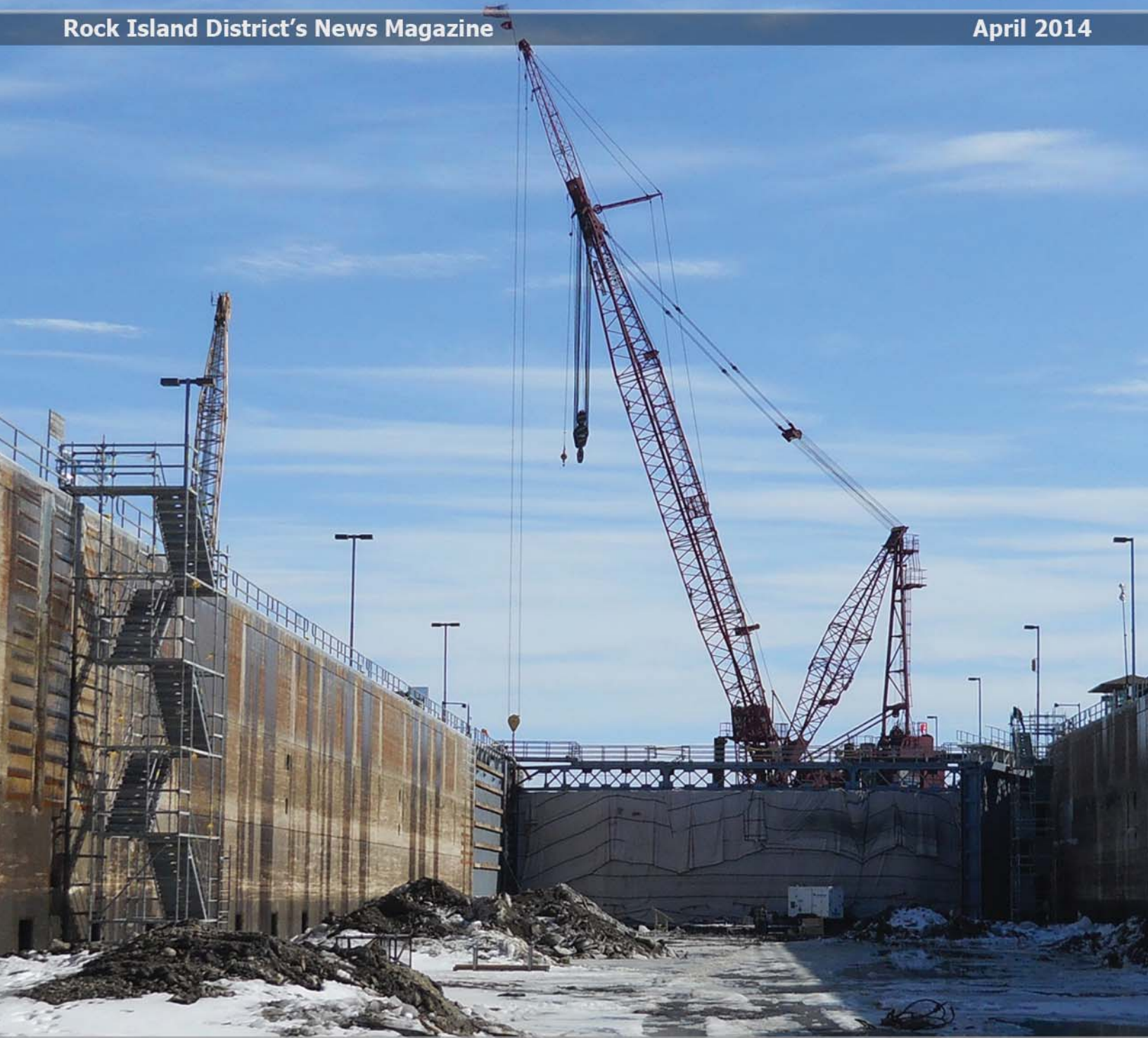




TOWER TIMES

Rock Island District's News Magazine

April 2014



Winter Rehabilitation



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

TOWER TIMES

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April 2014

On the Cover



The rehabilitation work at Lock and Dam 22 in Saverton, Mo., has been ongoing throughout the harsh winter.
Photo by Aaron Dunlop

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Tower Times

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A message from....

Colonel Mark Deschenes, District Commander



Funding levels point to exciting times for the District

Last year may very well be remembered by many as the year of sequestration and furloughs. It was rough for so many across all areas of the federal government including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. But 2014 is shaping up to be a fiscal year that, at the very least, is trending upward. For the first time in a couple of years, Congress passed an Omnibus Appropriation that included more than \$5 billion for the Corps. And, when the work plan was announced during the first part of March, the Rock Island District was slated to receive more than \$200 million, a fact that I believe points to exciting times ahead for the District.

Funding levels provided by Congress through appropriations bills are expected to be relatively static for the Corps for the foreseeable future. It may be an unlikely scenario that our District might experience a bit of a boom in workload as the country continues to evaluate to what degree an economic recovery may or may not be taking hold, but that appears to be what we are looking at. Our challenge will be to continue to provide services to stakeholders and customers while addressing critical infrastructure repairs.

