a living Master Plan for the District Headquarters that is overseen by the Facility Board. The purpose of the Facility Board is to oversee everything related to the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings, grounds, parking areas and systems associated with them. They also work to minimize the costs associated with any changes.

What started as a quest to remodel the restroom outside the Engineering & Construction Conference room expanded into the remodeling of the two other bathrooms in the Annex plus updates to the Clock Tower.

"The bathrooms outside the EC Conference room are not very guest friendly," said Jeff Loebach, project architect. "But in order for us to move the showers and locker facilities, and make the necessary updates, we needed to update the other restrooms in the Annex – starting with the most budget-friendly project first."



Four new kitchenettes all similar to this one in the basement of the Clock Tower provide a safe place for food preparation and cleaning. Photo by Charles Bauer

restrooms were updated with modern countertops and sinks that included low-flow faucets with automatic sensors to reduce the amount of water being used. Kitchenettes were also added in the basement and the 3rd floor providing a food preparation area and sink. Ceiling tiles were also replaced.

"The kitchenettes provide employees a clean place to prepare their lunch and wash any dishes that may have accumulated. The stations also include a garbage disposal to reduce food particles from being washed down the bathroom sinks or being left in the sink," said Charles Bauer, the contracting officer representative for the project.

Restrooms on the 2nd floor of the annex were completely remodeled and a kitchenette was added.

The entire restroom remodeling project began last year and was separated into three different phases. Phase I, now complete, included the remodel of the 2nd floor Annex restrooms, the addition of kitchenettes and some minor updates to the restrooms in the Clock Tower.

In the Clock Tower, the

"The walls were taken down to the studs," said Bauer, adding that during the demolition the contractor found that no insulation was located in the walls or ceiling.

"A contract modification was initiated and the contractor added sound deadening insulation in the walls and ceiling providing more privacy," said Bauer.

Another part of this project included upgrades and changes to the ventilation system.

"The annex restroom ventilation system is being updated with the installation of a new roof top exhaust fan," said Loebach.

Phase II of the project started April 8 and remodels the 1st floor annex restroom – adding a locker room, and two shower stalls to each restroom as well as other updates. A kitchen area will also be added similar to the others already installed.

"Moving the showers to the 1st floor of the annex will allow the addition of more toilet stalls in the restrooms outside the EC Conference Room making it more conducive to visitors," said Loebach.

Phase III will renovate the restrooms located outside the Engineering and Construction Conference Room.

In addition to the restroom remodeling projects, the Facility Board initiated a project to replace the windows in the cross-over and annex. The new windows are more energy efficient and also meet the new government building standards as being blast proof.

"The new windows are a lot harder to install," said Bauer. "As soon as the contractor mobilized the snow started to fly. The weather is finally starting to cooperate and we are making good progress."

The contractor will also be adding four windows to the 1st floor of the annex that will overlook the vehicle pool area.

The Facility Board is also making additional updates to the Clock Tower including the installation of overhead protection canopies to keep employees and visitors safe from falling debris as well as the reconditioning of the clock face. These two items are being closely coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office to ensure all guidelines relating to the Clock Tower being listed on the National Register of Historic Places are adhered to.



The new 2nd floor annex restroom features modern countertops, low-flow faucets with automatic sensors and other updates. Photo by Jeff Loebach



A pedestrian bridge spans the Des Moines River in downtown Des Moines, Iowa, connecting the Des Moines Riverwalk, a project of the Des Moines Recreational River and Greenbelt program. Photo by Mike Cox

A vision that continues to blossom

By Hilary Markin, Editor

Leveraging resources has been key in the success of the Des Moines Recreational River & Greenbelt program.

The visionary behind the program was former Congressman Neal Smith who drafted the legislation in an effort to develop ecosystem improvements and recreational opportunities in the Des Moines River corridor.

The program was authorized in 1985 by Public Law 99-88, the 1985 Supplemental Appropriations Act.

The overall objectives of the program are to provide central Iowa and Des Moines metropolitan area with environmental protection of scarce river bottom timberlands and to greatly enhance opportunities for recreation.

“The program has provided a vision of recreation along the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers in central Iowa created through a partnership with the State of Iowa and local communities to help focus recreational development efforts in their areas,” said Den-

nis Hamilton, chief of Programs Management Branch.

The legislation also established an advisory committee to oversee the program including representatives from various local, state and federal agencies with the Corps charged with the overall administration of the program.

