



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®

# TOWER TIMES

Rock Island District's News Magazine

November/December 2017



## District Employees Support Hurricane Response Efforts



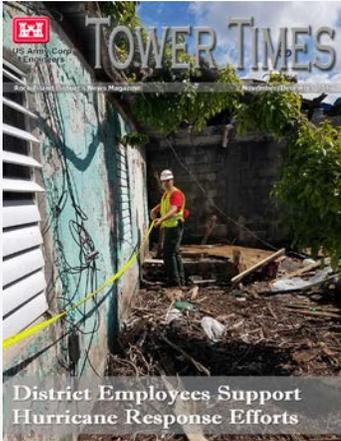
**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
Rock Island District

# TOWER TIMES

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November/December 2017

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Natural Resource Specialist Todd Ernenputsch assists with hurricane recovery efforts in Puerto Rico by measuring a building to calculate square footage of the roof. *Photo by Johnny Clark, Vicksburg District*

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## *Tower Times*

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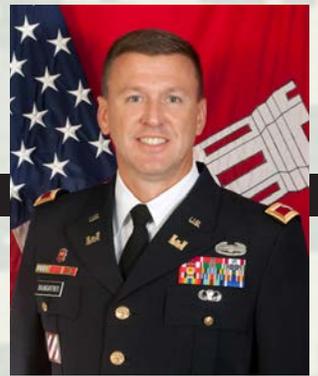
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*A message from....*

## Colonel Craig Baumgartner, District Commander



### *Another busy, effective year for the Rock Island District*

The calendar year 2017 will go down as yet another high tempo, high output year for the Rock Island District. Whether it was delivering a study related to stopping the spread of the dreaded Asian Carp, or responding to a national need for support brought on by Mother Nature, Rock Island District solidified its value and I was humbled by our District's successes.

Within the Mississippi Valley Division, Rock Island District continues to lead the way in many facets of delivering the program. We met all 24 of our headquarters-tracked milestones which was not a common occurrence command-wide. Achieving milestones may seem like buzz words but the data that drives these accomplishments hold a deeper meaning. Every employee within the District should know that their footprints are somewhere within those milestones as they represent the missions you all support. The collective effort, from all divisions, branches and operational sites, is how we are able to meet milestones and it is that effort and professionalism that I am most proud of. Delivering the program and on our commitments is the most strategic thing we do.

A prime example of Rock Island District professionalism was evident as our team worked to deliver the much anticipated Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study – Brandon Road Draft Feasibility Study. This study garnered national attention from political, public and private entities as it addresses options to prevent the spread of aquatic nuisances like Asian carp, an undertaking with far reaching effects and a wide variety of conflicting views.

The PDT, along with our teammates at the Chicago District, adapted to the delay and were ready to deliver once receiving higher permission. Months passed but in August, we released the study, followed by a public comment period and four public meetings convened and completed by the PDT. The entire effort was several years in the making and several more will follow. The Rock Island District's leadership in delivering the study has been outstanding and the District leadership going forward will be integral in delivering a recommendation to the Administration and Congress.

Stopping the spread of aquatic nuisance species is a nationwide concern but was not the only Rock Island

District effort with national implication in 2017. When hurricanes ravaged Houston, South Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was ready to respond. The Rock Island District has been thoroughly involved in that response. Whether it was deploying our deputy commander to provide leadership and oversight or the dozens of District employees who raised their hands to provide the expertise, the spirit of volunteerism throughout our organization has been inspiring.

As of December, nearly 80 employees have supported the hurricane recovery efforts and many continue to serve in a variety of ways at a variety of locations. The need for volunteers doesn't look to be waning anytime soon as there is still significant work to be done in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, work with which the Corps will be intimately involved. I know our District will continue to do our share in the months to come and I greatly appreciate all who volunteer.

As the District had been focused on hot topics like the Brandon Road Study, levee risk communications and the unexpected needs brought on by the hurricanes, we still had to deliver on our daily operations and deliver we did.

Our ongoing challenge of maintaining the river system's aging infrastructure was ever present. In late winter, our District's operations team, with an assist from our sister District teammates in St. Paul, dewatered Lock 17. This dewatering is critical to future maintenance requirements and enabled some much needed inspection of the lock. Also, up river at Locks 15 and 16, bulkhead slots were installed in each which will enable dewatering of those locks at a future date. And, over on the Illinois, new gates were installed, replacing gates that were original to the project. This looming challenge of maintaining our lock and dam system will not be going away anytime soon. Luckily, we have top-notch maintenance crews and lock teams engaged and ready to adapt and innovate.

