US Army Corps of Engineers

# TOWER TIMES

Rock Island District's News Magazine

July / August 2016

# District Celebrates 150 Years of Service to the Nation

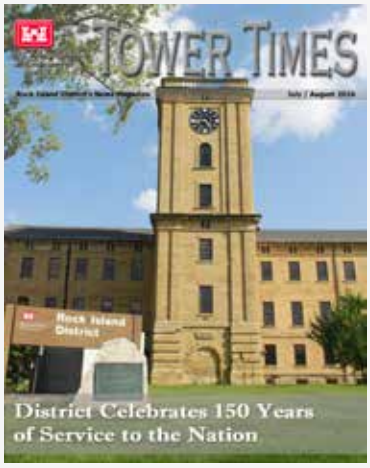
US Army Corps of Engineers ®
Rock Island District

# TOWER TIMES

## Contents

**July / August 2016**

On the Cover




The Clock Tower Building located on Arsenal Island in Rock Island, Illinois, has been home to the Rock Island District since 1932.
*Photo by Samantha Heilig*


3 **Rock Island District: Serving the Nation for 150 Years -** Col. Craig Baumgartner, District Commander

4 **Employees Celebrate Anniversary Aboard Largest Towboat on the Mississippi**

5 **Hundreds Tour Motor Vessel Mississippi During Public Open House**

6 **150 Years of Service to the Nation**

8 **Corps Archeologists Help Search for Missing in Action Service Members**

10 **Spotlight on the District** - Don Bawmann

12 **Safety Corner** - Electricity Has the Power to Kill

13 **Around the District**

14 **Spotlight on the District** - Brandon Hornung

16 **Annual Retirees Luncheon**



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*A message from....*

## Colonel Craig Baumgartner, District Commander

# *Rock Island District: Serving the Nation for 150 Years*

Our District celebrates a momentous milestone this month as we commemorate 150 years of serving the Nation. The Rock Island District birth can be traced to an act of Congress in August of 1866 when our country was expanding westward and the Nation's leaders fortuitously saw a need to tame, and make navigable, the Mighty Mississippi River.

That act of Congress tasked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to begin efforts toward making the river more easily navigated. Although the Corps did not use the term "district" in its nomenclature of the 1860s, a Corps officer named Lt. Col. J.H. Wilson opened an office in 1866 in Keokuk, Iowa, to oversee the Corps' initial efforts on the Upper Mississippi River. That office in Keokuk represents the beginnings of what we now know as the Rock Island District and Lt. Col. Wilson would be our first commander.

Early efforts on the river included dredging and removing snags. Those efforts led to the construction of a 4 and half foot and then 6 foot navigation channels. I wonder if Lt. Col. Wilson could have foreseen the scope of what his first District office began. Could have he envisioned the modern-day nine foot channel and the vast infrastructure the Rock Island District would build?

In 1932, we moved our District headquarters into the Clock Tower to oversee construction of the nine-foot navigation channel and infrastructure like Locks and Dam 15 which is adjacent to the Clock Tower. Almost 85 years later, we are still operating out of the Clock Tower but our missions have expanded drastically over the past century.

Flood control was added to our portfolio of missions in the late 1930s. That added mission resulted in the construction of five reservoirs with the final reservoir completed at Saylorville Lake just outside Des Moines, Iowa, in 1977. Other completed structures would precede at Lake Red Rock, near Des Moines, and Coralville Lake near Iowa City, Iowa. We also completed dry reservoirs at Farmdale and Fondulac near Peoria, Illinois.

Those flood risk management projects have netted billions of dollars in savings as they protect property from flood waters. But, more importantly, those reservoirs protect large communities of people. Also, the reservoirs have the ancillary benefit of providing a recreation component. The Rock Island District is the largest provider of recreational opportunities in the state of Iowa and our recreation mission stretches across nearly 100 sites within our District boundaries.

As we moved our focuses into areas like flood risk management and recreational opportunities, our District's boundaries also continued to expand resulting in new areas of responsibility. One of the prime examples of this expansion happened in 1980 when a Corps-wide realignment resulted in the transfer of river responsibilities. The Rock Island District had been primarily Mississippi River-focused but the realignment resulted in the Sangamon, Chicago, Fox, Des Plaines and Kankakee Rivers falling under the Rock Island District. The realignment also resulted in the Illinois River moving under our District's area of responsibility which meant the addition of eight locks and dams for our District to operate and maintain. At that point, with the 12 lock and dam structures we were already operating on the Mississippi River, we then had 20 locks and dams under our purview. That is still the case today.