Although the permanent workforce will continue to decrease as we move forward I want to encourage our employees to consider this more of a reshaping for an uncertain future than a downsizing based on a forecast of reduced future workload, or mission importance overall. Thanks largely to the Omnibus Budget deal which carries a reprieve from the Budget Control Act and Sequestration, as well as a growing recognition of the criticality of water resources investments, our mission is actually expanding in the near term.


In FY14 we received additional funding for projects at Lockport Lock and Dam, Marseilles Lock and Dam, Saylorville Reservoir, the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, and for the Upper Mississippi River Restoration program. This highlights a trend to address critical infrastructure needs for navigation and flood risk management and an organizational commitment to ecosystem engineering. The trend toward investing in infrastructure repairs may very

likely be short-lived though with respect to the District program as the region and headquarters addresses critical infrastructure needs throughout the nation in the years to come.

But the additional funding is an exciting opportunity for us in the coming year. We are anticipating the additional funding will cover most if not all of the permanent repairs needed at Marseilles Lock and Dam, repairs we weren't sure we would be making this year or next. And, the inclusion of funding to complete the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers project wasn't anticipated this year so we are happy to be moving forward with these efforts.

Although our critical work in Navigation, Flood Control, Ecosystem Restoration, Recreation, Natural Resources Management, Emergency Management and Regulatory is as necessary as ever, the nation's fiscal future remains uncertain. If the country was on a more secure fiscal footing, the District would be posturing in a much more aggressive way to respond to the opportunities on our doorstep. Our nation needs us to get after some very heavy lifting and if the money was there we would be accomplishing that lifting. But for now, we have to be cautious until fiscal times have assuredly improved.

This less than aggressive posture doesn't mean we rest on our laurels. The next six months are critical. We have a large execution responsibility and I want to ensure everyone is on board to meet the challenges. The funding received in FY14 is a show of confidence in the Rock Island District that we can fully manage and accomplish a very large workload. Success will be measured by our headquarters and the administration by using the metrics established in the Civil Works Program Execution guidance. Establishing and adhering to realistic project schedules is critical to ensuring we deliver on our promises. If we don't deliver in FY14 we run the risk of not being considered for similar funding levels in future years.

I am fully confident we are at no risk of seeing decreased funds in the future. This work force always proves its mettle and I am proud to be a part of the team. **CONTINUE BUILDING STRONG.** 

DISCOVER

ENGINEERING • LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE

ENGINEERING WEEK EVENTS AROUND THE DISTRICT

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

In honor of National Engineers Week, Engineering and Construction Branch held a ceremony Feb. 13 to recognize individuals from the District who went above and beyond to make a difference in the engineering world.

National Engineers Week, an annual event, took place Feb. 16-22, and celebrated the significant contributions and accomplishments of engineers world-wide. The event aims to increase public dialogue about the need for engineers and brings engineering to life for kids, educators, and parents throughout the nation.

This year Denny Lundberg, chief, Engineering and Construction Division, and Col. Mark Deschenes, District commander, recognized 16 new employees who completed their professional engineer exam, were new to EC or received a professional certification. At the end of



During National Engineers Week, Col. Mark Deschenes and Denny Lundberg, chief of EC recognized 16 employees (shown in listing below) for their accomplishments in engineering certification.

Photo by Lisa Kantor

the ceremony an updated professional registration board was revealed with the added names of these recognized employees. The registration board is displayed outside the Engineering and Construction office in the annex of the Clocktower building.

"I'm proud to say this is the most new professional engineers we have added to the board at one time," said Lundberg.

Lundberg explained that engineers who acquire the PE certification help to maintain the Rock Island District as the highest percentage of PE's per eligible population in the Mississippi Valley Division.

In addition to those who received their professional certifications, Lundberg said "There were also 23 employees recognized for making a difference in the community by donating their own time to local schools and organizations in support of the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) initiative."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a whole recognizes the critical role that STEM education plays in enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leader of the global marketplace. STEM also adds capability to the Department of Defense and the Army in securing our nation.

In the past three months, members of the Rock Island District have been involved in a number of outreach activities in support of STEM and followed the theme of this year's National Engineers Week which was "Let's Make a Difference."

(continued on Page 5)

Rock Island District Engineering & Construction Division Professional Registration	
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER (P.E.) Andrew Goodall Elizabeth Bruns Félix Castro William Conway Kalvin Kalafut Roger Perk Trent Robertson Christopher Thennes Jeffrey Tripp	CERTIFIED FLOODPLAIN MANAGER Gregory Karlovits Alan Tamm
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER (S.E.) Brant Jones	PROJECT MANANGEMENT PROFESSIONAL (P.M.P.) Eric Aubrey
ENGINEER IN TRAINING (E.I.T.) Rebecca Briesmoore	CERTIFIED ARCHIVIST John Fitzgerald
	LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (LEED) ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL Harlan Justice

Boy Scout Engineering Merit Badge Clinic

One outreach event was held Feb. 22 when staff from the Rock Island District assisted the Rock Island Post of the Society of American Military Engineers and the City of Davenport Public Works department for the 5th annual Boy Scout Engineering Merit Badge Clinic.

The event, held at the Davenport Public Works Center, had 45 scouts in attendance.

According to Anthony Heddlesten, from the District Environmental Engineering Section, “The goal of the day was to educate youth on the need for engineering professionals and showcase important contributions that engineering has provided.”

Boy Scouts from as far away as Iowa City and Chicago had the opportunity to explore various engineering professions during the daylong event.

