



Mississippi River Project



US Army Corps
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News from Around the Project

BOBBER THE WATER SAFETY DOG MAKES SPECIAL APPEARANCES AT FUN FAMILY EVENTS

Rangers with the Mississippi River Project along with other staff from around the Rock Island District have been busy this summer spreading the water safety message. Bobber our Corps of Engineers water safety mascot has been along for the ride and has really been a hit with the kids at all the events.

On June 8, 2011 the Mississippi River Project sponsored a Water Safety Night at Modern Woodman Park in Davenport, IA for a home baseball game with the Quad City River Bandits. Rangers had a patrol vessel on display and an information booth with lots of fun water safety giveaways. Bobber made his appearance several times throughout the night and even got to throw out the first pitch of the game.



Ranger Ben DeRoo with Bobber and Rascal at the Quad City River Bandits



Forester Jon Shultz with Bobber and 07 race truck driver Caleb Roark at the Iowa Speedway

On July 16, 2011 the Rock Island District sponsored the 07 truck in the Camping World NASCAR Truck series at the Iowa Speedway in Newton, IA. This event was a great opportunity for several different projects throughout the District to work together and spread the word about water safety to hundreds of people attending the races that day. Rangers from the Mississippi River Project helped to staff an informational booth during the afternoon and then were able to get Bobber down on the track and into the pits with the race team for the main event. Bobber was a huge hit with the families attending the event and did a great job that day despite the heat index being about 110 degrees!

News from the Project Office and Locks and Dam #14

DEDICATION HIGHLIGHTS

4TH OF JULY WEEKEND ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Bill Behrends loved the outdoors. He especially loved sharing the outdoors and all of life's experiences with his family and friends; that is evident. When Bill suddenly passed away on January 18, 2011 following a sudden illness, he left behind a grieving family and many, many people who called him a friend.

In a gesture that surprised no one who knew him, one of Bill's wishes upon his passing was to have his family and friends leave memorials toward purchasing recreational amenities to be placed at one of his favorite places to recreate, Smith's Island and the Locks and Dam #14 Recreation Area. Bill's wife Teri and their son Tony contacted the Mississippi River Project about the idea of a

donation of items to enhance visitor's use of the recreation area and honor Bill's memory. Soon they had a plan.



The Behrends family with donated park bench at Locks and Dam #14.

Several months later, two engraved park benches and three PLAYTRAIL nature signs were installed at the recreation area and along the trail. The benches are in very strategic locations, both with an awesome view of the Mighty Mississippi. The trail signs are "action" signs, designed to teach young people lessons about nature, while also encouraging them to be physically active while doing so. One sign contains information on bird's nests, one is about animal habitats, and the other educates us about pond life.



Supervisory Ranger John Knoble presenting Teri Behrends with certificate of "Thanks."

On July 2nd, a dedication ceremony was hosted at the recreation area by the Mississippi River Project to officially say "Thank You" to the Behrends Family for this wonderful donation. Nearly 60 people joined Teri, Tony, and the other two "Behrends Boys" – JR and Adam – and Bill's mother Betty Fahy, on an absolutely beautiful summer day to honor Bill's memory. Everyone gathered in the MRPO conference room for refreshments and conversation after the event.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

John Knoble – Supervisory Park Ranger, Mississippi River Project Office

I started my career as a park ranger because I was one of two people who bothered to show up for an interview for COE interns from UW-LaCrosse to work for the Mississippi River Project in the St. Paul District. I went to the interview because I was a 20 year old college student, had a wife and daughter to support, and I was flat broke. Lead Ranger Kevin Berg needed two park ranger interns, so I went to work for him and Tim Bertschi at Blackhawk Park, and so my classmate Shelly went to work at Eau Galle Reservoir. By far probably the easiest interviews either of us have ever had! Twenty six years later I am back working on the Mississippi River, but now working in the Rock Island District.



In between were several summers working at Blackhawk Park, and two temporary laborer jobs on lock and dam rehab projects at Alma, Wisconsin and Red Wing, Minnesota. Then I moved to Baldhill Dam in Valley City, North Dakota as a permanent seasonal park ranger. I would still be there working, but I would have had to stay there alone. My wife did not find the charm and wide open spaces of ND as fascinating as I did – especially during the 7 plus months of winter. We moved to Lake Red Rock in Pella, Iowa in 1989. I came back to the Mississippi River in 1992, and have been here ever since.

I grew up in Gay Mills, Wisconsin (apple capital of the state) and had an ideal childhood. My grandparents owned a large farm with lots of land to hunt, fish, and trap. I lived in town with my mom and dad and six brothers and sisters, but spent most of my time outdoors with my Grandpa. He was an outdoorsman who practiced conservation farming before anyone even knew what that term meant. I think he is the reason I became a park ranger, to help protect our natural resources while allowing people to use them wisely.