To date, the advisory committee has successfully completed 16 projects and four are currently active and in the process of being constructed. Another 14 projects are approved but currently inactive, and 74 are planned but not approved for federal funding.

Of those remaining projects some are being pursued by the local sponsors to continue the mission of the Des Moines Recreational River and Greenbelt program despite the lack of federal funding.

“Communities have developed some projects on their own that were originally Greenbelt program projects. They were able to find non-federal funds to complete them, some have also mor-

phed into other things,” said Hamilton. “However, all the projects are compatible with the recreation facilities we already have constructed.”

The four active projects include the Fort Dodge Riverfront and Trails, Des Moines Riverwalk in downtown Des Moines, Marion County Cordova Center on the Rock and Red Rock Trail Segment 4B along the north shore of Lake Red Rock.

The Fort Dodge Riverfront and Trails project aims to transform a former industrial area into a recreational area complete with trails, fishing and boating facilities, and other recreation areas. The first stage of the project is under construction with additional stages to be constructed as federal funds become available. The project is funded with a 50 percent cost share from the City of Fort Dodge.

The Des Moines Riverwalk project evolved from a master plan developed by the City of Des Moines and The Principal Financial Group. It includes a multipurpose trail loop and connecting trails, bridges, parks, promenades and related facilities along the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers in downtown Des Moines.

“The project has proven to be tremendously popular with bicyclists, walkers and runners, and has helped to re-energize the downtown area,” said Hamilton.

More than 50 percent of the project has been funded by the City, Principal Financial Group and other key donors.

“This project is intended to increase interaction with the river

and create opportunities to connect adjacent development, neighborhoods and other trail systems like the Neal Smith Trail,” said Mike Zukowski, project manager.

The other two active projects, Red Rock Trail Segment 4B and Marion County Cordova Center on the Rock, are waiting for additional funding.

“Red Rock Trail Segment 4B is a current example of how non-federal dollars are being used to complete about 50 percent of this portion of the trail,” said Hamilton.

This trail segment is being constructed by the developer of a hydropower generating facility at Red Rock Dam at their expense.

“This program is an innovative way to effectively use a combination of federal and non-federal funds to build recreational facilities,” said Hamilton.

“Through the years the program has seen the peaks and valleys related to funding. The project sponsors and advisory committee members have been instrumental in pushing the program forward and keeping the Greenbelt vision alive.

“It really is a win-win situation. Having recreational facilities along the corridor brings new types of opportunities to the area. The Des Moines Recreation River and Greenbelt program has provided critical links along the river corridor that are now partially interconnected.” 

A multi-purpose trail bridge was completed as part of the Lake Red Rock Trail Segment 4B project of the Des Moines Recreational River and Greenbelt program. Photo by Corps of Engineers



Left, a multi-purpose trail has been constructed as part of Stage 1 of the Fort Dodge Riverfront and Trails project, a project of the Des Moines Recreational River and Greenbelt program. Photo by Corps of Engineers



Eric Hackbarth, Geotechnical Branch, explains the different types of materials that dams and levees are constructed of at the iExploreSTEM Festival in Des Moines, Iowa, Jan. 26. Photo by Michael Champagne

Engaging youth in STEM

By Hilary Markin, Editor

The District participated in an iExploreSTEM Festival Jan. 26 at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines, Iowa.

The festival was a part of the Living with Floods project in Iowa to commemorate the recent flood events and celebrate progress toward recovery. It was open to kids and their families and provided hands-on activities all centered around science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Saylorville Lake Natural Resources Specialists Phil Rustad and Michael Champagne, and Eric Hackbarth, Geotechnical Branch, engaged students through various displays at their booth.

They centered the focus on dams and levees – their design, function, the role they play in flood risk management and the importance of dam and levee safety.

“The Drowning Machine was a big hit – demonstrating to participants how low-head dams work as well as the dangers that surround them,” said Rustad.

In addition to that – students got to get their hands dirty

exploring the different types of material that dams and levees are constructed of.

“The participants got to see what happens when dried bentonite (clay) interacts with water,” said Hackbarth. “This type of clay absorbs more water and at a faster rate than the clay found in the Des Moines area making it a great demonstration tool.”