There are far too many District-wide accomplishments to list in 2017. Any effort to do so would likely leave something out. As I wrote earlier, anything we accomplish is done as a team. It may be hard for an employee working

*(continued on page 4)*

## Another busy, effective year (continued from page 3)

at one of our reservoir projects to understand that their efforts assist in ensuring the maintenance crews on the Mississippi River carry out their tasks. But, that is the case. From all levels of the Clock Tower to all levels of our field sites, it is the collective effort and professionalism that ensures we deliver the entirety of our program. All successes should feel shared across the District.

Success and accomplishing the mission has certainly been a part of 2017 but when a calendar year comes to a close, it is a good time to reflect deeper. An organization that is not constantly in a learning mode is one doomed to fail. We have to be looking at ways to improve and I am confident that is a shared value throughout our organization.

I have encouraged our leaders to look at what we do well and where we can improve. We are doing that by evaluating and analyzing the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey which was taken by many of our employees in 2017. Those survey results have been calculated and provided to the District. As in past years, we are looking at those results and implementing action plans related to various needs identified within the survey results. The action plans identify items that should be sustained as well as challenges that need to be addressed for improvement.

The FEV Survey is a critical tool that provides leadership much needed insight into how our employees

see us as an organization. But, the tool is useless if the information provided is not acted upon. It is my promise to all District employees that I will ensure we are acting on the feedback within the recent and past surveys. I want all of our employees to feel that they work within an organization that views continuous improvement as a priority. It is a Corps-wide goal for USACE to be in the Top 100 places to work within the federal government. Ideally, the Rock Island District is well on its way toward that goal.

As 2017 comes to a close, take a moment to revel in what you and your teammates have accomplished. It has been quite impressive. Each year I have been in command has been a progression of confidence and amazement in what this District provides to this Nation. Let's endeavor to keep up the momentum into 2018 with an ongoing focus on improvement where it is needed and sustainment where it is warranted.

Finally, I hope your holiday season is restful and enjoyable. Please remember those who serve in operations that are 24 hours per day, 7 days a week in our District, and may not be able to spend the desired time with family and friends over the holiday. Some of those are your Rock Island District teammates and all deserve our admiration and thanks. From my family to yours, warmest holiday wishes and happy New Year. Thanks for continually demonstrating what right looks like and living our District values of People First, Professionalism, Technical Excellence, Innovation, Public Service and Stewardship. BUILDING STRONG! 

# ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT SELECTED AS ONE OF BEST PLACES TO WORK IN USACE

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

The Rock Island District was recently selected by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters as being one of the best places to work in USACE. This recognition came as a result of feedback provided during the 2017 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). The survey, which is administered by the Office of Personnel Management, is a tool that helps senior leaders within USACE make positive changes that increase employee satisfaction and commitment to their jobs. For more information on USACE's FEVS results and the best places to work visit: <https://intranet.usace.army.mil/hq/hr/Pages/FEVS.aspx>



# RIBBON CUTTING CELEBRATES COMPLETION OF HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in cooperation with its partners at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony Oct. 12 in celebration of completing the Rice Lake Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project.

The ceremony was held at the Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area pump station overlooking the Illinois Waterway near Peoria, Illinois. The program included remarks from Rock Island District Commander, Col. Craig Baumgartner, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director, Wayne Rosenthal and USACE Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program Manager, Marvin Hubbell. Following the ribbon cutting, Col. Baumgartner and Mr. Rosenthal demonstrated the project's new water management capabilities by firing up two of the three, 48-inch submersible pumps at the newly constructed pump station.

"This project greatly benefits one of our most valuable

resources – the Illinois Waterway and I am very proud of the Corps team that worked together to bring the project to completion," said Baumgartner. "It is important to note that we were not alone in this effort and had a great partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Without them and their support in restoring the area, this project would not have been possible."

The Rice Lake Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project is part of the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program. It was developed, designed and constructed to restore wetland and aquatic habitat needed to support plant and waterfowl along the Illinois Waterway. The UMRR Program, which has projects on both the Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway, has restored more than 102,000 acres of habitat over the past 30 years.

"From my perspective, UMRR is a prime example of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' commitment to the environment," said Col. Baumgartner. "Since its inception

*(continued on page 7)*



Rock Island District Commander, Col. Craig Baumgartner (center), along with Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director, Wayne Rosenthal (center left) and Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program Manager, Marvin Hubbell (center right) cut the ribbon on the Rice Lake Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project with the collaborative team who worked on the project. *Photo by Samantha Heilig*

# MAINTENANCE CREWS INSTALL 4 NEW MITER GATES AT PEORIA LOCK AND DAM

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

**T**his fall, Corps of Engineers maintenance crews took four, 80-year-old miter gates at Peoria Lock and Dam out of service and replaced them with newly-constructed miter gates. The original gates, which had been in place since the lock opened in 1938, were in disrepair from years of opening and closing each time a boat passed through the lock.