“This year we were able to showcase the Corps’ new hands-on stream table model which arrived the day before the event,” said Heddlesten. “The kids really enjoyed getting to see how environmental engineering really works.”

Attendees at this year’s clinic also built a hovercraft using simple materials like tape, foam plates, balloons and straws. They learned about what it might take to mass produce an actual hovercraft vehicle.

Other activities included designing and constructing



Anthony Heddlesten demonstrates the use of a stream table to teach scouts about environmental engineering.

Photo by Robin Dunn, Davenport Public Works

streets and bridges, surveying, soil testing, project scheduling, flood risk management, electrical circuits and launching M&Ms from a catapult and trebuchet.

At the end of the event the scouts were asked to survey the activities of the day. According to Heddlesten, the results showed that more than 97 percent of the scouts who attended would like to learn more about the engineering field.

“More kids liked the hands-on engineering activities than the pizza they provided for lunch.” said Heddlesten.




Eric Johnson, along with other members of the QCESC, test the bridges for support efficiency to determine the winner of the battle of the bridges. Photo by Pat Barnes, QCESC

Battle of the Bridges

Another event held Jan. 31 – Feb. 1 was the Quad City Engineering and Science Council’s Annual Battle of the Bridges which took place at the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa. District engineers Rick Nickel and Eric Johnson assisted with this year’s activities by helping teams with construction designs.

“The STEM initiative is important especially for students in the 6th through 12th grade,” said Nickel. “It is important to reach out to those who are interested in science and engineering before they head off to college.”

According to the QCESC’s rules, teams must build a model bridge onsite with provided tools and materials in a two hour, 30 minute timeframe and have the greatest support efficiency to win.

After all the bridges were built, members of the QCESC, including Nickel and Johnson, assisted in testing the structures to see how much weight they could hold. More than 65 teams participated in this year’s event. 

THE MYSTERY OF THE GRAPEFRUIT TREE

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

Nearly four decades ago, Steve Johnson, a planner with the District's Regional Planning and Environmental Division, planted a few seeds never imagining he would discover the mystery of a grapefruit tree in his place of employment 40 years later.

In 1973, Johnson was just starting out. Newly married, working as a junior high science teacher and living in a small apartment in Manly, Iowa.

"A book gave me the idea," Johnson said, although he couldn't recall the book's title. "It was written by a city apartment dweller on too tight a budget to buy houseplants. He wondered what would happen if he planted seeds or part of fruit or vegetable products available from local grocers."

This idea sparked Johnson to plant several seeds of which many did grow. One plant in particular did very well. Johnson cared for the plant for many years remaining curious which seed had produced this thriving plant. It was a larger variety of tree that for many years lived happily in his home--even surviving moves to Virginia and back, four different houses in the Quad Cities area, and two cats.

In 2001 Johnson began working at the Rock Island District in the Environmental Branch. As the tree was outgrowing its accommodations, in 2003 he brought it to its current location at a window on the 2nd floor of the Clock Tower building.

Johnson said he found it funny that after caring for the plant for many years he could no longer remember what seed had produced this thriving plant.


"I was pretty sure it was in the citrus family," Johnson said. But I could not confirm the true identity of the tree until it bore fruit last year." When Johnson moved into the Rock Island New Orleans Support office as a Project Manager about 2005, he passed the upkeep and care of the tree to Joe Jordan, a biologist from the District's Planning Section who willingly adopted it.

In January 2013, a few flowers appeared on the lower branches of the tree. Within a few months, one small fruit started to form and continued to grow.

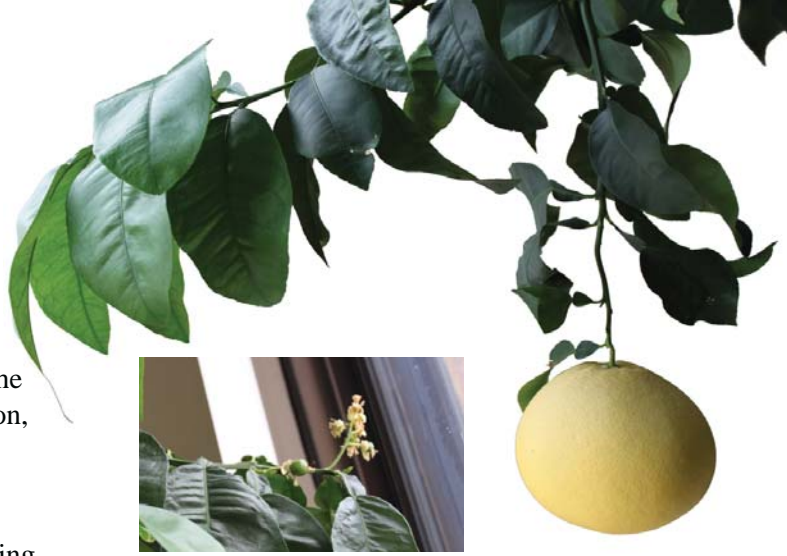
When asked about details of the tree's maintenance, Jordan says, "I water it a lot and give it some fertilizer once a month or so, but that's about it."

With branches now reaching the high ceiling, the fruit enabled Jordan to finally confirm the species of the tree. It was a *Citrus paradisi* also known as the grapefruit.

"I have claimed the Clock Tower is Illinois' number one grapefruit producer in the state." Jordan said.

No one is certain as to why the tree finally produced fruit but the original grapefruit is still hanging on the tree. It has now been there for 14 months. New fruits are also starting to form and should be ready for harvest sometime in 2015. 

Steve Johnson admires the fruit on the tree that stands more than 10 feet tall on 2nd floor of the Clock Tower. Photo by Samantha Heilig



The first grapefruit produced by the citrus tree in 40 years along with the beginnings of the next crop. Photos by Samantha Heilig



NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Editor's note: This article provided by the District Equal Employment Office Special Emphasis Program.)

Margaret Petersen, a pioneering woman engineer, is remembered for her professionalism and desire to mentor and guide.

Ms. Petersen was a successful civil engineer from an era when few women pursued that career. She died Jan. 18, 2013, at age 92, leaving behind an example for women in applied sciences and a legacy of 35 years of service with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Born in Rock Island, Ill., in 1920, Petersen joined the Corps in June 1942 when she was employed as a draftsman by the Rock Island District and was selected as one of 10 employees to go to Panama to complete contract drawings for the Panama Canal Third Locks project.

During her time in Panama, Petersen earned an engineering degree and enrolled in the College of Engineering at the University of Iowa – a radical notion for women at that time.

Petersen worked her way through school as a technician in the Corps' hydraulic laboratory at the university and earned her baccalaureate degree in August 1947. Her first engineering assignment was as a hydraulic engineer at the Corps' Waterways Experiment Station in Vicksburg, Miss., where the Mississippi Basin Model was nearing completion.

Petersen returned to the University of Iowa in 1952 for graduate study in hydraulics and received a master's degree in mechanics and hydraulics in 1953. She rejoined the Corps in Omaha, Neb., at the Missouri River Division office, where she worked on a variety of Missouri River navigation and bank stabilization projects.

Petersen's career spanned several decades and her responsibilities grew.


After transferring to Sacramento District in 1964 she became a powerful component of the Sacramento District Water Resources Planning Branch until she retired from

the Corps in 1977. She is remembered not only for her technical prowess but her desire to mentor others as well.

In fall 1980, Petersen accepted an appointment as a visiting associate professor in the Department of Civil Engineering and Engineering Mechanics at the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Professionally, she is renowned for her energetic contributions to hydraulics and water resources, including significant contributions to the development of the McClellan-Kerr Navigation System in Arkansas, the San Francisco Bay-to-Stockton deep-draft shipping channel and early work on California's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The Margaret Petersen Woman of the Year Award was established in 2010 and is presented annually to a female engineer who has demonstrated exemplary service to the water resources and environmental community.

Although Petersen worked for the Rock Island District more than 70 years ago, there is still a hint of family connection as Steve Gustafson who works for the Engineering and Construction Division is related to her via his grandfather's cousin who was Petersen's father. 



Margaret Petersen, a pioneering woman engineer, worked for the Rock Island District in 1942.

Courtesy Photo

National Women's History Month is an opportunity to honor and celebrate historic achievements of women. 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.

For 2014 the theme for Women's History Month is "Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment." This year's theme honors the extraordinary and often unrecognized determination and tenacity of women. They have demonstrated their character, courage and commitment as mothers, educators, institution builders, business, labor, military, political and community leaders, relief workers, and CEOs.

LOCK AND DAM 22 DEWATERED FOR WINTER REHABILITATION

The background photo shown here was taken using an aerial drone controlled from the ground. Photo by Aaron Dunlop

By Allen Marshall, Public Affairs Specialist

More than 10 million gallons of water removed. More than two million pounds of construction materials placed. More than 20 thousand hours of manpower expended. And, all of it done in treacherous conditions due to record low temperatures. These statistics represent a small snapshot of the work recently completed at Lock and Dam 22 as the lock chamber was dewatered and maintenance to the infrastructure was performed.

Lock and Dam 22, located on the Mississippi River near Saverton, Mo., falls under the purview of the Rock Island District's Mississippi River Project. Crews from the Project's Maintenance Section maintain 12 lock sites on the river, working throughout the year to keep the critical vein of commerce open to navigation. According to Aaron

Dunlop, Chief of the Maintenance Section, work at Lock and Dam 22 began in December and was completed in early March. Dunlop said the lock had not been dewatered in nearly two decades.

"Historically in the Rock Island District, locks are typically dewatered as part of a major rehabilitation which is performed by a contractor," Dunlop said. "That work was last done at Lock and Dam 22 more than 20 years ago so it was time to pursue some critical maintenance work that needed to be done."

Dunlop said the critical maintenance work included the installation of four new miter gates, bulkhead sill beams and struts, a new bubbler system, bulkhead stands, and valve cables; as well as an inspection of the chamber and the associated systems. All of this equipment, including the systems within the chamber, are typically under water thus the need to dewater the chamber.

The process of dewatering the lock chamber involved the use of four, 12-inch pumps, Dunlop said. Those pumps, working simultaneously, could remove more than 18,000 gallons per minute which equated to nearly 10 million gallons removed throughout the duration of the project. When the chamber was dewatered, navigation operations through the lock had to be stopped. The scheduling of the project was done to minimize impact to the river industry during the cold-weather season.

