



# Mississippi River Project



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®

## Getting a Little Help from Some Friends

On June 14th the Mississippi River Project's Natural Resource Section teamed up with Living Lands and Waters (LL&W) and 125 John Deere summer interns for a volunteer tree planting and invasive species removal on Smith's Island located at Locks and Dam 14 near LeClaire, IA as well as a former cabin site in Pool 14. The volunteers represented 37 states and consisted of juniors and seniors from various colleges around the United States. The students ranged from engineering students to human resource specialists and included a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

Volunteers lined up to sign release waivers for the event.



Each year summer in June, John Deere hosts 250 summer interns for two days at their headquarters in Moline, IL to give students the opportunity to learn about John Deere's history and its future.

Chad Pregracke, President of Living Lands and Waters, donated the trees and his staff assisted with the organization of the volunteers and planting of the trees during the event.

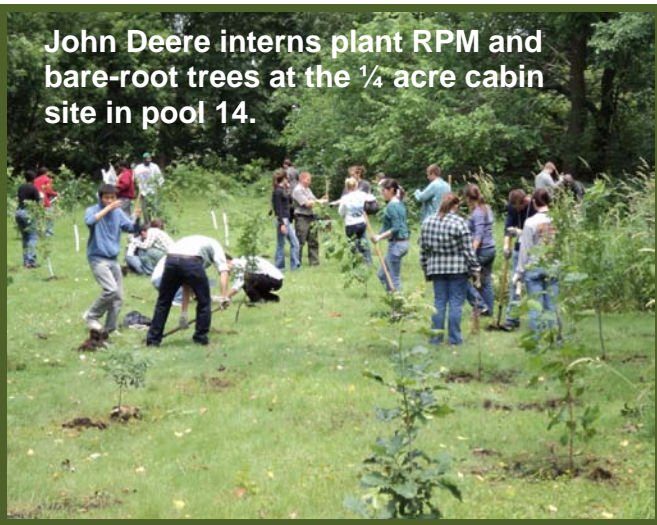
Below: LL&W President, Chad Pregracke, gives a "Pep Talk" to the interns.



Above: Natural Resource Specialist, Jeff Nelson, introduces the staff and gives a brief description of the Mississippi River Project and the mission of the Corps of Engineers.



The interns divided up into 2 groups, 47 students went to the ¼ acre cabin site and planted 75 trees using the root production method (RPM), as well as 200 bare-root oak trees. The RPM species planted on this site included: white oak, bur oak, red oak, pecan, hackberry, sycamore and persimmon.



John Deere interns plant RPM and bare-root trees at the ¼ acre cabin site in pool 14.

The other 78 interns walked to Smith's Island located at Locks and Dam 14 where they pulled the invasive species amur honeysuckle, then filled in by planting shade tolerant species that included: silky dogwood, eastern redbud, pecan, sycamore, white oak, bur oak, red oak and hackberry.



John Deere interns removing invasive species on Smith's Island.

By the end of the day, one hundred fifty container stock trees, two hundred bare root trees, and two hundred fifty volunteer hours were provided to the government in the effort. Thank you to John Deere and Living Lands and Waters for this great accomplishment in natural resource management.

## Mississippi River Project Office News

### MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



#### **Danet Dexter – Administrative Officer**

I started my career here at the Mississippi River Project as a student aid park clerk when I was a senior in high school. Twenty five years later – and I'm still here... My current position is as an Administrative Officer. My job is varied. I pay invoices either via contract or visa payment. I am involved with contract administration, budgeting, travel and training paperwork, and I serve as the fee cashier. I also take care of the timekeeping so everyone else in the Project gets paid. Overall I do a lot of firefighting for whatever crisis is flaming the highest at the moment. It's never a dull moment in the Mississippi River Project Office.

When I'm not at work I enjoy spending time with my family. I have three children; Beau is 22, Ashley is 20 and Cody is 16. My biggest hobby is watching my daughter play soccer and basketball for St. Ambrose University. I like to be outdoors, working in the yard or helping on my folk's farm.

## ANNUAL FISHING CLINIC SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, AUGUST 6<sup>TH</sup>

Start planning to participate in 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.



## Dubuque Ranger Station News

### POEM FROM A RIVER RESIDENT

Recently our rangers at the Dubuque Ranger Office were presented this poem written by our very own volunteer campground host at the Pleasant Creek Recreation area located near Bellevue, IA.