“The old gates had been through structural rehabilitation multiple times throughout their service life but were in dire need of replacement,” said Peoria Lock and Dam Lockmaster, Doug Morgan.

Replacement of the lock gates took about 84 hours of work and required three scheduled lock closures during

early November. The new gates were delivered to the site on a barge. As the old gates were lifted and removed, the new ones were set into place using the District’s heavy lift crane named the Hercules.

“We were fortunate that river levels were high enough that our wicket dam was down and boats could use the open pass option during the switch,” said Morgan. “Right after the gates were installed and put into service, the wicket dam needed to be raised to maintain river levels. After a few short operational adjustments to the controller system the new gates were put to work locking boats.”

Peoria Lock and Dam, located four miles downstream of Peoria, Illinois, is one of only two facilities on the



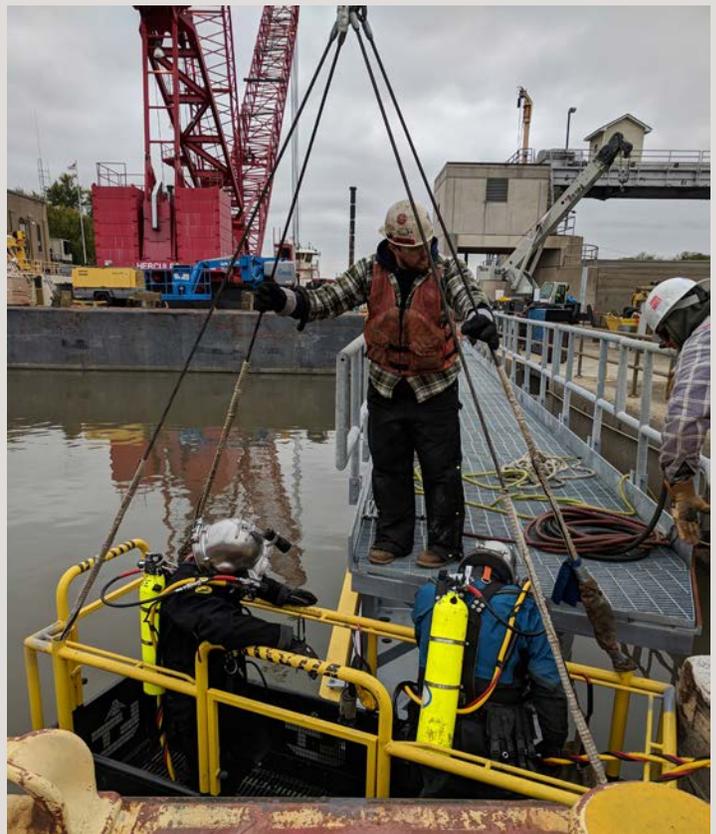
Rock Island District maintenance crews on the Illinois Waterway prepare a newly manufactured miter gate for installation at Peoria Lock. *Photo by Doug Morgan*

Illinois Waterway that have wicket dams allowing boats to navigate around the lock when water levels are high enough. Although Peoria Lock and Dam has this open pass option, the lock is used the majority of the year when the wicket dams are closed to maintain the 9-foot navigation channel.

Peoria is currently the only lock and dam to receive newly constructed gates on the Illinois Waterway however new gates for LaGrange Lock and Dam have arrived and are scheduled to be installed in mid-January.

“Maintaining the aging infrastructure within the District is one of our biggest challenges,” said Illinois Waterway Maintenance Section Chief, Scott Uhl. “These new gates will help us to provide a more reliable and predictable navigation system on the Illinois Waterway for years to come.” 

**Two divers from the Rock Island District dive team assist maintenance crews with installing new miter gates at Peoria Lock. Divers are needed to make underwater adjustments to the gate as it is set into place in the lock. Photo by Doug Morgan.**



### **Congratulations to Missy Yerington for being selected as September Employee of the Month**

Missy Yerington provided superior customer service assisting with the initial launch of the Total Employee Development (TED) training management system pilot. As a member of the TED deployment team, she has displayed profound professionalism. Yerington updated TED for all district employees who completed SHARP Part 1 training. Through this effort, she identified a need for district training coordinators to update personnel profiles in the system, took the initiative to assist the district training coordinators and performed the updates for several hundred district employees. In addition, she also ensured all employees had the appropriate mandatory training loaded and assisted with loading EEO, Anti-Harassment and No Fear training to over 200 employee Individual Development Plans. Yerington accomplished this extra assistance while still learning her new job within the District’s Equal Employment Opportunity Office. Her selfless service and dedication to others is a testament to how she demonstrates the Organizational Values, by always putting people first.