My wife Tina and I had our first formal date when we were both five years old (as miniature king and queen at our siblings' junior prom!). We will celebrate 30 years of marriage together in June of 2012. We have two daughters – Emily who is a D.O. doing her residency in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Erin who is a recently graduated RN and looking for her first permanent nursing job. We purchased some land in Goose Lake, Iowa and built a home there just a few years back. We enjoy many things together as a family such as gardening, fishing, traveling to natural areas and parks, and taking care of our bird dogs, Sadie and Crescent.

I have met and worked with so many wonderful people in this organization that I cannot even begin to mention them all. I have also seen some things from serving the general public for 26 years that really should be written down in a book – a non-fiction book - though many stories would seem unbelievable when heard. For the most part my career has been very enjoyable and very rewarding, and definitely holding of very few dull moments.

RANGERS GET DEFENSIVE

In an effort to keep the visiting public and our employees on the Mississippi River safe while using our facilities and resources, our summer park rangers are sent through a week long training session at the beginning of their first year of work. This training focuses on all the skills they need to have and enhance to become a better park ranger – communication, negotiation, authority, compliance resolution (also known as verbal judo), and self-defense. Seasoned park rangers from all projects in the District along with private contractors taught the class this summer at the Mississippi River Project Office located in Pleasant Valley, Iowa.



The reason for this training is that Corps park rangers do not carry weapons when performing their jobs. They are trained in the use of the minimum amount of enforcement needed to gain compliance from an individual who is breaking the rules and regulations, which is the main focus of the majority of the training week. Should the ranger find themselves in a threatening situation, self-defense maneuvers including the use of OC (pepper spray) are also taught.

As part of the training, hands-on exposure to situations are needed to fully train the staff. Here in the photos, OC Instructor Tyler Hill demonstrates the effective range of OC using a “blank” or inert spray that smells like fresh oranges. Believe me, the real OC smells nothing like oranges!

In the other photo, Dubuque Summer Park Ranger Drew Vlazny learns how to fend off an aggressor (Lake Red Rock Summer Ranger Amy Schmitt) who has somehow gotten him off his feet and wishes to do him harm.



ANNUAL FISHING CLINIC SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, AUGUST 6TH

Don't forget to get registered for the annual Mississippi River Project's Fishing Clinic scheduled for Saturday, August 6th. This is a free event that will be held at the Locks and Dam #14 Day Use Recreation Area located close to Pleasant Valley, Iowa. The clinic will start at 9:00 AM and end at 3:00 PM. Educational programs on water safety, fishing and fish ID will be held in the morning. A free lunch consisting of hot dogs, frog legs and catfish fillets will be served. The afternoon will consist of a fishing derby. Please bring your equipment; the Corps will have a limited number of rods and reels for families to use. Bait (worms) will also be provided. Trophies and other prizes will be awarded to the youth. Pre-registration is required, do so by calling (309) 794-4301.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Megan Costello – Administrative Assistant

I started my journey with the Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project two and a half years ago in January 2009 as a student aide at the Mississippi River Visitor Center. I worked there until one month ago when I got transferred to our Project Office in Pleasant Valley, IA. I am now taking part in the Student Career Employment Program (SCEP) and working full time while going to Ashford University for my degree in Business Management.

I have enjoyed every moment of working for the Corps at the Visitor Center and at the Project Office. At the Visitor Center I thoroughly enjoyed daily interaction with the public. Now that I am at the Project Office I am seeing a behind the scenes look at how the Project is run.

When I am not at work I enjoy spending time with my family and my boyfriend. I come from a large family so there is never a dull moment. My boyfriend John has recently returned from his second deployment with the US Marine Corps in Afghanistan. After going through that deployment I have an all new respect for military families and what they are put through during a deployment. I also love to bake all sorts of sweets and treats for my family and coworkers.

I love working for the Corps of Engineers for many reasons including all of my great coworkers and the positive environment. I hope to stay with the Corps for many more years to come!

Dubuque Ranger Station News



GRANT RIVER CAMPGROUND GETS NEW BOAT DOCK

Grant River Campground located near Potosi, WI is the Mississippi River Project's northern most recreation area. This beautiful facility offers many recreational opportunities including fishing, hunting, hiking and biking. The campground is also fun for the whole family with several playground areas, a reservable picnic shelter, and great views of the Mississippi River. So for your next river getaway come check out the Grant River Recreation area and see what the Mississippi River Project has to offer.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS FOR GRANT RIVER CAMPGROUND:

August 6 at 6:30pm - Berry Williams presents Wood Whittling

August 13 at 8:00pm - Sharon Swiggum presents The Reintroduction of Whooping Cranes

August 20 at 8:00pm - Frances Rivoire from the Potosi Brewery presents the History of the Potosi Brewery

August 27 at 7:00pm - Lance Love presents Rendezvous

Grant River Campground is located 2 miles south of Potosi, WI off Hwy 133. The campground offers 73 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, and playground. To reserve a campsite contact the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at (877) 444-6777. Campsites may also be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact the Dubuque Park Rangers by e-mail at mvrodmn11@usace.army.mil or by phone at (563) 582-0881.