Navigation and flood risk management have certainly been noted areas of expertise throughout most of our District's history. But, our evolution has developed in much the same way the Nation has as a whole. It can be argued that environmental concerns were overlooked in the first half of the 20th century but soon our country saw a need to protect the land we hold so dear. The establishment of organizations like the Environmental Protection Agency in the 1970s pointed toward a commitment to protect and preserve the environments in which we live. The Corps of Engineers, which today considers ourselves the Nation's environmental engineers, was ready to take on the challenge of environmental protection and restoration. And, the Rock Island District would be, and still is, a key player in that mission.

When Congress passed the Water Resource Development Act of 1986, it recognized the Upper Mississippi River System as not only a nationally significant navigation system but also a nationally significant ecosystem. WRDA of 1986 authorized the

*(continued on page 4)*

# 150 Years (continued)

Environmental Management Program which directed the Corps of Engineers to care for the Upper Mississippi River System as an ecosystem. The Rock Island District has been proud to lead the effort which is referred to today as the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program – UMRR. For 30 years, UMRR has been working to rehabilitate habitats, completing 55 projects and restoring more than 102 thousand acres. The program has also conducted long term resource monitoring and research that has been integral in assessing the health of the river system.

We, along with our sister Districts in St. Paul and St. Louis, recently celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the UMRR program with our partners from a plethora of government and non-governmental organizations. UMRR is one of the most successful programs of its kind and the Rock Island District has been a huge player in that success.

For more than 150 years, the Rock Island District has been providing intrinsic value to the Nation. From our early beginnings as an entity working to make the Mississippi River navigable, to our modern-day 78,000 square miles of operations, the men and women of the Rock Island District have been dedicated to delivering vital engineering and water resource solutions in collaboration with our partners to secure our Nation, reduce disaster risk and enhance quality of life, providing value to the region and Nation.

Today's Rock Island District is more than 800 people spread out through the Clock Tower and our many field sites. Our people are project managers, lock operators, park rangers, engineers, divers, welders, contract specialists, biologists and many more. You name the profession, we likely have someone with that expertise. I'd imagine that Lt. Co. Wilson would be not only amazed but extremely proud to see what became of the District he first commanded 150 years ago.

I am certainly proud to be part of this team as we celebrate 150 years serving the Nation. During my time as your commander, I have been humbled and impressed by the professionalism, technical excellence, innovation and public service that is ever-present within this District. I have no doubt that those who follow us will carry on the outstanding tradition of excellence which has been the trademark of the Rock Island District for a century and a half. The 150th Anniversary is just the beginning as I know many more milestones will follow. Thank you for all you do every day. Continue BUILDING STRONG!

# Employees Celebrate Anniversary Aboard Largest Towboat on the Mississippi

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

In honor of the Rock Island District's 150th anniversary, employees and their guests were invited aboard the largest working towboat on the Mississippi River, the Motor Vessel (MV) Mississippi, for a short reception and tours of the vessel. The MV Mississippi, which is owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is usually stationed on the lower portion of the Mississippi River. The vessel typically visits the Rock Island District, every two years, as part of the Mississippi River Commission's Low Water Inspection Trip.

While aboard the boat, employees and guests took part in a commemorative ceremony, enjoyed cake and hors d'oeuvres and viewed a variety of exhibits and displays that showcased the many accomplishments of the District over the past 150 years. After the ceremony, attendees toured the four upper levels of the vessel, visited with crew members and learned about the vessel's work on the lower portion of the river.

**District Commander, Col. Craig Baumgartner, and Cadet Philip Jaedicke cut the cake during the Rock Island District's 150th anniversary celebration.** *Photo by Samantha Heilig*

# Hundreds Tour Motor Vessel Mississippi During Public Open House

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

On Aug. 2, the Rock Island District hosted a public open house aboard the Motor Vessel (MV) Mississippi during its low water inspection trip to the Upper Mississippi River. The MV Mississippi, which is owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, spends most of the year on the lower river as a working towboat but it also transports the Presidentially-appointed Mississippi River Commission to the upper river when it conducts annual inspections of Corps projects.

During the open house, nearly 800 people toured the boat while it was docked at River Heritage Park in downtown Davenport, Iowa. As part of the tour, guests made their way through all five levels of the boat, including the engine room and pilot house, and visited a large hearing room on the main deck of the boat to view exhibits and displays outlining the Rock Island District's 150 years of service to the Nation. Natural resource specialists from each of the District's recreation projects also assisted by providing information on recreation and navigation projects across the District.