**Ribbon Cutting** *(continued from page 5)* more than 30 years ago, UMRP has been a shining example of what we can do, as a nation, to protect and preserve our natural resources.”

The \$20.9 million Rice Lake project has enhanced habitats within the Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area through the following features: natural spillway repairs, construction of an overflow spillway, a spillway access road, outlet structure, pump station, pump station control building, discharge channel with associated berms and

water control stoplog structures. These features increase reliability and flexibility of water level management, improve habitat for migratory waterfowl, and protect aquatic habitat and maintain connectivity with deep water areas.

For more information on the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program and projects like Rice lake visit: <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental-Protection-and-Restoration/Upper-Mississippi-River-Restoration/>. 

# DISTRICT EMPLOYEES SUPPORT HURRICANE RESPONSE EFFORTS

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

Late this summer when natural disasters struck Texas, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mobilized teams of people and resources from across the country to assist with the mission of emergency response. These specially-trained response teams, supported by emergency contracts, help to perform a wide range of public works and engineering-related missions. These missions include activities such as debris removal, temporary roofing, commodities distribution, and generator installation.

Over the past several months, more than 80 employees from the Rock Island District, including Deputy District Commander, Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, have volunteered their time and talents to assist in areas of need. Across the Corps, more than 850 personnel have engaged in the response and continue to coordinate with local, state and FEMA partners to respond to people who have been affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

The Rock Island District National Flood Fight Materiel Center has also played a primary role in recovery efforts by providing 1.5 million standard sandbags, 6,000 large airlift sandbags, 500 helicopter slings, 75 rolls of poly and 5,000 linear feet of HESCO barriers. These supplies are being used to restock areas of need and stabilize infrastructure like the Guajataca Dam in Puerto Rico to ensure that residents living downstream of the dam remain safe during the recovery process. 



(Above) Under the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, a contractor reconnects power lines that were damaged when hurricanes struck Puerto Rico earlier this year. As assigned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the USACE is leading the federal role in repairing the hurricane-damaged electrical power grid in support of the Government of Puerto Rico. Corps staff who are currently deployed to the area are supporting the mission by providing quality assurance and safety guidance. *Photo by Jim Trail*



(Left) Rock Island District Operations Division staff load trucks with sandbags, HESCO barriers, poly and slings from the District's National Flood Fight Materiel Center for transport to Puerto Rico for hurricane response efforts. The employees who load and transport these supplies put their regular jobs on hold to support the needs of the National Flood Fight Materiel Center. *Photo by Sarah Jones*

