



Spotlight on the District

Bernie Dolezal

Maintenance Supervisor, Coralville Lake

By Mark Kane

Bernie Dolezal prides himself on some of the simplest things in life. “I’m a straight shooter and I never lie,” said Dolezal, maintenance supervisor, Coralville Lake. “The truth is a lot easier to remember.”

Dolezal is a working supervisor who works side by side with the workers he supervises. Although he works hard year-round, he wouldn’t have it any other way.

“This isn’t a boring job at all, I always have something going on,” said Dolezal. “I supervise, but I also do a lot of work, especially now since we lost two of our maintenance workers. I have two self-motivated people working for me and we just do what needs to be done.”

“Bernie is the ultimate team player,” said Scott Ford, Coralville Lake. “He routinely makes himself available for any after-hours maintenance problems that may crop up.”

“Bernie is very good at getting tasks completed on time,” said Randy Heggen, Coralville Lake. “He’s very customer oriented.”

Getting a description of exactly what needs to be done from Dolezal is a different story.

“I just tell everyone I carry a roofers card – I pretty much do everything from the roof down.”

Dolezal first started with the Corps at Coralville Lake in 1980 working as a maintenance mechanic.

“I did a lot of work in the sign shop, and back then, we used to make hand-routed signs out of wood,” he said. “Now Coralville Lake makes all the signs for the

District. We make three to 5,000 signs during the winter alone.”

Aside from work, Dolezal has a deep appreciation for the environment that surrounds him everyday.

“From my window I can see the dam and even an occasional deer ... I have a great job,” he said.



Above and beyond simply working in maintenance, he specifically enjoys working for the Corps.

“I like the people,” he said. “It’s a challenge, but you get the chance to make things better and make a difference. Here we have the freedom to make changes that can make a difference. My guys come to

me and if they have an idea we try it. It’s not a cut-and-dry type of job, there’s always a better way to do something.

“The bottom line is that we’re here to serve the people and make sure they have a good time when they come out here ... I really like working with the public.

“There’s a lot of little things we take for granted when it comes to dealing with the public,” he said. “I hear all the time that the Corps has the best campgrounds in the world. It makes me and my guys feel good to know that people appreciate it so much,” he said.

Dolezal is married and has three children ages 27, 24 and 21. He also has two grandchildren ages 4 and 1.

His hobbies include camping, building things and working on cars. Dolezal owns a 1968 Oldsmobile, as well as a 1985 Z-28 Camaro.

Dolezal also built the home where he and wife are living. “I built the home back in 1983,” he said. “I designed and built it, it’s an energy efficient home.”

His advice to anyone reading this article is to, “be patient, things change and it’s not as bad as you first think it is.

“My eyes were really opened when Mike (Michael Tampir) passed away,” he said. Tampir worked for Dolezal at Coralville Lake and passed away at the age of 50, on Aug. 15, after an extended illness.

“If you haven’t done it, and you’ve wanted to do it, do it,” he said. “I went parasailing this summer and my wife thought I was crazy, but I said let’s do it.

“Life is too short, I found that out from Mike ... he only had five more years to retirement,” he said. 🙏

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Mmmm, Chili Gooood



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A Matter of Company



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Rendezvous on the Prairie



On the Cover

Patrick Trier, Lake Red Rock, helps Knoxville East Elementary students plant a tree at the "Children's Forest," a six-acre tract of land in the Whitebreast Recreation Area. Story page 10.

Photo by Tracy Spry, Lake Red Rock.