Living with Floods commemorates the five-year anniversary of the historic floods of 2008 and the two-year anniversary of the western Iowa flooding in 2011. It celebrates the progress made toward recovery, and raises awareness of flood mitigation strategies and the interconnection of the environment and the watershed individuals live in.

iExploreSTEM festivals are a series of hands-on STEM festivals geared toward children of all ages and their families; a project of the State Hygienic Laboratory and Health and Human Physiology Department at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Learn more at <http://iexplorestem.org>. 

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - STEM

Engaging students in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is a focus across the nation. The Corps recognizes the critical role that STEM education plays in enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leaders of the global marketplace, and enabling the Department of Defense and Army in the security of our nation. The Corps is committed to teaming with others to strengthen STEM-related programs that inspire current and future generations of young people to pursue careers in STEM fields. More at www.usace.army.mil/stem. 

Reducing the impact of invasive species through partnership

By Hilary Markin, Editor

In an effort to reduce the impact of invasive species, Coralville Lake was one of the first agencies to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Hawkeye Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) in 2007. This partnership is just one of the ways the Corps is working with others to fight invasive species. Since then, the Mississippi River Project has also signed a MOU with them.

The main focus of the Hawkeye CWMA is reducing the impact of invasive species in Eastern Iowa through cooperative education, demonstration and restoration.

"We are working hard to get the word out," said Mary Sue Bowers, natural resources specialist, Coralville Lake.

Together the group has produced more than 20 brochures on individual invasive species to educate others on how to identify and manage them – and more are in the works. The brochures can be found on Coralville Lake's Web site at www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/CoralvilleLake/NaturalResourceManagement/InvasiveSpecies.aspx.

"The brochures have been extremely well received," said Bowers. "We have a display rack and banner that we put up at events, natural resource meetings, and field days. The brochures consolidate information from a variety of sources in a very user friendly way for the public, which was our target audience."

Together with the Hawkeye CWMA, Coralville has worked to engage adjacent landowners in discussions about invasive species.

"We have held field days with our neighbors to talk about invasive species on Corps lands and on their adjacent lands, and strategies to manage them," said Bowers. "It takes everyone – invasive species don't recognize jurisdictional boundaries so we need everyone's help to control them."

Participating in the Hawkeye CWMA has helped the Corps in other ways too.



Mary Sue Bowers, natural resources specialist, Coralville Lake, talks to adjacent landowners about oriental bittersweet, an invasive species threatening Iowa's woodlands. Photo by Corps of Engineers

"During the meetings I get to talk to others who are working to control invasive species and learn about different pilot programs or new management tools they are testing," said Bowers.

The Hawkeye CWMA is also working to educate local plant nurseries on invasive species.

"Japanese Barberry is a common landscaping plant that we are starting to see as an escaped invasive in our woodlands," said Bowers. "We want to educate the nurseries about their spread and hopefully encourage them to do the same to potential buyers or replace their stock with a native shrub like the buffaloberry."

The Hawkeye Cooperative Weed Management Area is a group of federal, state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and community groups who are interested in combating invasive species in Eastern Iowa. More information can be found at www.HawkeyeCWMA.org.

Join the Hawkeye CWMA for a Invasive Species Field Day June 6 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Scotch Grove Coon Hunters Lodge. Learn about invasive species and how to manage them. Call (563) 487-3541 for more information and to register. 



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.



January-February Answer - Coralville Lake's table at the first Coralville Lake Bald Eagle Watch and Expo. Feb. 9
Winner - Jeff Peck, Coralville Lake



Spotlight on the District

Anthony Heddlesten

**Project Engineer
Environmental Engineering Section, Design Branch
Engineering & Construction Division**

Finding a balance between work and play can be difficult at times but also rewarding. For one Rock Island District employee, that balance comes from being very involved in the community and also taking on projects at work.

Anthony Heddlesten joined the Rock Island District in January 2008 after graduating from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Wis., with a degree in civil and environmental engineering. During college he worked as a land conservation engineer with Chippewa County and as a water treatment engineer with Strand Associates in Madison.

“I got to experience both the private and public sector of engineering,” said Heddlesten. “It really helped me decide what I wanted to do after college.”

He chose the public sector of engineering as a way to better serve the community.

“I’m not in it just for the money. I also wanted a life outside of work – I didn’t want to be putting in 60 plus hours of work each week like many do in the private sector.”

He came on board with the Corps through the Army Career Intern program and was able to rotate through the various District offices to get a better understanding of their functions. He also established a rotation at the Engineer Research and Development Center, something that now others can benefit from.