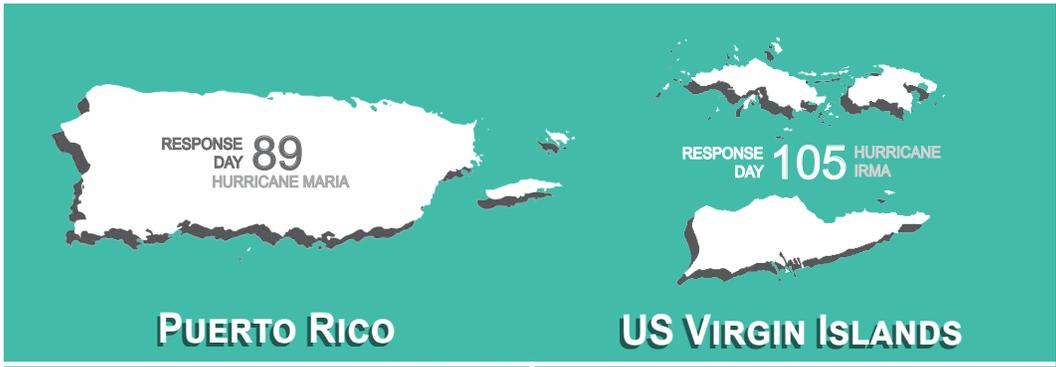


US Army Corps of Engineers

# HURRICANE IRMA & MARIA RESPONSE

Updated as of 14 DEC 17

MISSION ASSIGNMENTS / CUMULATIVE COST / PERSONNEL ON GROUND



## PUERTO RICO

## US VIRGIN ISLANDS

mission assignments issued by FEMA: 27 / \$2.4 billion / 691

mission assignments issued by FEMA: 24 / \$201 million / 116

TEMPORARY ROOFING



29%

75,000 roofs estimated for repair

21,259 blue roof installs completed out of 72,359 requested



100%

3,670 roofs estimated for repair

3,664 blue roof installs completed out of 3,665 requested

TEMPORARY EMERGENCY POWER



70%

889 generator installs completed out of 1267 installs requested



98%

173 generator installs completed out of 176 installs requested

DEBRIS MANAGEMENT



32%

49 municipalities requested assistance, currently working in 43

1.17M cubic yards removed of 3.7 million assigned



46%

851,000 cubic yards estimated for removal

393K cubic yards removed

PUERTO RICO POWER GRID REPAIR

63.5% of instant max load out of historic average load

instant max demand: 1600 MW  
pre-storm avg monthly load: 2500-3000 MW



82.7% functioning



342 substations

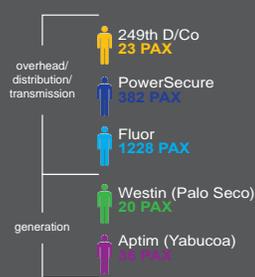
71.4% functioning



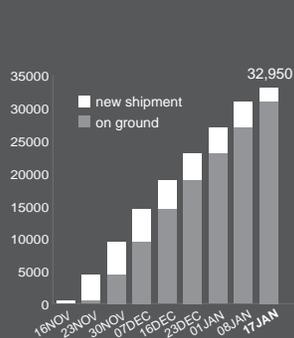
56 transmission centers

\* Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority and USACE recently recalibrated its reporting of the above percentage, accounting for recent disparities.

### CONTRACTED personnel on ground



### POWER POLES



### Palo Seco

2 x 30MW generators installed producing 50MW and providing grid stabilization

### Yabucoa

25MW generator installed to provide power to region. Online as of 09DEC; increasing power incrementally

USACE Public Affairs  
hq-publicaffairs@usace.army.mil

<https://www.facebook.com/USACEHQ/>

\* percentages may remain unchanged for periods of time as requests and installs completed can increase concurrently



# *Spotlight on the District*

## SCOTT HARRIS

CONTRACTING DIVISION CHIEF

& SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

By Andrew Barnes, Assistant Chief, Programs and Project Management Division

Scott Harris was selected as the recipient of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Small Business Champion of the Year for extraordinary contributions to the Rock Island fiscal year 2017 Small Business Program. Harris made his contributions as the District Contract Execution Branch Chief in FY16 and then as the District Contracting Chief in FY17. Harris worked closely with the Small Business Deputy through planning for acquisition strategy to accomplish the District's small business goals. The District's Small Business Deputy left during FY16 and was temporarily replaced by a rehired annuitant through early FY17. The position was vacant until the recent hire of Elizabeth White. Harris provided the continuity required for successful execution by first coordinating with the rehired annuitant, and later by assuming many of the Small Business Deputy duties himself. His reasonable approach to meeting goals while executing the District's missions, and his ability to work with all organizations within the District were the cornerstone of his success.

As a result of Harris' determination and leadership, Rock Island District not only exceeded all assigned Small Business Program goals, the resulting District Small Business Program performance contributed significantly to the Mississippi Valley Division's Small Business Program success. The Division Commander issued a challenge midway through FY16 for Districts to stretch goals to assist the Major Subordinate Command in achieving the small business goals assigned by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters to the Mississippi Valley Division. Mr. Harris' involvement in and valued support of the District's Small Business Program was key to this success.

Harris provided the framework for an effective and efficient acquisition planning program in Rock Island District. The tools put in place require Project Delivery Teams to start planning very early after identifying acquisition requirements. This has consistently resulted in better decisions and requirement fits, executing the mission while still meeting small business goals. Harris has displayed vision for the appropriate assessment of District needs and abilities of the contracting community, reflected



**(From left) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Deputy Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Michael C. Wehr, and Rock Island District Commander, Col. Craig Baumgartner, present Rock Island District Contracting Division Chief, Scott Harris, with the award for USACE Small Business Champion of the Year with Director of the Department of the Army Office of Small Business Programs, Tommy Marks, and USACE Command Sgt. Maj. Bradley Houston. Photo provided by USACE Headquarters**

in the FY16 and 17 small business program results. This work has also laid a foundation for subsequent Small Business Program success in the future.

Rock Island District's detailed FY16 Small Business Program achievements, as measured against the District's assigned small business and small business socioeconomic goals included Small Business, Small Disadvantaged Business, Women-Owned Small Business, HUBZone Small Business, and Serviced Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business. Rock Island District is on pace to similarly surpass FY17 assigned goals.

Harris' leadership and support of the District's Small Business Program throughout FY16 and 17 was critical to the District's Small Business Program success. His dedication and willingness to take on additional duties to help ensure the success of the program exhibit his tremendous character. His employees and other District leaders have become proponents of small business utilization due to his excellent example. 

# CORPS ARCHEOLOGIST HELPS RECOVER MISSING VIETNAM WAR VETERAN

By Samantha Heilig, Editor

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. Recently, one of Rock Island District's own, Brant Vollman, learned that he had played a vital role in assisting the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Agency (DPAA) in accounting for one more.