"In December there was a short closure to install the downstream bulkhead sill beam which included nearly two entire days of diving operations and heavy lift crane work," Dunlop said. "This work enabled the downstream



Four, 12-inch pumps were used to to dewater the chamber at Lock and Dam 22. Photo by Aaron Dunlop



During the two month dewatering project, the work crew had 47 days where temperatures never climbed above freezing. Courtesy Photo



bulkheads to be properly sealed at the bottom of the chamber once the dewatering closure began in January.”

After the work on the downstream bulkhead was complete, Dunlop said the rest of the process worked from upstream to downstream.

“Once the chamber was dewatered, work on the bulkheads began,” he said. “Tarps were placed on the bulkheads and heated to reduce the ice buildup. Then, concrete was poured to permanently affix and seal the bulkhead sill beam. Bubbler pipes were installed in the gate recesses, and a bubbler screen and crossover piping were installed and encased in concrete.”

David Schipper, lockmaster at Lock and Dam 22, said the new bubbler system was a very important maintenance need for his operations. Schipper said the bubbler system helps remove ice from the recesses so the gates of the lock can open and close fully. The bubbler system also helps during the non-winter months by helping to remove objects like driftwood which can be a hindrance to the gate operation.

“The old bubbler system had become more or less useless,” Schipper said. “Without a bubbler system, locking can become nearly impossible. It would be a very slow process. We were really happy to get the new system.”

After the bubbler system and other repairs were in place, the crews made adjustments to anchor bars and seals to ensure the lock’s gates were properly aligned and operational without interference. Dunlop said the project concluded with clean up and inspections.

“Debris was removed from the lock chamber, Tainter

valve wires were replaced, and a full Operational Condition Assessment inspection was performed by a joint team of Operations and Engineering Staff,” he said. “Finally, once all the necessary work was completed, the lock chamber and Tainter valve bulkheads were all removed from downstream to upstream and the lock was placed back into service. All of this was done in two short months.”

The quick completion of the work meant the lock was back in service before the traditional navigation season began. But, more importantly, Dunlop said, all of the work was completed safely without a lost-time accident.

The timely, safe completion of the project was a success but Dunlop said there were plenty of challenges along the way. Most significant of those challenges came in the form of Mother Nature. The crews endured working in temperatures that dipped below zero for more than 12 days. For 47 days, the temperatures never climbed above freezing.

“Weather is always a part of our work environment,” Dunlop said. “But these extremely low temperatures were hard on both our equipment and employees. I would estimate that at least two weeks of the project’s schedule were dedicated to resolving cold weather issues like ice buildup and general site safety cold weather issues.”

While endeavoring through the challenges of a frigid environment, the crews completed the \$10 million project with a combination of contractual and maintenance efforts. Although it had been nearly 20 years since a project of this magnitude was taken on at Lock and Dam 22, modern technology was providing some assistance that was not

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Spotlight on the District

EMPLOYEES GAIN CERTIFICATION TO PROVIDE FIRST AID TRAINING

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

Training of any kind often requires contracted instructors and financial resources but due to the efforts of a few District employees one kind of training can now be provided with in-house resources.

Several members of the Rock Island District are now certified instructors for First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation training. Lou Ann McCracken, Cindy Klebe, and Daniel Schmitt with the Mississippi River Project, and Jim Homann, Programs and Project Management Division, have all received certification through the American Heart Association to teach Basic Life Support, First Aid and CPR with an automatic external defibrillator.

Homann was the first to receive his formal training in 2007 while working for a local volunteer fire department. "I originally became an instructor to train my fellow firefighters at the Port Byron Fire Department," he said.

Since that time he has instructed CPR and First Aid classes for firefighters, emergency medical technicians, Army Corps of Engineers staff and the public.

Homann believes there are several advantages to having someone from within the District teach the courses. "Someone from outside can teach the mechanics but may not be as familiar with the specific problems you encounter in our field of work," said Homann.

Natural Resource Specialists, McCracken and Klebe, got involved teaching the classes in 2012. Working for the Mississippi River Project, they saw a need. Both said that in the recreation field it is important that every seasonal employee as well as permanent rangers stay current on their First Aid and CPR training as they are out in the field everyday and could end up needing these skills on a regular basis.

To become a trainer, each of them had to complete 40 hours of online and classroom instruction as well as 16 hours of teaching under a certified instructor. Once this process



James Frederickson, Operations Division, Mississippi River Maintenance Section gets trained in CPR which is an important part of keeping District staff prepared for an emergency.

Photo by Hilary Markin

was complete, they were free to teach classes on their own. To maintain their certification they teach at least two AHA courses per year.

Although the instructors only need to teach a couple of classes each year they want to make sure that other offices are aware that they are available and interested in teaching more courses for the District.

"Teaching more classes is beneficial as it improves our skills, both teaching and practical, keeps the information current and encourages further instructor development," said Klebe. "We also have a great facility at the Mississippi River Project Office that can be used for teaching and makes it easy for us to keep all the required gear in one location."

When asked about why they decided to get trained,






Staff trained in First Aid could end up using their knowledge both on and off the job.

Photo by Hilary Markin

McCracken said, “The main reasons we looked into certification was convenience of scheduling, cost savings for the Project and responsible use of resources for the District.”

In addition to the staff who are trained by the American Heart Association, there are also a number of lock and dam staff from the Mississippi River Project certified by the American Red Cross including Larry Reeve, Dallas Roberts, Charles Epley, and Brian McMillen.