**Natural Resource Specialist, Julie McDonald, explains how the Corps uses navigational dams on the Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway. Nearly 800 visitors toured the Motor Vessel Mississippi an learned about the Corps' missions during the District's public open house event.** *Photo by Samantha Heilig*

**Visitors wait in line along the Davenport, Iowa, river front for a chance to tour the Motor Vessel Mississippi during the Rock Island District's public open house at River Heritage Park.** *Photo by Samantha Heilig*

# 150 Years of Service to the Nation

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

The Rock Island District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a civil works District with roots tracing back to a Congressional Act of 1866. The Act appropriated funds for the first sustained attempt at improving navigation on the Upper Mississippi River. Although the term "District" did not become part of the Corps' lexicon until 1908, the arrival of Lt. Col. James H. Wilson at Keokuk, Iowa, on Aug. 3, 1866 marks an appropriate birth date for the Rock Island District.

Over the years, the boundaries and missions of the Rock Island District have changed and expanded. The office located in Rock Island, Illinois, in 1869 was originally a sub-office which operated under the direction of the headquarters office in Keokuk. At the time, the idea of a "District" had not yet been formed.

The start of construction on the 4½-foot navigation channel on the Mississippi River in the late 1880s gave way to the idea that the area between St. Paul, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri, would serve as a "District." In 1892, headquarters operations were officially moved from Keokuk to Rock Island and soon after the area between St. Paul and St. Louis became known as the Rock Island District.

The 4½-foot navigation channel eventually led to the authorization of the 6-foot channel in 1907 which then led to the authorization of the 9-foot channel, in 1930, and is still in use today.

The need for additional navigation improvements on the Mississippi River and the Illinois Waterway as well as civil works missions along tributary rivers, such as the Des Moines and Iowa rivers, expanded the District's boundaries to what they are today.

The birth of the Rock Island District occurred when Lt. Col. J.H. Wilson opened the first District office at Keokuk, Iowa.

Flood control was added to the Corps' mission and led to the construction of five reservoirs in the Rock Island District.

Corps-wide realignment transferred river-related responsibilities of the Illinois, Chicago, Fox, Des Plaines, Kankakee and Sangamon rivers to the District.

**1866**

**1932**

The District moved to the Clock Tower Building, to oversee the 9-foot channel project and construction of locks and dams on the Mississippi River.

**1936**

**1942**

During World War II, the District shifted its mission from civil works to military construction, completing $80 million in projects.

**1980**

**1986**

The Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program was authorized to build a healthier, more sustainable waterway.

Today, the Rock Island District covers more than 78,000 square miles in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Missouri. It has responsibility for 314 miles of the Mississippi River and 268 miles of the Illinois Waterway and their tributaries. The District employs more than 800 people. Some work at the headquarters office in the historic Clock Tower Building on Arsenal Island while others work at one of the District's 27 field sites.

In addition to its original mission of navigation, the District now also focuses on flood risk management, environmental protection and restoration, emergency management, recreation, regulatory functions and other areas of civil works.

For 150 years, the District has proudly provided water resource development programs to the Midwest and the Nation. It stands ready to provide vital engineering and water resource solutions in collaboration with our partners to secure our nation, reduce disaster risk and enhance quality of life, providing value to the region and Nation.

The Flood of 1993 broke records throughout the District and became one of the most devastating floods in U.S. history.

The District was first recognized as a center of expertise for flood fight materiel distribution and later became a national supplier.

The District authorized use of the Lake Red Rock Dam for construction of a hydroelectric power plant with a completion date in 2018.

**1993**

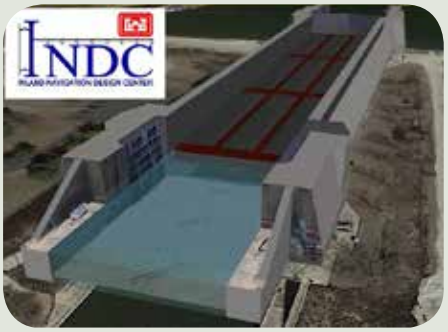
**2004** — The District completed the Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Feasibility Study to address navigation and ecosystem restoration needs.

**2006**

**2013** — The Inland Navigation Design Center - Mandatory Center of Expertise was created at the Rock Island District.

**2014**

**2016** — Lockport Lock and Dam Upper Pool Project becomes one of the largest civil works projects ever completed by the District.