In 2015, Vollman, an archeologist with the District was one of only a few Corps of Engineers staff who answered the call when the Mandatory Center of Expertise for the Curation and Management of Archaeological Collections in St. Louis, Missouri, sent out a request for skilled archeologists to support a DPAA mission in Southeast Asia.

Vollman was selected to deploy in the spring of 2016 as a Recovery Leader/Anthropologist for a DPAA mission in Laos. There he served as the archaeological subject matter expert authorized to make scientific decisions on behalf of the DPAA-Lab during the mission.

While deployed, Vollman helped oversee excavation operations that searched for osseous remains (bone) and life support materials which could be used to identify missing service members.

"It was hard work but you always had the family of the service member in the back of your mind and that kept everyone motivated," said Vollman. "You just hoped enough material could be found that a positive ID could be made."

During his deployment, Vollman never had the opportunity to find out if his recovery efforts were successful.

"In most cases it takes months to verify that findings are in fact human remains and that they belong to a certain individual," said Vollman.

But this fall, more than a year after Vollman had returned from his deployment to Laos, the DPAA informed him that due to his efforts, Air Force Reserve 1st Lt. David T. Dinan, III, killed during the Vietnam War, had been accounted for and had been returned to his family.

According to the DPAA release, on March 19, 1969, Dinan was a member of the 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 388th Tactical Fighter Wing, 7th Air Force, and



**Air Force Reserve 1st Lt. David T. Dinan, III, who was killed during the Vietnam War. He was recently accounted for thanks to recovery efforts by archeologist Brant Vollman and Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency staff.** *Photo provided by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency*

was the pilot of an aircraft flying on a strike mission over northern Laos. During the second strafing pass over the target, Dinan transmitted a distress message. The Forward Air Controller then observed Dinan's parachute enter the jungle, as well as an aircraft crash. Search and rescue aircraft conducted an aerial search and located a parachute and confirmed the death of the pilot, however, due to enemy fire in the area and the hazardous location, his body could not be recovered. The U.S. Air Force subsequently reported Dinan as killed in action.

Dinan's name is recorded on the Walls of the Missing at an American Battle Monuments Commission site along with the others who are missing from the Vietnam War. Now rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

"It is an honor to have been part of the recovery of this service member who has been missing for more than 45 years," said Vollman. "Completing my missions with the DPAA has definitely become the highpoint of my career as a professional archaeologist." 

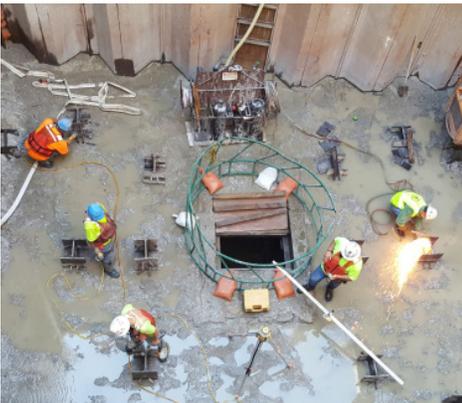
# Around the District



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

If so, send your answer to [Samantha.A.Heilig@usace.army.mil](mailto:Samantha.A.Heilig@usace.army.mil) to be entered for a prize and be featured in the next issue of the Tower Times.

August/September Where's This



**Answer:**  
Big Creek Diversion Dam.

**Winner:**  
Jeff Tripp

## Retirements ...

**Michael Cox**, Chief Operations Division, retired December 1, after dedicating more than 39 years of service to the federal government.

**Mark Hanson**, Lock and Dam Repairer Leader at the Illinois Waterway Project Office, retired September 2, after dedicating 30 years of service to the federal government.

**Marvin Morris**, Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist at Saylorville Lake, retired September 30, after dedicating more than 42 years of service to the federal government.

## Sympathy ...



**Albert L. (Bert) Elliott, 85**, of Rock Island, Illinois, passed away October 14.

Elliott worked for the Rock Island District as a mechanic and was an engineer on the Hercules steam engine until his retirement in 1993. Elliott also served eight years as a member of the U.S. Navy Reserve.



**Mary Berrie, 59**, of Galveston, Texas, passed away October 19.

Berrie was an employee of the Galveston District Regulatory Office and had 21 years of federal service. Prior to working in Galveston, she was a Rock Island District employee and worked in both the Regulatory and Construction offices.



**Neal J. Johnson 65**, of Muscatine, Iowa, passed away December 5.

Johnson retired from the Regulatory Office at the Rock Island District in June 2009.

## Have something you would like to share?

If you have something you would like to submit for the Around the District section of the Tower Times or ideas for Tower Times news stories please send them to [samantha.a.heilig@usace.army.mil](mailto:samantha.a.heilig@usace.army.mil).