The cost effectiveness of having in-house trainers within the District is significant. For example, it costs approximately \$70 per student when using an outside instructor from the American Red Cross. Using District certified trainers the only cost to the office is the trainer’s salary for the day and a nominal fee for each of the cards issued to the students after the training.

Any District office in need of First Aid or CPR training can request these certified trainers to provide a class. Classes can easily be set up in facilities like the Mississippi River Project office classroom in Pleasant Valley, Iowa. Arrangements can be made with each of the trainers by contacting them directly to work out the details of the required course. 

Lock and Dam 22 Dewatering

continued from Page 9


available the last time this lock was dewatered.

Dunlop said the team implemented the use of aerial drones to provide photography which documented the work being done.

“This is a new capability that has already proven invaluable,” Dunlop said. “The ability to document the work being completed showcases the capabilities of the Maintenance Section for purposes of regional coordination and information sharing. The small drone was much more cost effective than traditional aerial photography which would have required the rental of a commercial plane.”

As unmanned aircraft snapped pictures and sub-zero temperatures challenged the crew, a critical piece of the District’s infrastructure got the imperative maintenance it needed to ensure its reliability. It is a project Dunlop described as “teamwork at its finest.”

“This was a unique opportunity for our maintenance crews to integrate with staff from the Lock and Dam Section, Engineering, Project Management, Safety, and the District’s dive team who all worked together to ensure project success,” he said. “We even enlisted support from the St. Paul District’s lock dewatering experts to ensure that everything would run smoothly as they have been doing dewaterings each winter for many years.”

Looking to the future for the rest of the District’s infrastructure, Dunlop said there are plans to increase these kinds of regional work efforts with each successive project. The goal in doing this is to ensure the District’s valuable resources are being used as effectively and efficiently as possible. 

Training Tidbits

If your office is in need of First Aid/CPR training or if you are a certified trainer for First Aid/CPR and would like to be added to the list for District in-house training efforts, please contact the District Training Coordinator at 309-794-5635

Did you know... the Department of Army has leadership development training called the Civilian Education System (CES). You can learn more about CES at: <http://www.civiliantraining.army.mil/Leader/Pages/default.aspx>.

Did you know... every employee has an office training coordinator? If you are unsure of who your office training coordinator is, visit the District training SharePoint site at: <https://team.usace.army.mil/sites/MVR/trng/default.aspx> and look on the right-hand side of the screen for 'Find Your Office Training Coordinator.'

VIRTUAL TOURS HELP VISITORS DISCOVER CORPS RECREATION

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

According to recent data compiled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, USACE once again ranked as the top federal provider of outdoor recreation in the nation. Each year 370 million visitors recreate on the 12 million acres of land and water managed by the Corps.

Within the Rock Island District there are 184 recreational facilities with an annual visitation of more than 17 million people. A large percentage of these visitors turn to the internet for information regarding recreational facilities and reservation services. At two of the Rock Island District's recreational projects, Saylorville Lake near Des Moines and Coralville Lake near Iowa City, Iowa, visitors can now use the internet to gather insight about a recreation area before they ever arrive.

Creating virtual tours for the projects began when Greg Hosler of Photography Options, contacted the managers of each project to offer his services. His company had already created virtual tours for a number of USACE projects around the country and was looking to expand to new Districts.

Natural Resource Specialist, Angela Stone had the opportunity to work directly with Hosler for the creation of the tour for Saylorville Lake. "He was very helpful and easy to work with," said Stone.

The process involved using maps already created for the lake project's recreation guide to identify specific areas for tour stops. After looking over the maps, 18 sites were chosen to begin laying out the tour. Multiple images could then be used to provide greater detail for each of these selected sites. "It was pretty painless," Stone said. "He (Hosler) did most of the work and we just had to verify that the details were correct."

Once the sites were determined, Hosler visited the lake to take 360 degree-images of all the recreation areas including campgrounds, boat ramps and day-use facilities.

"He took a millin photos," Stone said figuratively. "There were times I needed to sit under the camera just to be sure I didn't end up in the shot."


Full 360 degree-images are taken with a special fish-eye lens that allows the camera to see everything around it. To stay clear of the photo the photographer must position items

and people around them in a way so as to not block the view.

To make his trip to the Midwest more efficient, Hosler also visited the Coralville Lake project. He had been working with the staff from the lake to produce a similar virtual tour for their facility. Rick Knoke, a natural resource specialist at Coralville worked closely with the photographer to lay out and design the tour.

"We are hoping that having the tour available online will make it easier for the public to make decisions about staying at our facilities," said Knoke.

Once the photos were taken of all the sites, Hosler placed them in the predesigned layouts for each of the lakes. Now when a user visits the virtual tours webpage, they can select a recreation site on the lake and get a full 360-degree image of the area. This can be helpful for people who have never visited the area and are looking for details about available space, shade coverage and general conditions of the sites.

To check out either of the virtual tours visit the District webpage at www.mvr.usace.amry.mil and click on Saylorville Lake or Coralville Lake from the recreation page. 

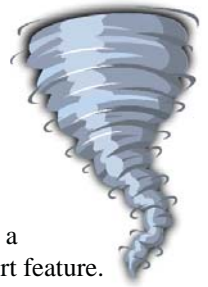
New virtual tours can be used to give visitors a 360-degree view of recreation areas on two District lake projects.

Image from Photography Options website.



SAFETY CORNER

SEVERE WEATHER



By Troy Larson, Safety Officer

The Midwest has a number of severe weather hazards that can affect our District. Seasonal threats include thunderstorms, tornadoes, floods, damaging winds, and hail. Severe weather has the potential to cause extensive property damage as well as injury or death. You can help to protect yourself and others both at home and at work by becoming familiar with the signs of severe weather and taking the appropriate recommended actions. It is also important to be aware of terms used to describe seasonal threat levels.

- **Severe Thunderstorm Watch:** Severe thunderstorms are possible. Watch the sky, listen to the radio or television for weather information. Be prepared to take shelter.
- **Severe Thunderstorm Warning:** Severe thunderstorms are occurring. Take shelter and turn on a battery operated radio or television to receive warnings and severe weather statements.
- **Tornado Watch:** conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes.
- **Tornado Warning:** a tornado has been reported by spotters, or National Weather Service (NWS) meteorologists have determined that one is about to form in the next several minutes. Go to a substantial shelter immediately.
- **Flood/Flash Flood Watch:** conditions are favorable for flooding in the next day or two. Flash floods occur very quickly, usually as a result of heavy rainfall in a short period of time.
- **Flood Warning:** flooding is expected to threaten life and property a few hours after the onset of heavy rain, ice jams, reservoir releases or snowmelt. Flood warnings may be in effect for days or even weeks depending on weather and soil conditions, land topography and river size.
- **Flash Flood Warning:** rapidly rising water which poses an immediate threat to life and property within a few hours due to small stream or urban flooding and dam or levee failures. Quickly move to higher ground or stay away from flooded areas - especially in vehicles.



Being prepared and informed is your best defense against severe weather threats. Ensure your worksite has an emergency plan and you understand what to do in case of an emergency. Create an emergency plan for your home and discuss it with your family. You can visit www.weather.com to help make a severe weather emergency plan for your family.

Before the Storm

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recommends you have a weather radio with battery backup with tone-alert feature. Be sure to know the surrounding counties near your home and work, the severe weather warning or watch will be issued by county. New Specific Area Message Encoders (SAME) can be programmed to alert you of severe weather in your particular county or surrounding counties.


- Check the weather forecast before leaving on extended outdoor periods. Postpone your plans if severe weather is imminent.
- Keep a list of emergency phone numbers and be sure all children in the home know when and how to dial 911 for assistance.
- Maintain a disaster supply kit. This should include things such as flash light, replacement batteries, drinking water, and a first-aid kit.

During the Storm

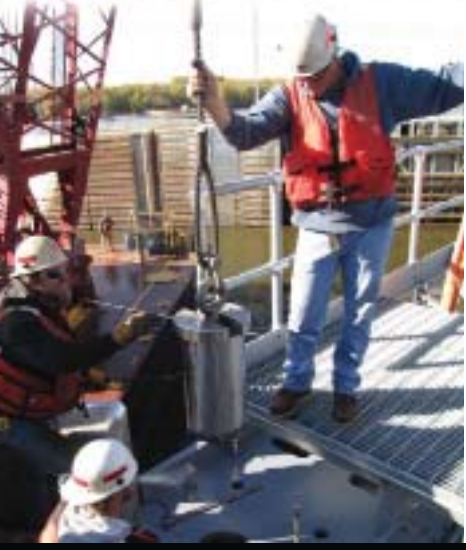
If you are inside, go at once to your predetermined shelter. All windows and doors should be closed. To reduce the risk of flying glass in the event of a broken window or door, keep blinds and shades drawn. Air conditioners should be turned off to avoid power surges from possible lightning strikes. Continue to monitor your battery radio or television for current weather updates. Avoid using a telephone or other electronic devices until the storm has passed.

If you are outdoors seek shelter immediately. If you are in a boat you should attempt to make it to shore as quickly as possible and seek shelter. Pull to the side of the road if you are driving. Find a location free from trees and power lines. Generally, in an open area, a vehicle is a safe shelter from lightning. However, if the severe weather is due to a tornado, leave the car immediately. If shelter is not available find a low spot of ground, such as a ditch or culvert, and squat down as low as you can. You want to make yourself a small target.

After the Storm

Continue monitoring the radio and television for emergency information and updates. Check for injured victims and administer first aid if necessary. Do not attempt to move severely injured victims unless absolutely necessary. If driving, be alert to hazards on the roadway such as trees and downed power lines. If conditions are safe, you may want to take photos or video of damages to your home or place of work due to the storm. 

Around the District



Retirements ...

Timothy Olson, supervisory accountant, Resource Management, retired Feb. 28 after dedicating more than 31 years of service to the federal government

Kenneth Beck, realty specialist, Real Estate Division, retired Feb. 28 after dedicating more than 35 years of service to the federal government.

Carlos Olvera, maintenance worker, Mississippi River Maintenance Section, Mississippi River Project, Operations Division, retired Mar. 31 after dedicating more than 20 years of service to the federal government.

Congrats ...



Congratulations to **Ben Ferrell**, and his wife Jenny, on the birth of a baby girl on Feb. 10. Josie Elise weighed eight pounds six ounces and was 19 and one-half inches long.



Congratulations to **Josh Hendrix** and his wife, on the birth of a baby boy on Jan. 13. Camden Elliot weighed 6 pounds and was 19 inches long.

Sympathy ...



Lawrence "Larry" Squire, 71, of Davenport, Iowa, passed away March 21 at Genesis Medical Center in Davenport, Iowa.

Squire worked for the Corps of Engineers at Locks and Dam 15 until he retired after 30 years of service.



Rodney Stover, 44, of Lyndon, Ill., passed away March 17 at his home.

Stover worked as the General Maintenance Supervisor for the Maintenance Section at the Mississippi River Project Office.



Doyle McCully, 82, of Bettendorf, Iowa, passed away Feb. 12 at the Manor Care in Davenport, Iowa.

McCully worked for the Corps of Engineers in Rock Island as the chief of the Engineering Division and retired in 1997 as the Deputy for Project Management and Assistant District Engineer.



LTC Kenneth A. Harshbarger, 54, of Eugene, Ore., passed away Oct. 27 in Beaverton, Ore.

Harshbarger was a former Deputy Commander for the Rock Island District.

Nominations for Employee of the Year

Nominations are requested for the Rock Island District Employee of the Year Award which has eight specific categories for recognition. The categories are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| (1) Engineer of the Year | (5) Clerical/ Assistant/ Technician |
| (2) Supervisor/ Manager | (6) Federal Wage System |
| (3) Professional Occupations | (7) Public Contact |
| (4) Technical/ Administrative | (8) Community Service |

All nominations are currently being accepted by the Awards Committee for review. The eligibility criteria and nominating requirements can be found on the homepage of the District Intranet. All nominations must be submitted to Ann Marie Roarty, Resource Management Office by April 14.

Support & Sacrifice for the Corps

Thanks to all who deployed to the Transatlantic District - Afghanistan (TAA)!

DISTRICT ELECTRICAL ENGINEER GAINS VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

By Bill Dowell, Public Affairs Specialist (TAA)

Electrical Engineer Trent Robertson knew deploying with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Transatlantic Afghanistan District would provide an unparalleled learning experience.

It didn't disappoint.

On his first site visit he couldn't believe his eyes at all the issues that needed correcting and his head was spinning. His supervisor, Margaret Jones, who he

describes as an "angel on his shoulder," helped him set and keep priorities. He said another electrical engineer, who has been in country more than a year, has also helped along the way.

Robertson also grew on a personal level. He left his wife and two boys in diapers and just as military members learn on deployments, there's also a home front which needs a lot of attention as well.

"Once in country, things move so quickly that I lost sight of things back home, and the neglect wreaked havoc on my wife and sons," he said.

And as often happens when you're 12,000 miles away, the stress didn't let up – the clothes washer broke, the dishwasher stopped working, the vehicle broke down and a burglar tried to break into the house. All of it nearly cost him his marriage.

"I was crushed and felt very alone. There is no way I would have gotten through those challenges without the help of my guardian and angel, Margaret




Trent Robertson with his wife and children who faced many challenges during the deployment.

Photo courtesy of Trent Robertson

Jones," he said.

Her personal and spiritual advice helped Robertson and his wife, Lisa, overcome their hurdles and their relationship has never been stronger.

He still has several months left on his deployment, but was the learning experience worth it?

"It will be inspirational to look back on this experience, realizing the sacrifices my family and I have made were truly worth the tears and frustrations," he concluded. 

A view of the conditions that the people of Afghanistan live in. *Photo courtesy of Trent Robertson*



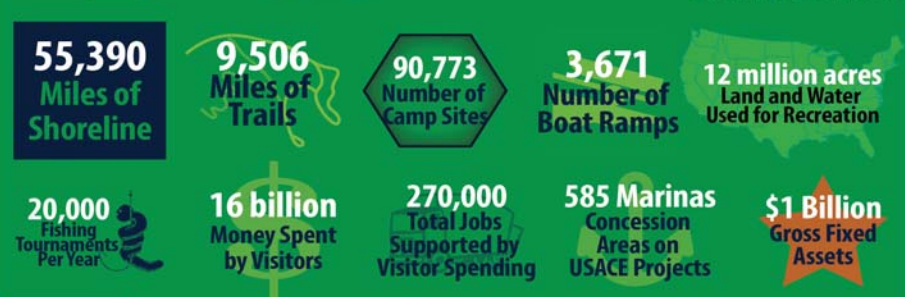
Electrical Engineer, Trent Robertson during his deployment with the TAA.

Photo courtesy of Trent Robertson



Program Statistics Recreation

The recreation program provides quality outdoor public recreation experiences to serve the needs of present and future generations and contribute to the quality of American life, while managing and conserving natural resources consistent with ecosystem management principles.



Volunteers at USACE projects: 51,195 worked more than 1.6 million hours providing \$35 million value of service

Percentage of U.S. population that visits a USACE project at least once a year: 10%

RECREATION AT ITS BEST

When it's time for outdoor recreation, many Americans head for the water. The Corps' many lakes, rivers, and beaches offer everyone fun, fitness, rest and relaxation. Ultimately, America's first choice for water-based recreation is the Corps of Engineers. According to a recent study one out of every ten Americans will visit a Corps lake this year.

These new statistics show just how much of an impact the US Army Corps of Engineers has on our nation's recreation system.

Within the Rock Island District there are six separate recreational projects to chose from for outdoor activites and fun. However, on a national level there are thousands of Corps-managed facilites, all ran by the recreation program.

To learn more about the Corps' recreation program visit www.corpslakes.us.