“I set-up a month-long rotation at ERDC – this was the first time that anyone had done an internship with them. Many other interns also took advantage of this during their rotations,” said Heddlesten.

Upon graduation from the intern program Heddlesten joined the Environmental Engineering Section of Design Branch as a project engineer. As a project engineer he works closely with the project manager to complete projects and ensure the rest of the team is moving forward. He also does some of the design work and coordinates with other team members on various project aspects.

“As a project engineer I get to work with so many different groups of people from many different departments. I also get to meet with sponsors and present material to local organizations and groups. Not everyone gets the opportunity to do that,” said Heddlesten.

A couple of the projects he is currently working on include the 408 permits for the Red Rock Hydropower Project and the Illinois River Basin Restoration Program projects.

“Not a lot of people can say they are building an island or working on a hydropower plant that can power an entire county in Iowa,” said Heddlesten about why he likes his job.



Heddlesten is the president of the Rock Island District Welfare Association which plans Corps Day and other events and activities for District employees.

“It’s very rewarding but can also be frustrating to find things that everyone likes,” says Heddlesten. “I would love to see more people get involved in RIDWA and volunteer some of their time for the good of the District.”

When not at work Heddlesten finds himself being active in his community. He lives in the Broadway District of Rock Island, Ill., in one of the historic houses. He and his wife Kyla have been busy restoring the house and upgrading it to be more energy efficient – another passion of his.

“My energy bill used to average \$227 a month and we have reduced it to \$154,” said Heddlesten. “Pretty much everything in my house has an energy star on it – from the windows to the appliances to the lights.”

To reduce his bill even more, he recently installed an environmentally friendly roof.

In addition to his house, Heddlesten regularly walks to work and uses public transportation as much as possible to reduce his carbon footprint.

Some of his other hobbies include camping, biking, wood-working, model railroading and homebrewing.

“My dad and I built a coffee table with a model train inside it from cherry wood my grandfather harvested from the land I grew up on in Minnesota,” said Heddlesten. You can see several of the items he and his father built at his desk in the annex.

Community involvement is another passion. His most recent endeavor was running for 5th Ward alderman in Rock Island. He is also active with the Broadway Historic District and Neighbor-

hood Partners, volunteering his time for the betterment of the community.

When asked about advice, he shared what he lives by, “Take every opportunity that anyone gives you - you never know where it may lead you; nobody ever wished they had spent more time sitting around twiddling their thumbs. You also have to find a good balance between work and play; again, nobody ever wished they spent more time at work rather than going fishing, hiking or spending time with family.” 

National Engineers Week Celebration – Feb 17-23

Story and photo by Hilary Markin, Editor

In celebration of National Engineers Week, Engineering and Construction Division held an Open House on Feb. 19. Activities included exhibits in the various offices and short presentations of recent engineering work accomplished by Engineering and Construction personnel.

A ceremony was held to honor and present the latest roster of registered engineers and professionals.

“Our District has the highest percentage of professional engineers in the region. This is a testament to our professionalism and integrity, and is highly regarded across the Corps,” said Denny Lundberg, chief of Engineering and Construction Division.

Anthony Heddlesten, one of the District’s newest professional engineers, said a few words about the importance of becoming a professional engineer to help encourage others.

“It was a lot of work studying and then terrifying waiting for the results,” said Heddlesten. “But it was all worth it. To me, having my PE (professional engineer) means a lot. It furthers my career development and it adds a feather in my cap to my position both here in the District and as an engineer.”

The celebration of National Engineers Week was started in 1951 by the National Society of Professional Engineers in conjunction with President George Washington’s Birthday. President Washington is considered the Nation’s first engineer, notably for



Anthony Heddlesten, one of the District’s newest professional engineers, shared some of the top reasons why you should become certified as a professional engineer during a National Engineers Week ceremony.

his survey work. During this week, engineering societies, associations, and councils representing the dozens of different types of engineering disciplines from across the nation call attention to the contributions engineers make to society. 

Rock Island District Engineering & Construction Division Professional Registration - 2013 additions

Professional Engineer (P.E.)

Anthony Heddlesten
Joshua Hendrix
Christopher Trefry

Engineer in Training (E.I.T.)

William Conway

Associate Value Specialist (VE)

Jack McDaniel

Certified Cost Consultant (C.C.C.)

Garrett Mattila

Certified Cost Engineer (C.C.E.)

Jack McDaniel

Diplomate, Water Resources Engineer (D.WRE)

Christopher Trefry

Land Surveyor in Training (LSIT)

Patrick Baumgartner

Professional Hydrologist (P.H.)

Christopher Trefry

Baerwaldt recognized as 2013 Junior Scientist of the Year

Kelly Baerwaldt was recognized on Feb. 20 as the 2013 Junior Scientist of the Year by the Quad City Engineering and Science Council at the 51st Annual National Engineers Week Banquet.

Baerwaldt was recognized for her work as a Fish Biologist and the eDNA Program Manager with the St. Paul District and USACE Monitoring Team Lead for the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Aquatic Nuisance Species Barrier Project. She also represents USACE for Asian carp issues on the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee. Baerwaldt has been instrumental in developing the use of the eDNA technique for identifying the potential presence of invasive fish species by collecting genetic material from water samples and applying it as a regional monitoring tool in the Mississippi River Basin.

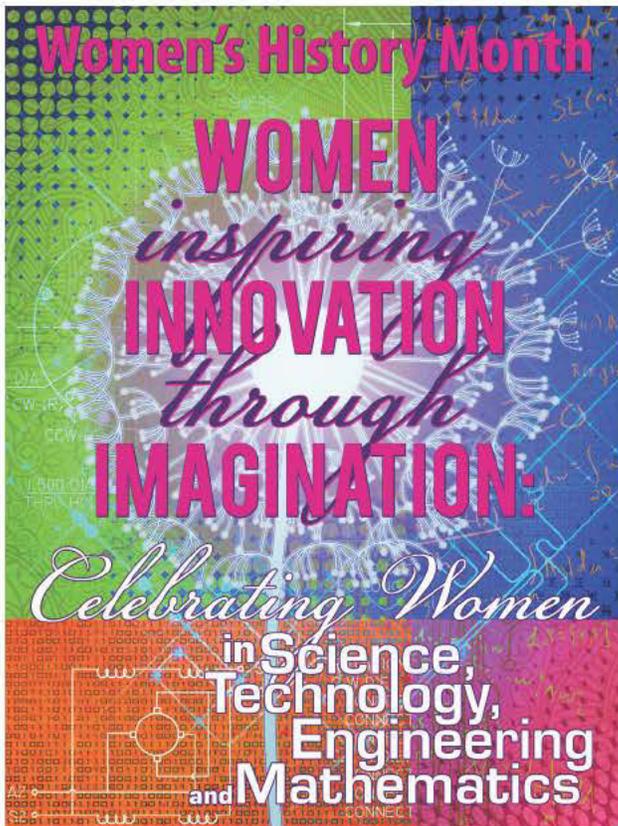
The Quad City Engineering and Science Council numbers 36 local engineering and technical societies with a total membership of 5,000 engineers and scientists. It promotes engineering and science to area youth through scholarship and engineering completion programs. 



Kelly Baerwaldt (left) receives the Quad City Engineering and Science Council's (QCESC) 2013 Junior Scientist of the Year Award from QCESC President-Elect Kimberly Gasaway at the National Engineers Week Banquet, Feb. 20. Photo by Jason Meredith

Empowering women in STEM

By Aimee Vermuelen, Federal Women's Program Manager



Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute

In 1987, Congress declared March as National Women's History Month. A special presidential proclamation is issued every year which honors the extraordinary achievements of American women.

"Women Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics" was the theme for the 2013 National Women's History Month. According to the National Women's History Project, although women now outnumber men in American colleges nationwide, the reversal of the gender gap is a very recent phenomenon. The fight to learn was a struggle waged by many women — across years and across cultures.

In the history of scientific research and discovery, women's contributions have often been overlooked, undervalued, omitted from textbooks, and skipped over for awards. Young girls today who are captivated by Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) are not only facing the stereotype that boys are naturally better than girls at math and science — but girls also lack historical role models to guide their aspirations and show that girls just like them have gone on to do great things in STEM. As stated on their Web site, the National Women's History Project announced the names of 18 honorees for National Women's History Month 2013.

The 18 women chosen are all extraordinary visionaries and role models in the STEM fields. The 2013 honorees represent a remarkable range of accomplishments and a wide diversity of specialties including medicine, robotics, computer programming, atmospheric chemistry, architecture and primatology. These women's lives and work span centuries of American history and they come from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. To learn more go to <http://www.nwhp.org/whm/honorees2012.php>. 

SAFETY CORNER

Severe Weather - Tornado Awareness

March traditionally marks the beginning of the severe weather season for the Rock Island District. It is important for you to know how to prepare and actions to take when severe weather and tornados are predicted. Please review the following.

Preparing for a Tornado

- Designate a shelter area at your home and work. Basements or storm cellars are the safest. Otherwise, use the most interior room or hallway away from windows.
- Practice a drill and get to your planned shelter area.
- Trailers and sheds offer little protection in a tornado, find a sturdy building nearby where you can take shelter.
- Make a plan with your family and supervisor on how or where to find each other after an event. The period after the event is chaotic and traditional communication is typically disrupted; having a plan or safe place to meet helps everyone.
- Stock your home shelter area with a flashlight, a battery-powered radio, extra batteries, water and a first-aid kit.

During Severe Weather or a Tornado Watch

- Stay tuned to a radio or TV for updates.
- Be prepared to take shelter at any time, some tornadoes develop so quickly that advance warning is impossible.
- Watch the sky for funnel-shaped clouds and pay attention to tornado danger signs - dark, greenish sky, large hail and a loud roar similar to a freight train.
- Stay out of large, flat buildings with wide-open areas such as supermarkets or shopping malls.

During Severe Weather or a Tornado Warning

- Head for a designated shelter or a central area on the lowest floor possible.
- Leave vehicles, trailers and sheds at once. Seek shelter in a sturdy building.
- If you are caught outside, lie flat in a ditch and cover your head. Do not get under bridges or overpasses.
- Never attempt to outrun a tornado.

After a Storm or Tornado

- Watch out for debris - especially broken glass and downed electrical lines.
- Be careful when entering a damaged structure. Make sure the walls and roof are secure and the foundation is sound. Do not enter if you are unsure.
- Always help your neighbor if safe to do so. 

Build a Safe Room

Extrême windstorms in many parts of the country pose a serious threat to buildings and their occupants. Your residence may be built “to code” but that does not mean it can withstand winds from extreme events such as tornadoes. A safe room or a wind shelter provides a space where you and your family can seek refuge with a high level of protection. You can build a safe room in one of several places in your home.



- Your basement
- Atop a concrete slab-on-grade foundation or garage floor
- An interior room on the first floor

Safe rooms built below ground level provide the greatest protection, but a first-floor interior safe room can also provide the necessary protection. Below-ground rooms must be designed to avoid flooding from heavy rains that often accompany severe storms.

To protect occupants, a safe room must be built to withstand high winds and flying debris, even if the rest of the residence is severely damaged or destroyed.

Consider the following when building a safe room:

- The safe room must be adequately anchored to resist overturning and uplift.
- The walls, ceiling and door of the shelter must withstand wind pressure and resist penetration by wind-borne objects and falling debris.
- The connections between all parts of the safe room must be strong enough to resist the wind.
- Sections of either interior or exterior residence walls that are used as walls of the safe room must be separated from the structure of the residence so that damage to the residence will not cause damage to the safe room. 

For more information on preparing yourself for a tornado visit www.ready.gov/tornadoes

Around the District

Retirements ...

Randy Kraciun, biologist, NEPA Compliance Branch, St. Paul District, retired Feb. 28, after dedicating 27 years to the federal government.

Scott Kool, chief, Survey Section, Technical Services Branch, Engineering and Construction Division, retired Feb. 28, after dedicating 31 years to the federal government.

John Carr, supervisory economist, St. Paul District, retired March 1, after dedicating 35 years to the federal government.

Steve Russell, civil engineer, Project Management Branch, Programs and Project Management Division, retired March 23, after dedicating 27 years to the federal government.

James Carlson, lock and dam repairer, Maintenance Section, Operations Division, retired March 31, after dedicating 28 years to the federal government.

Bob Wild, crane operator, Operations Technical Support Branch, Operations Division, retired April 1, after dedicating 34 years to the federal government.

Patrick Wharry, lockmaster, Lockport Lock, Illinois Waterway, Operations Division, retired April 2, after dedicating 36 years to the federal government.

Earl Wood, realty specialist, Federal Lands Support Branch, Real Estate Division, retired April 2, after dedicating 34 years to the federal government.