## Congratulations to Fabio Mencia for being selected as October Employee of the Month

Fabio Mencia's actions exemplify the District's Organizational Values of People First, Professionalism and Stewardship. He always has an attitude of "Why not me?" and takes on every task throughout the Clock Tower and Annex to make the office look better, safer, function more efficiently, and be happier. Mencia does it all with remarkable patience and admirable tact.

No task is too large and difficult or too small and menial for Mencia. Once he completes the given task, he follows up with the customer to make sure the job is complete and to their satisfaction and more than one supervisor has commented that this is the way it should occur. He is dependable, ambitious, efficient and punctual. It is a pleasure to work with someone who has their heart behind their work and pays great attention to details.

The skills Mencia possesses do not end with his work. His warm, cheerful attitude brightens everyone's day as he engages with them. There are numerous examples of him doing the extra little things that make the District one of the best places to work, such as sweeping the cobwebs and dirt off the windows, keeping the grass and plants alive by watering them, cleaning off sidewalks, picking up litter and debris around the grounds, and keeping the facilities from looking dated, all of this in addition to his regular work tasks. Fabio loves people, works hard, and is always willing to lend a hand to anyone. He sets the standard in customer relations and his characteristics represent all the values of the Rock Island District, and USACE.



# NOTHING SAYS HAPPY HOLIDAYS MORE THAN AN UGLY SWEATER CONTEST



The Rock Island District held its annual holiday celebration Dec. 14 with employees participating in a variety of activities including an ugly sweater contest which was sponsored by the Rock Island District Welfare Association. A small group of musically inclined employees joined together for caroling and moved from office to office singing holiday tunes accompanied by a traveling guitarist. After office caroling, the carolers joined the Rock Island District's band, River Bend Brass, for a short concert for employees gathered in the Clock Tower cafeteria. Following the concert, District Commander, Col. Craig Baumgartner, presented a recap of 2017 District accomplishments and wished all the employees a safe and happy holidays. *Photo by Samantha Heilig*

# SAFETY CORNER

## WINTER SAFETY: AVOIDING COLD STRESS

By Troy Larson, Chief of Safety and Occupational Health

Working in cold environments can lead to cold-related illness or injuries, which are collectively known as cold stress. When the core body temperature falls below 96.8 °F and the body is unable to warm itself, you become at risk for hypothermia and frostbite. Without protective equipment such as hats, insulated gloves and proper footwear, we are at greater risk for both frostbite – especially to the ears, fingers, toes, cheeks and nose – and hypothermia.

Employees working in air temperatures of -15 °F or less shall use the work/warm-up schedule shown in the chart below. Where possible, it is recommended shields should be set up to protect against wind exposure. Since sweating can quickly make a bad situation worse, you are encouraged to bring additional layers of clothing to work to change. Work that causes profuse sweating in cold temperatures must be examined by supervisors because it may be too strenuous for these conditions.

Remember that workers face increased cold-weather risks when they are in poor physical condition, have illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension or heart disease, or are taking certain medications.

### Some tips for avoiding cold stress include:

- Be mindful of environmental and workplace conditions that may be dangerous.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses and injuries and what to do to prevent them.
- Wear appropriate clothing for cold, wet and windy conditions, including layers that can be added or removed as needed.
- Have a spare set of dry clothing onsite in case you become submerged or wet,
- During extreme weather conditions, employees working in the cold should take frequent short breaks in warm, dry shelters to warm up.
- Try to schedule work for the warmest part of the day and avoid fatigue and exhaustion as much as possible because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- Work in pairs and watch for warning signs of cold-related health problems in one another.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol, both interfere with the body's ability to regulate heat. Instead, drink warm decaffeinated drinks and water.

### WORK/WARM UP SCHEDULE

Temperature (°F)	No Noticeable Wind		5 mph Wind		10 mph Wind		15 mph Wind		20 mph Wind		25 mph Wind		30 mph Wind		35 mph Wind		40 mph Wind			
	Max. Work Period	# of Breaks*																		
20 to 16	Routine Breaks																			
15 to 11	Routine Breaks																			
10 to 6	Routine Breaks		75 min	2	55 min	3														
5 to 1	Routine Breaks		75 min	2	55 min	3	40 min	4												
0 to -4	Routine Breaks		75 min	2	55 min	3	40 min	4	30 min	5										
-5 to -9	Routine Breaks		Routine Breaks		Routine Breaks		Routine Breaks		75 min	2	55 min	3	40 min	4	30 min	5	Cease non-emergency work			
-10 to -14	Routine Breaks		Routine Breaks		Routine Breaks		75 min	2	55 min	3	40 min	4	30 min	5						
-15 to -19	Routine Breaks		Routine Breaks		75 min	2	55 min	3	40 min	4	30 min	5								
-20 to -24	Routine Breaks		75 min	2	55 min	3	40 min	4	30 min	5	Cease non-emergency work									
-25 to -29	75 min	2	55 min	3	40 min	4	30 min	5												
-30 to -34	55 min	3	40 min	4	30 min	5														
-35 to -39	40 min	4	30 min	5	Cease non-emergency work															
-40 to -44	30 min	5	Cease non-emergency work																	
-45 & below	Cease non-emergency work						Cease non-emergency work		Cease non-emergency work				Cease non-emergency work		Cease non-emergency work				Cease non-emergency work	