Thomson Ranger Station News

THOMSON CAUSEWAY RECREATION AREA TO REMAIN CLOSED TO CAMPING UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces that the Thomson Causeway Recreation Area in Thomson Illinois will remain closed to camping until September 1, 2011. This is due to a delay in the completion of ongoing construction to upgrade the area's sanitary facilities. All existing reservations will be cancelled and receive a full refund. The area will open again to day-use activities only such as boat launching, fishing, and picnicking as soon as it is safe for the public to enter the area. Please check www.missriver.org for updates.

When complete, the improvements will include: partial renovation of the two existing shower facilities, Thomson city sewer and water brought into the recreation area to serve existing facilities, and a renovated multi-lane dump station along Lewis Avenue.

For further information on this closure, please contact the Thomson Park Rangers at 815-259-3628. To learn more about the Mississippi River, you are encouraged to visit www.missriver.org.

CAMPER CRAFT SHOW AND BAKED GOODS DISPLAY AT THOMSON CAUSEWAY RECREATION AREA

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project will hold the Annual Camper Craft Show and Bake Goods Display on Saturday, September 10, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., at the Thomson Causeway Day Use Picnic Shelter. The craft show and baked goods display is a special event designed to complement the natural environment of the Mississippi River with handmade crafts and baked goods that campers have skillfully created.

Anyone wishing to display at this event must register with the Thomson Park Ranger Office no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9. There is no fee to participate, but registration is required. The craft show and baked goods display is free of charge and open to the public. For more information or to register please contact the Thomson Park Rangers at (815) 259-3628, 823 Main St., Thomson, IL.

CAMPGROUND PROGRAMS AT FISHERMAN'S CORNER CAMPGROUND

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites campers and the visiting public to attend campground programs held at Fisherman's Corner Campground near Hampton, IL. Throughout the summer, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, presenters will cover a host of topics for all to enjoy. As a reminder, all campground programs are subject to cancellation or rescheduling in the event of rain or severe weather. Programming for the month of August includes the following:

- August 6th at 7:00 PM – Join Gene Buss to learn about cast iron cooking.
- August 13th at 7:00 PM – Program To Be Announced
- August 20th at 7:00 PM – Join Sharon Peterson for a demonstration on dog agility.
- August 27th at 7:00 PM – Program To Be Announced

Fisherman's Corner Campground is located just on Highway 84 just north of Hampton, IL. The campground offers 56 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, and playground. To reserve a campsite contact the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at (877) 444-6777. Campsites may also be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact the Thomson Park Rangers by e-mail at mvrodmn13@usace.army.mil or by phone at (815) 259-3628.

Mississippi River Visitor Center News

PRAIRIE FLOWERS PROGRAM

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces that the Visitor Center at Locks and Dam #15 is inviting guests to join us for a presentation on prairie flowers. This presentation will take place in our Visitor Center as well as in our native plantings area around the Visitor Center. Guests will be able to view some common prairie plants that were found long ago in the native grasslands of the Midwest and learn about their importance in our environment. This program will be held on Saturday, August 13th from 9:00 – 10:00 AM. The program will be approximately 1 hour long and be guided by a Visitor Center Park Ranger. This program is free of charge and everyone is invited to attend. Advanced registration is required. An adult must accompany children under 12 years of age. All persons over age 16 must carry a photo ID to enter the island. Vehicles are subject to search and participants should allow 15 minutes extra to ensure proper arrival time for the tour. For more information, or to sign up the program, please contact the Visitor Center at (309) 794-5338.

LOCKS AND DAM #15 TOURS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces they will be offering free tours of Locks and Dam #15 each weekend through Labor Day. Corps of Engineers Park Rangers will offer free lock and dam tours each Saturday and Sunday at 11:00am and 2:00pm (weather permitting). Participants must wear shoes with enclosed toes and backs, tennis shoes are preferred. Cameras and pictures are not allowed on the tour but they are allowed in the Visitor Center. Walking is required. Pre-registration is also required and the group size is limited. The facility is accessible via the Davenport or Moline entrances. All persons over the age of 16 must carry a photo ID in order to enter the island. All vehicles are subject to random search and participants should allow 15 minutes extra to ensure proper arrival time. Pedestrians and bicyclists with helmets have access to the Mississippi River Visitor Center through the Davenport gate only. Appropriate ID is required.

Contact the ranger staff at (309) 794-5338 to make a tour reservation or for any additional questions.

Muscatine Ranger Station News

22ND ANNUAL SHADY CREEK CAMPER'S OUTDOOR CRAFT SHOW

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project is pleased to invite the general public to attend the 22nd Annual Camper's Outdoor Craft Show to be held at the Shady Creek Recreation Area picnic shelter on Saturday, August 20, 2011 from 9:00 am until 2:30 pm. Crafters will display baskets, candles, homemade wooden and hand-sewn items as well as many other interesting pieces. Many of the crafts will follow an "outdoor" related theme, and visitors will be able to view the preparation of many items. The show is free of charge.

The purpose of the craft show is to demonstrate the different ways that items from our environment can be turned into beautiful crafts, and how man-made materials can be transformed into something useful and beautiful that preserves our natural environment. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project is involved in educating the public on how to conserve and protect our natural resources. Camping reservations for Shady Creek and Clark's Ferry Campgrounds can be made on the web at www.recreation.gov or call Reserve America at 877-444-6777. Shady Creek Recreation Area is located between Muscatine and Davenport, along Highway 22, about 10 miles east of Muscatine, Iowa. Clark's Ferry Recreation Area is located 5 miles east of Shady Creek Recreation Area on Highway 22. For general information and entry forms, please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by mail, 810 Main Street, Muscatine, Iowa 52761, by phone at (563) 263-7913, by fax at (563) 263-1845 or by email at mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil.

CAMPGROUND PROGRAMS AT CORPS OF ENGINEERS PARKS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites campers and the visiting public to attend campground programs held at Clark's Ferry and Shady Creek Recreation Areas. Throughout the summer, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, presenters will cover a host of topics for all to enjoy. As a reminder, all campground programs are subject to cancellation or rescheduling in the event of rain or severe weather. Programming for the months of August and September includes the following:

- August 6, 2011, 7 PM, Shady Creek Campground, Mike Hutchison of Iowa Parrot Rescue will present his parrots and explain his rescue program.
- August 13, 2011, 6 PM at Shady Creek Campground and 7:30 PM at Clark's Ferry Campground, The Muscatine County Conservation Board will present wildlife programs with live animals.
- August 27, 2011, 7 PM, Clark's Ferry Campground, Meet Ed Kocal from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to talk about boating safety & YOU.
- September 3, 2011, 8 PM, Shady Creek Campground, The Quad City Astronomy Club will bring along telescopes to view the different stars and constellations in the sky.
- September 4, 2011, 6 PM, Shady Creek Campground, Kendall Davis will present information on how a boomerang works and demonstrated the flight of several different types of boomerangs. The audience is encouraged to try throwing some of the different boomerangs during portions of the presentation.



Clark's Ferry Campground is located just off Highway 22 at 3860 Sunset Beach, Montpelier, IA 52759. Clark's Ferry offers 45 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, playground, boat launch and wood.

Shady Creek Campground is located at 3550 Highway 22, Muscatine, IA 52761. Shady Creek offers 53 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, playground, boat launch and wood.

To reserve a campsite, contact the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at (877) 444-6777. Campsites are also available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by e-mail at mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil or by phone at (563) 263-7913.

LOCK AND DAM #16 TOURS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites the public to enjoy a tour of Lock and Dam #16. Every Sunday from May 29, 2011 through September 4, 2011 at 2:00 PM, weather permitting, tours of Locks and Dam #16 will be conducted for the public. A special Labor Day weekend tour will be held on Saturday, September 3, 2011 at 2:00 PM. Lock and Dam #16 is located off 102nd Ave West on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River about one mile upstream from the Muscatine Bridge. Participants will be presented with a history of the Upper Mississippi River system, how the river system operates and the process it takes to move a barge through a lock.

The tour is capped off with a walk on the lock and dam structure. Walking is a part of the tour, so participants must wear shoes with enclosed toes and an enclosed back (tennis shoes are best). Advance reservations are required as group size is limited. Please allow approximately one hour to complete the tour. For more information and to make reservations, please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by e-mail at mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil or by phone at (563) 263-7913.



Quincy Ranger Station News CLEANING UP



Rangers Brent Groesch and Dennis Franks along with the Mississippi River Project maintenance crew and other staff from around the Project are working hard this week to uncover the recreation areas on the southern end of the Project. After a large storm and high water has affected many of the areas it has been a real challenge to get these areas back in usable shape. In this photo you can see the damage to the Bear Creek Recreation Area. This photo is of the boat ramp area used by many fishermen near Marcelline, IL. Bear Creek also has 40 primitive camping sites as well as a picnic shelter that were also affected by the storm.

August

2011

If you would like to be removed from our e-mail list please print "unsubscribe" in the subject line in a reply to us.

**Thank you,
Park Ranger Staff**

P.O. Box 2004 Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

(309) 794-5338 E-mail - mvrodmn15@usace.army.mil Website - <http://www.missriver.org>