# Corps Archeologists Help Search for Missing in Action Service Members

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

In October 2015, the director of the Corps of Engineers' Mandatory Center of Expertise for the Curation and Management of Archaeological Collections in St. Louis, Missouri, sent out a request asking all Corps districts to find skilled archeologists with professional experience who would be willing to support a mission to Southeast Asia in the next year. It was not long after the request was made that archeologists Cindy Peterson and Brant Vollman learned about the opportunity and wasted no time in volunteering for the job.

Since 1973, the remains of more than 1,000 American service members, killed during the Vietnam War, have been identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors. But more than 1,600 missing service members still remain. There is an ongoing effort to account for these service members and it is the job of the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Accounting Agency (DPAA) which oversees the search. DPAA is a combination of several former agencies which were involved in the process of recovering POW/MIA service members. These agencies which included the former Defense Prisoner of War Missing Personnel Office, the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command and the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory; now work together as one to provide the fullest possible accounting of our missing personnel to their families and the nation.

Peterson, who works for the Regional Planning Division North as part of the Rock Island Environmental Compliance Branch, was the first to deploy and left to support DPAA in February. She went first to Hawaii where she completed two weeks of specialized training and then traveled to Laos where she served as a member of DPAA's team. The goal of the mission was to investigate a crash site of a 1969 F-4D fighter jet where two pilots had been shot down and one was still unaccounted for.

Peterson's job during her deployment involved working with a group of 16 other people from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps to excavate the crash site and examine recovered material. The team, made up of all military service members except for Peterson, was a group of individuals who Peterson said understood the importance of the mission, were dedicated and took great pride in knowing that they may help bring closure to a family of a missing fellow service member.

"They were the most hard-working, uncomplaining group of people I have ever worked with in my 25 years as an archeologist," said Peterson.

Each day, while serving in Laos, Peterson and the DPAA team assembled outside their small hotel and boarded a helicopter that took them on an 18 minute flight to the crash site. Once on-site, the team joined forces with a group of anywhere from 30 to 85 local Laotian people who were employed by DPAA to assist with the labor intensive process of excavating the site.

During the excavation, the DPAA team worked side-by-side with the large group of locals to investigate the soil and survey the crash site. They used standard archeological

**A group of local Laotian people perform wet soil screening during a recovery mission, lead by the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Accounting Agency, at a jet crash site in Southeast Asia.**
*Photo by Melissa Mekponsatorn, U.S. Air Force*

**Members of the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Accounting Agency's recovery team gather near a helicopter in northern Laos after a long day of searching through a crash site from the Vietnam War. The helicopter takes the team to and from the excavation site each day.** *Photo by Cindy Peterson*

techniques such as wet and dry screening to search for materials which could be separated from the soil and analyzed to see if it might be a remnant of the crash.

"In addition to searching for osseous remains, also known as bone, we looked for life support materials such as helmet or parachute fragments," said Peterson.

Peterson and her team excavated a total of 980 square meters of soil during their five-week deployment to the site.

"We all hoped that the materials found would help to account for the missing service member who went down in the crash," said Peterson. "Unfortunately when I left the site at the end of my deployment, no determination had yet been made."

Peterson says that going on a mission with DPAA is something many archeologists might only dream of doing. If given the chance she said she would do it again in a heartbeat.

Vollman, who works as an archeologist for the Rock Island District's Operations Division, Regulatory Branch, also volunteered to support DPAA on a mission in central Laos. His deployment began in May and although weather was a challenge during his time there, he says it was a great experience

"The members of my team were some of the best people I have ever worked with," said Vollman. "I enjoyed the experience so much I couldn't wait to do it again."

An do it again is just what he did. In October, Vollman will return to southeast Asia for a second mission.

DPAA, along with support from agencies like the Corps of Engineers, will continue to work toward providing the fullest possible accounting for missing personnel to the families and the nation.

**Workers from the local community in Laos assist with the recovery efforts by sifting through soil excavated from a 1969 F-4D fighter jet crash site.**
*Photo provided by Melissa Mekponsatorn, U.S. Air Force*

# Spotlight on the District

## Donald Bawmann
## Senior Geotechnical Engineering Specialist

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

This year while the Rock Island District celebrates 150 years of service to the Nation, one of its employees is also reaching a milestone that exceeds a level most federal workers ever achieve. In April, Senior Geotechnical Engineering Specialist, Donald Bawmann, completed his 55th year of service to federal government, all of which has been with the Rock Island District. This unique event makes Bawmann, the longest serving federal employee the District has ever employed.

Bawmann's federal engineering career started at the District when he was hired as an engineering tech with the Design Branch on Feb. 1, 1957. He had applied for jobs all over the Quad City area and almost accepted a position with a company in Milan, Illinois, when he received a call from the Rock Island District, offering him a job.

"I wasn't exactly sure what type of engineering I wanted to do," said Bawmann. "I thought working for the Corps would give me a chance to explore the possibilities."

Working for the Corps in the late 1950s was a very exciting time according to Bawmann.

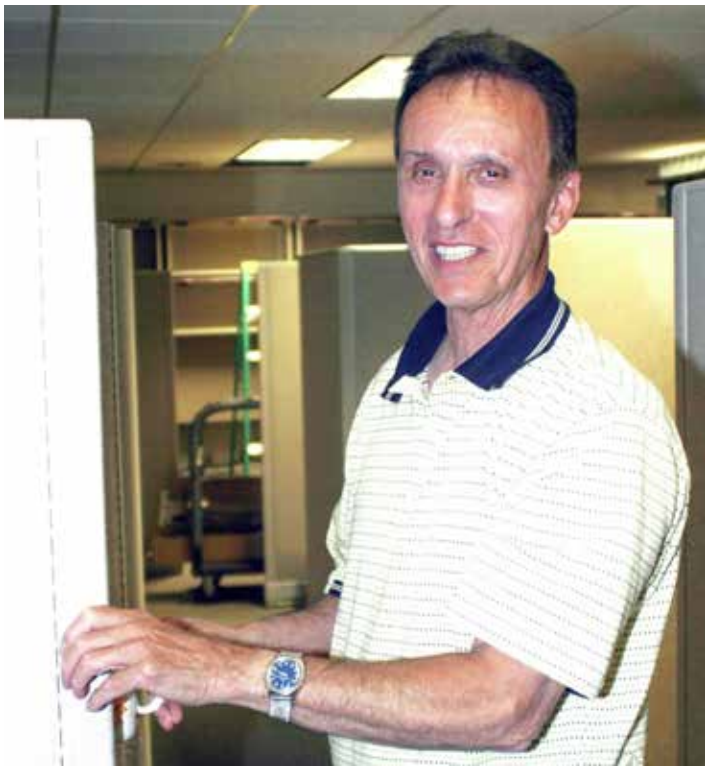
"When you started a job back then, your employer expected to train you to do things their way," said Bawmann. "You had a boss who sat side-by-side with you and taught you everything you needed to know about the projects you would be working on."

Bawmann was a fast learner and quickly became an expert in geotechnical engineering techniques. His primary job was to test soil samples and perform slope stability and under seepage analysis. These tests were fairly time consuming and it was not uncommon for him to complete just two analyses in one day.

"Now with the help of computers and technology, it's not uncommon for us to complete thousands of slope stability tests in just seconds," said Bawmann.

Over the years, Bawmann has witnessed many projects built across the District. He assisted with geotechnical engineering support for the construction of Lake Red Rock Dam, Saylorville Lake Dam, Big Creek Diversion Dam and Channel, Terminal Dam, and Barrier Dam and assisted with guidance for the improvement of many levee systems along the Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway.

As an engineer dealing with soils along the District's river systems for several years, Bawmann developed an ability to analyze soil content without the need for laboratory testing. This skill became a benefit to Bawmann in the spring of 1965 when he was first assigned to assist with levee monitoring during one of the largest floods ever recorded on the Mississippi River.



**Senior Geotechnical Engineering Specialist, Donald Bawmann, completed his 55th year of federal service, earlier this year.** *Photo by Thomas Dumoulin*

"It took more than a week for our team of seven people to walk the levees of the Rock Island District," said Bawmann. "We worked in two-mile shifts, looking for levee distress."

During the flood of '65, Bawmann found his first boil on the Bay Island Levee and became educated on the courses of action needed to control seepage. These skills, coupled with the fact that he had assisted with engineering improvements for many of the levee systems along the river, gave him an advantage when it came to handling levee distress. This knowledge earned him the title of flood distress advisor for subsequent flooding events that he assisted with in later years.

"When it comes to working flood events, my favorite thing to do is to work with the local people and help educate them on how to protect their land," said Bawmann. "Building relationships and getting them to trust you was often not an easy task."

Although he has a total of 55 years of working for the District, not all of his time was served in succession. In 1978, after 22 years with the Corps, Bawmann took a break from federal service and joined an engineering firm in Bettendorf, Iowa. He and 20 other members of the District decided that they wanted to see what it would be like to work in the private sector. As part of their new job, this group of former Corps employees traveled all over the country and became educated about products and materials the Corps had never used before.

"I considered this adventure with the private firm to be long-term, on-the-job training," said Bawmann. "I learned a lot in just a few years and I am very thankful to have had the opportunity to travel."

After four years, three months of working for the private firm, he returned to his job with the Corps.

"The economy went south in 1983 and jobs got scarce," said Bawmann. "My supervisor at Rock Island was nice enough to hire me back on and I've never thought about leaving since."

In the years following his return to the District, Bawmann has seen many people come and go from the geotechnical engineering office. He says he still loves his job and enjoys coming to work each day but as things change he's not so sure he will be able to stay ahead of the curve.

"The Corps family I once knew is all but gone," said Bawmann. "A new family of engineers is coming in. They have new ideas and new ways of doing things that I never imagined would be possible."

Although Bawmann may have a few years of service under his belt, he has no intentions of slowing down any time soon. In the mornings you may see him riding his bicycle from his home on the far side of Rock Island,

**Senior Geotechnical Engineering Specialist, Donald Bawmann, performs slope stability testing on the earthen embankment of Saylorville Dam.**
*Photo by Thomas Dumoulin*

Illinois, to the District headquarters for a day at the office. Then, during lunch, he can be found out running the streets of the Rock Island Arsenal on his mid-day run. At the end of the day he returns home, on his bike, to the house where he and his wife, Janet, raised their three children and have spent the past 59 years happily married.

"Janet and I both love the outdoors," said Bawmann. "She is a Master Gardener and keeps the yard looking beautiful and I love to run. I've only missed running on a handful of days in 35 years."

When asked about how much longer he intends to work for the Corps, Bawmann says he is unsure of what the future will bring.

"I truly enjoy working for the Rock Island District and even though I never served in the active military, working for the Corps has allowed me to provide a service to my country and feel proud of the work I have done."

# Training Tidbits

By Sara Paxson, District Training Officer

**Reminder:** All annual mandatory training must be completed and reported by Sept. 21. This ensures the District will be 100 percent compliant by the end of FY16.

**Retirement Training** is tentatively schedule for Dec. 6-8. Mark your calendars and start requesting permission to attend through your supervisor and office training coordinator.

**Rock Island District leadership Development Program Level 2** is scheduled to launch in January 2017. This program will be under a new contract with new vendors facilitating. If you are interested in applying, please gain permission from your supervisor now so you are ready to apply when the program is announced this fall. Additional information about the upcoming program is available on the District Training SharePoint site.

# SAFETY CORNER

## Electricity Has the Power to Kill

By Troy Larson, Chief Safety Officer

People rely on electrical power to keep workplaces and homes operating day and night. Electricity provides heat, light and energy to do many kinds of work. As useful as electricity is, we must never forget that it can also be dangerous. Electricity can not only cause fires and explosions but electrical shock can also kill.

**Here are some important reminders about electrical safety at home and work:**

- Keep electricity and moisture away from each other. Never touch electrical equipment with wet hands or when standing on a damp surface. Do not work around electricity when your tools or clothing are wet.
- Report any indications of electrical malfunction. Watch for these signs: flickering lights, radio or television interference when another electrical device is in operation, buzzing sounds in electrical panels, switches or outlets hot to the touch, damaged or worn insulation, loose switches and electrical equipment that works sometimes and doesn't work the next time.
- Never attempt electrical repairs unless you are qualified and authorized to do them. Do not use electrical equipment altered with makeshift repairs.
- Do not alter plugs by removing the third prong so it can fit into a two-prong outlet. This defeats the safety feature of a ground wire.
- Only use extension cords temporarily. Have wiring upgraded to accommodate new equipment.
- Use a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) whenever you use electrical tools and appliances around moisture or outdoors. GFCIs can detect a leakage of electricity from a circuit before you are harmed by electrical shock.
- Wear the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when working around electrical hazards. PPE may include leather gloves covered by rubber gloves, non-conductive footwear, arc flash protective gear and safety eyewear. Do not wear metal jewelry that could accidentally contact an electrical circuit and cause a shock.
- Heed all warning signs about electrical hazards. Stay away from high voltage installations and other posted areas.
- Beware of overhead electrical hazards. Watch for power lines and ceiling fixtures when moving items such as ladders or pipes, or operating equipment such as cranes or lifting devices.
- Use your electrical safety sense off the job too. Inspect your home for possible electrical hazards, including overloaded circuits and defective electrical equipment. Have a qualified electrician repair or improve wiring as necessary. Have GFCIs installed in bathrooms, basements, kitchens, and areas outdoors where you use electrical equipment.

**Some things to keep in mind when dealing with an accident involving electricity:**

- Before you attempt to rescue a victim of electric shock, make sure you are not putting yourself in similar danger. Do not touch the person and do not use a tool to reach the person unless you are sure the power has been disconnected. Check for a heartbeat and if necessary start Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) if you are trained to do so. Seek medical help immediately.
- If fire occurs in energized electrical equipment, use only a "C" fire extinguisher, or a combination "ABC" or "BC" extinguisher. Never put water on an electrical fire; the result can be a deadly shock.

Caution must be used around all electrical circuits and equipment. Never underestimate the potential for electrical shock.

# Around the District

## Retirements ...

**John Durdan**, lock and dam equipment mechanic at Starved Rock Lock and Dam, retired March 3, after dedicating more than 21 years of service to the federal government.

**Tim Fiscus**, supervisory realty specialist with the Regional Real Estate Division North, retired March 31, after dedicating 31 years of service to the federal government.

**Russell Jennings**, towboat master for the Mississippi River Project's Structures Maintenance Section, retired March 31, after dedicating more than 29 years of service to the federal government.

**Valerie Bollman**, supervisory budget analyst for Resource Management, retired April 2, after dedicating more than 35 years of service to the federal government.

**Denny Lundberg**, Inland Navigation Design Center director and former chief of Engineering and Construction Division, retired April 30, after dedicating more than 36 years of service to the federal government.

**Yogendra Patel**, civil engineer for Design Branch's Structural Section, retired April 30, after dedicating more than 6 years of service to the federal government.

**Deborah Rieck**, supervisory program analyst for Operations Division's Management Support Branch, retired May 31, after dedicating more than 36 years of service to the federal government.

**Janet Lewis**, supervisory natural resource specialist at the Coralville Lake Project, retired May 31, after dedicating more than 37 years of service to the federal government.

**Joseph Valois**, assistant lockmaster at T.J. O'Brien Lock and Dam, retired May 31, after dedicating more than 20 years of service to the federal government.

**James West**, marine machinery mechanic for the Illinois Waterway Project's Maintenance Section, retired May 31, after dedicating more than 29 years of service to the federal government.

**Ronald Fournier**, chief, Corporate Communications, retired June 3, after dedicating more than 36 years of service to the federal government.

**James Piper**, lockmaster at Lock and Dam 11, retired June 3, after dedicating more than 39 years of service to the federal government.

**James Stiman**, chief, Water Management Section, retired July 1, after dedicating more than 42 years of service to the federal government.

**Elizabeth Robinson**, equal employment opportunity specialist, retired July 2, after dedicating more than 43 years of service to the federal government.

**Frank Daughtry**, construction control representative at the Quincy Area office, retired July 31, after dedicating more than 29 years of service to the federal government.

## Sympathy ...

**Col. Daniel Lycan,** 84, of Manassas, Virginia, passed away September 26, 2015.

Col. Lycan was commander of the Rock Island District from 1975 to 1978 and became director of the Engineering Topographic Laboratories at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, after leaving the District. In 1981 he retired from the U.S. Army with 29 years of service.

**Vernon Greenwood,** 74, of Rock Island, Illinois, passed away April 22.

Greenwood worked as a geologist for the Rock Island District for more than 30 years and also served in the U.S. Navy.

**Keith Weuste,** 67, of Bellevue, Iowa, passed away April 4.

Weuste retired from the Rock Island District in 2010 as Assistant Lockmaster at Lock and Dam 11 in Dubuque, Iowa. His federal service included 23 years with the Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District and eight years of service in the U.S. Navy.

## Congratulations...

Congratulations to **Angela Freyermuth** and her husband, Tyson, on the birth of a baby boy on July 27. Owen Lane weighed in at 6 pounds 10 ounces and was 19.5 inches long

# Spotlight on the District

## Brandon Hornung
### Assistant Lockmaster

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

For a little more than five years, lock and dam equipment mechanic, Brandon Hornung, has been working for the Rock Island District and has jumped at every opportunity to gain valuable job experience and training. During his short tenure with the District, Hornung has worked several different jobs, at multiple locations along the Illinois Waterway, and has now returned to his original duty station at Starved Rock Lock and Dam.

Hornung's service with the Corps started in 2011 when he joined the Rock Island District team as part of the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) at Starved Rock Lock and Dam. The SCEP program allowed him to gain on-the-job training while continuing to attend classes at Illinois Valley Community College. Upon completion of the Industrial Maintenance Electrician certificate program in 2012, he accepted a lock operator position at Dresden Island Lock and Dam and spent two years working in Morris, Illinois, before making his next move.

In September 2014, Hornung decided to expand his career experience and applied for a job with the Illinois Waterway Maintenance Section.

"I like to problem solve and create solutions," said Hornung. "The job with the maintenance crew seemed like a good fit for me."

After acquiring a marine machinery mechanic position with the maintenance crew, based in Peoria, Illinois, Hornung continued to develop his skills as a mechanic and traveled with the maintenance crew to jobs all along the Illinois Waterway. After a little more than a year with the Maintenance Section, Hornung decided to apply for a job that didn't require as much travel. This is when he accepted a position as equipment mechanic at Starved Rock Lock and Dam and has since been promoted to Assistant Lockmaster.

"It was nice to get back to a job that was closer to home," said Hornung. "I liked being able to use my mechanical skills to maintain and repair things at the lock but still be able to go home at night to see my family."

Hornung is a native of Mendota, Illinois, located about 30 minutes north of Starved Rock Lock and Dam. He and his wife Kylie and their one-year old son live there today.

As an equipment mechanic, Hornung performed regular maintenance and repairs on all the mechanical and electrical systems at the lock and dam. Now, as assistant lockmaster, he helps plan, schedule and oversee all of the work being done at the facility and helps ensure that daily operations of the lock and dam run smoothly.

**Assistant Lockmaster and Illinois National Guard member, Brandon Hornung, holds an M-1 Grand Riffle he received from the Secretary of the Army after winning first place at this year's All Army Small Arms Championship at Fort Benning, Georgia.** *Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dave Perdew*

In addition to being an employee at Starved Rock Lock and Dam, Hornung is also a member of the District's underwater dive team, is a certified instructor for the Corps' motorboat operator's license and is a trained Flood Area Engineer. These voluntary duties are not part of his daily routine but when assistance is needed in one of these areas, he leaves his job at the lock and dam, shifting his focus to the new task at hand.

Outside of his job with the Corps, Hornung serves his country as a member of the Illinois National Guard with the Illinois Small Arms Readiness Training Section (SARTS) based in Springfield, Illinois. This team, made

up of 12 of the best marksmen in the Illinois National Guard, trains other service members in basic and advanced marksmanship skills and competes for the state in regional and national small arms competitions. The SARTS team spends eight to 10 weeks each year on active military orders, competing in competitions and providing training to other Soldiers.

In the past year, Hornung has competed in several shooting competitions including the Illinois National Guard Regional Marksmanship Competition at Camp Grayling, Michigan where he placed first as overall champion; the All Army Small Arms Championship at Fort Benning, Georgia, where he placed first and received an M-1 Grand Riffle from the Secretary of the Army; and the National Guard Winston P. Wilson combat match in Arkansas where he placed 13th out of 469 Soldiers. During the Winston P. Wilson event Hornung was awarded the Chief's Fifty Marksmanship Badge which is only given to the top fifty marksmen in the National Guard.

**Diver, Brandon Hornung, enters the water below the dam at LaGrange Lock and Dam, assisted by tender Curtis Brown. Hornung works as Assistant Lockmaster at Starved Rock Lock and Dam but he also works as a member of the District's dive team.**
*Photo by Jim Punkawicz*

When he's not working one of his many jobs for the Corps or serving with the National Guard, Hornung spends time practicing his shooting skills and is an avid hunter. He also loves spending time with his family and says he is thankful that his career with the Corps has allowed him to stay close to his hometown and provides him with good job security and valuable benefits that his family needs. He looks forward to further developing his careers with the Corps and the National Guard and will continue to seek ways to expand his experience in the years to come.

**Can you name where this photo was taken?**

**If so, send your answer to samantha.a.heilig@usace.army.mil to be entered for a prize and be featured in the next issue of the Tower Times**

**March/April Answer:** Ice on the outlet of the control structure at Coralville Lake

**Winner:** Tom Heinold

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# Annual Retirees' Luncheon

The 2016 Annual Retirees' Luncheon will be Friday, Sept. 9, at the Quad City Botanical Center, starting at 11:30 a.m. Because of a scheduling conflict at the QCBD, we have to change from our traditional Wednesday after Labor Day to the Friday after Labor Day. We'll ask for a show of hands at the luncheon as to whether you want to return to Wednesday, or start a new tradition of Fridays. Cost is $15 per person, including tax and gratuities. Reservations and advance payment are required. Checks should be made out to Dudley Hanson and mailed to 3812 North Thornwood Avenue, Davenport, Iowa 52806-5250. Deadline for reservations and payment is Friday, Sept. 2.