The chart above provides a work/warm up schedule for a 4-hour work period. Apply the schedule one step lower for light to moderate work based on the following definitions: Light = Light manual tasks while sitting, driving, or standing, with some arm and hand work. Moderate = Sustained arm and hand work, continuous walking on flat ground, light pushing/pulling. Heavy = Intense arm/hand work, continuous walking at a fast pace, hand sawing, digging. \*Warmup breaks are ten minutes in length. Routine breaks are regularly scheduled breaks.

Chart provided by Rock Island District Safety Office



**HYPOTHERMIA** is a condition in which the body uses up its stored energy and can no longer produce heat.

**Early Symptoms**

- \* Shivering.
- \* Fatigue.
- \* Loss of coordination.
- \* Confusion and disorientation.

**Late Symptoms**

- \* No shivering.
- \* Blue skin.
- \* Dilated pupils.
- \* Slowed pulse and breathing.
- \* Loss of consciousness.
- \* Body temperature drops to 95 °F.

**First Aid**

- \* Hypothermia is a medical emergency. Call for immediate medical assistance.
- \* Move the person to a warm, dry area.
- \* Remove any wet clothing and replace with warm, dry clothing or wrap the person with blankets.
- \* If the person is conscious, give warm, sweet drinks.



**FROSTBITE** is a bodily injury caused by freezing, which most often affects the hands, fingers, toes, ears, nose, and face.

**Symptoms**

- \* Reduced blood flow.
- \* Bluish or pale, waxy skin.
- \* Skin becomes hard and numb.\*
- \* Aching, tingling, or stinging.
- \* Left untreated, gangrene can occur (flesh turns dark purple, blue, or gray).

\*Because of numbness, a victim is often unaware of frostbite until someone else points it out.

**First Aid**

- \* Move the person to a warm, dry area.
- \* Remove any wet or tight clothing.
- \* Warm the affected area by gently immersing in warm (not hot) water or by using body heat.
- \* DO NOT rub the affected area. This can cause further damage.
- \* Avoid walking on frostbitten feet or toes. This increases damage.
- \* Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

**WINDCHILL CHART**

		Temperature (°F)																		
		40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45	
Wind (mph)	Calm	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63	
	5	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72	
	10	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77	
	15	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81	
	20	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84	
	25	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87	
	30	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89	
	35	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91	
	40	26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93	
	45	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95	
	50	25	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82	-89	-97	
55	25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98		
60	25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98		

Frostbite Times\*

Frostbite is possible   30 minutes   10 minutes   5 minutes

This chart demonstrates how cold temperatures and wind combined will increase cold stress. The information in this chart assumes workers are wearing dry clothing to maintain a core body temperature of 96.8 °F. \*Frostbite times are for exposed cheek skin. Wet skin could significantly decrease frostbite times.

Warning signs of frostbite include discomfort, pain and numbness. Hypothermia symptoms include uncontrollable shivering, a feeling of being unable to warm up, drowsiness and slurred speech.

In addition to dressing properly for cold conditions, it's important to eat regularly when you are out in the cold, especially foods high in carbohydrates. Your body requires an enormous number of calories to shiver and keep warm.



**TRENCHFOOT** is an injury of the feet resulting from prolonged exposure to wet and cold conditions.\*

**Symptoms**

- \* Reddening of the skin.
- \* Numbness, swelling, or tingling pain.
- \* Blisters or ulcers.
- \* Left untreated, gangrene can occur (flesh turns dark purple, blue, or gray).

\*Trenchfoot can occur in temperatures as low as 60 °F if the feet are constantly wet.

**First Aid**

- \* Remove shoes/boots and wet socks.
- \* Apply warm packs or water for five minutes.
- \* Dry the feet.
- \* Avoid walking. This may cause further tissue damage.
- \* Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Try to keep moving while in the cold; don't be still. This helps to keep your body temperature up and circulation moving.

If you think you are experiencing symptoms of hypothermia or frostbite, get to a shelter right away notify your supervisor and seek medical help. Remember, working or playing in cold weather can be a positive experience if you dress warmly and use common sense about protecting yourself.

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



# FROM THE ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT