



# Spotlight on the District

## Tracy Spry Park Ranger, Lake Red Rock

By Mark Kane

Tracy Spry first rested the Corps “Smokey Bear” hat on her head back in 1991 when she went to work for the District as a part of the Cooperative Education Program at the Mississippi River Visitor Center.

Becoming a park ranger wasn’t something she always wanted to do, but it fulfilled an inner need she had for her life.

“I guess it stemmed from wanting to educate the public on environmental issues,” said Spry, park ranger, Lake Red Rock. “You get to work with a lot of other agencies and that’s fun, but it’s also a challenge.”

Spry moved into a permanent position at Lake Red Rock in February 1992. It’s been at Lake Red Rock that she’s received the chance to pass on the environmental education that brought her into the Corps.

“I coordinate special events like ‘Trash Bash.’ It’s an annual event to bring people together, show some stewardship and clean up the lake that really belongs to them,” said Spry.

Spry’s efforts have ranged from producing educational brochures to conducting water safety programs, but she feels like more can be done.

“We’ve been trying to target the

teenage audience,” said Spry. “We need to find a way to tap into that age group. I believe we can come up with other ways to get our message to that audience.”

One of Spry’s future goals is to be a part of the solution that educates teens and college age youth about the environment.

“We’re currently working on a joint-agency learning center,” said Spry. “It’s a combined effort of federal, state, county, and a local college to take education a step further. It’s quite a ways off now, but it’s one of my goals to be a major part of making it happen.”



Tracy Spry, park ranger, Lake Red Rock, and “Woodsy Owl,” U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, talk with “Trash Bash” volunteers about the effects of littering and illegal dumping on the environment.

“Trash Bash” is an annual Lake Red Rock event held in April and sponsored by the Corps of Engineers and the Marion County, Iowa, Development Commission. Activities include educational displays on recycling, a free picnic lunch and lake-litter pick-up.

Check out Woodsy Owl at: [www.fs.fed.us/spf/woodsy/](http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/woodsy/)

It’s no surprise to know that Spry majored in biology and minored in environmental education and graduated from the University of Wisconsin, in her hometown of Stevens Point, Wis., in 1991.

Spry lives with her husband, Scott, in Colfax, Iowa. Her hobbies include walking and gardening.

Spry’s advice to anyone reading this article is that everyone in the Corps should “realize that their involved in public relations. We are all promoting the Corps and we need to realize that even one person that the public meets is a representative for the Corps, and they definitely have an impact.”

### “Spotlight Someone You Know”

The next District Spotlight employee could be working right beside you, the only way you’ll see that person here is if you let the Tower Times know it.

If you know

someone who you feel is doing a good job, setting a good example, or is just a pleasure to work around, maybe it’s time the District knew it.

Ready to tell the rest of the District, then E-Mail me at:

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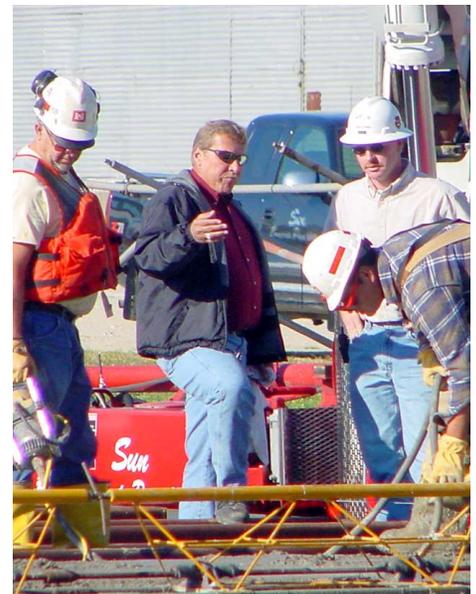
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#### On the Cover

Members of the Mississippi River Project Maintenance Crew and contractor Shawn Jackson discuss placing concrete on the surface of a barge (shown) to make a new smooth surface for use as a work barge.

Gary Rose, crane operator; John Wayne, foreman, Mississippi Project Maintenance Crew; Shawn Jackson, Sun Concrete Pumping; Mike Roland, Sun Concrete Pumping; and (bending) Jose Coronado, maintenance worker.