Corps Day is June 13

Mark your calendar for this year's Corps Day at Memorial Park, Rock Island Arsenal, June 13. The Corps Day committee is busy planning this year's activities - you can also help. Contact RIDWA at RIDWA@usace.army.mil for more information.

Activities will include an awards ceremony, luncheon, games, a hobby vehicle show and activities for children. There will also be a program for all retirees to hear what has been happening in the District.

Stay tuned for more information. 

Sympathy ...



Margaret Lively, 92, of Davenport, Iowa, passed away Feb. 23 at Trinity in Bettendorf.

Lively retired from the Corps of Engineers in 1974 after 35 years of service.



Louis "Jim" Frederick, 88, of Elwood and formerly of Joliet, Ill., passed away March 26 at home.

Frederick retired from the Corps of Engineers after 32 years of service where he was known as "cricket."

He also served in the Army during World War II.



William "Bill" Podhirny, 56, of Davenport, Iowa, passed away March 4 at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

Podhirny was an accountant with more than 30 years of federal service, working with the Corps of Engineers and the Defense Finance and Accounting Services.

New District Intranet

The new Rock Island District Intranet is now available and serves as a portal to all internal Web pages and applications.

This internal communication tool enables employees to find the necessary information to accomplish District missions. The left hand menu items are all Rock Island District pages. The right side has standard menus and links that allow access to USACE-level information, platforms and applications.

"This command tool will provide better communication throughout the District - something that was articulated in feedback from the Command Climate Survey," said Lt. Col. Todd Reed, deputy commander.

Current and pertinent information will be posted to the site, keeping employees informed of what is happening. 



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.



*Kenneth Beck, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Randall Braley, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Peter Corken, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Chris DePooter, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



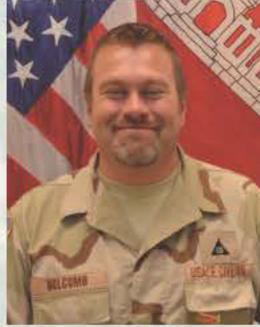
*Stephanie Dupey, TAN
Real Estate Division -
North*



*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*



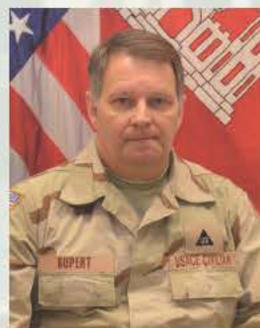
*Brian Lane, TAN
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Robert Meyers, TAS
Operations Division*



*Kurt Reppe, TAN
Real Estate Division -
North*



*Richard Rupert, TAS
Engineering &
Construction Division*



*Randy Tucker, TAS
Operations Division*



*Blayne Walker, TAN
Operations Division*

Planning for fiscal year 2014 training

By Sara Paxson, Professional Development Specialist

Spring has sprung and now is the time for employees to be planning their training needs for the next fiscal year. In an effort to help you locate possible training opportunities, a Training TEAM Collaboration site has been established to serve as a centralized hub for information related to training. This site is available on the new District Intranet site under the MVR Only tab.

As you research possible training courses keep in mind the current budget and that local and online training should be considered whenever possible.

The USACE Learning Center will be releasing the “purple book” in May, with a schedule of PROSPECT courses for the next fiscal year. It can be found at <http://pdsc.usace.army.mil>. As you assess your future training needs, please note the District plans to hold a Leadership Development Program Level I and Level II class that will start in October.

Below are steps to follow when planning training for the upcoming year:

Once an employee identifies a training course they would like to take, they should work with the office training coordinator to obtain supervisor approval to attend. Once the supervisor approves the course, the employee can then work with the office

training coordinator to get the course entered on the employee’s Individual Development Plan in the District’s Automated Training Program (ATMP), as well as create proper training documents for registration and attendance.

ATMP is the system the District utilizes to plan, track and budget for training. It will be open for business in early May and will close mid June. The system will then be locked until sometime in August when all PROSPECT seat allocations are received and entered into the system. At that time, employees will receive notifications whether they did or did not receive a seat in the requested PROSPECT course.

Office training coordinators will also be working closely with employees and supervisors to update Mission Essential Task Lists (METL) in ATMP. The purpose of METL is to identify how each office and employee directly aligns with the District’s mission. So in other words, METL connects the District mission to each major functional area, down to each branch, as well as each employee.

Please remember that planning for training is a team effort between the employee, the office training coordinator and the supervisor. 