#### Pleasant Creek on the Mississippi

By: Bruce T. Brush

A narrow strip of land where Pleasant Creek joins the Mississippi River.  
Bordered by a scenic by-way on one side, itself dominated by a rocky, wooded bluff,  
and on the other side by the "father of waters," sometimes three miles wide.

Within these borders a wildlife haven, a heavily forested wetland  
populated by coyotes, possum, frogs, raccoons and millions of fireflies.  
The river itself teeming with catfish, perch and snapping turtles.

Enter this little haven and the rest of the world disappears.  
No television, internet or even cell phone signals.  
A world of campers, tents and trailers each with a friendly  
campfire.

While the world races on and worries over every crisis,  
This little world neither worries or nor cares.  
What will we do today or not, we ponder.  
Maybe tomorrow.

We have the whole summer to enjoy our smoky fire; cold beer,  
Hot dogs and s'mores. Lazy days in the shade under our awning.  
Quite evenings listening to the croaking frogs and the river barges, chugging upstream.

Life on the Mississippi, catfish and cornbread at Pleasant Creek.





## UPCOMING PROGRAMS FOR JULY FOR GRANT RIVER CAMPGROUND:

- July 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 PM - Extreme Park Maintenance, Join Park Ranger Brian Blakeway as he will show photos of this year's spring flooding at Grant River Recreation Area. Brian will explain who and what goes into putting a park back together. There will also be short videos of "Extreme Park Maintenance" within the National Park System.
- July 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Pete Murphy from the Dubuque Humane Society
- July 23<sup>rd</sup> - To Be Announced – call 563-582-0881 for more information.
- July 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 PM - Sharon Swiggum will present "Night Sky" (astronomy), looking at slides and then through scopes.

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](mailto:mvrodmn11@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (563) 582-0881.

## Thomson Ranger Station News

### 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 June includes the following:

- July 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Joe Nobling a local musician for an evening of folk music along the river.
- July 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Frank Ross for a presentation on Mississippi Mud Art that he creates.
- July 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Don Swensson for an presentation on Fishing the Mississippi River.
- July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 PM – Join Wayland Bauer for a presentation on Astronomy.
- July 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Dave Searl on a presentation on Backyard Gardening.

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](mailto:mvrodmn13@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (815) 259-3628.

### **THOMSON CAUSEWAY RECREATION AREA TO REMAIN CLOSED TO CAMPING UNTIL AUGUST 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 August 1, 2011. This is due to flooding which has caused further delay to 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](http://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](http://www.missriver.org).

## **Mississippi River Visitor Center News**

### **BICYCLE TOUR OF HISTORIC ARSENAL ISLAND**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces that the Visitor Center at Locks and Dam #15 is inviting guests to a bicycle tour of historic Arsenal Island. This six-mile ride will be held on Saturday, July 2nd from 9:00 – 11:00 AM. The tour will begin and end at the Mississippi River Visitor's Center, located on the western end of Arsenal Island at Locks and Dam #15. This tour is free of charge and is limited to 15 bicyclists. Advance registration is required. Helmets are mandatory. An adult must accompany children under 12 years of age.

### **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, July 16<sup>th</sup> 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 for either of these programs, please contact the Visitor Center at (309) 794-5338.

## Muscatine Ranger Station News

### MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

#### Scott Bierman – Summer Park Ranger



My name is Scott Bierman and I was born and raised in Muscatine, Iowa. I have three children ranging in age from 19 to 25. I graduated from Muscatine High School in 1975. After High School I took a three year vacation starting on the West Coast and I ended up in Oahu, Hawaii for two years. I returned home to Muscatine and worked as an operator in a tannery. After the tannery closed I began working as an operator at Pretium Packaging. I worked my way up from operator to a supervisor and ended as an Operations Manager. A new Area Manager was hired and determined all Operations Managers needed a college degree, and I was released after twenty four years of service. My next job was cut short when the company locked out the union due to a contract dispute.

The lockout led me to return to school and I am currently attending Muscatine Community College. My returning to school has proven you can still teach an old dog new tricks. I was fortunate enough to be hired as a Summer Ranger last year at the Muscatine Ranger Station. I have

found this field to be so enjoyable and I love being outside after working inside a factory for thirty years. The people I have encountered are a joy to work with, and I look forward to a great summer in my second year as a Ranger. I would like to thank the Rangers at the Muscatine Ranger Station for allowing me to work this wonderful job.

### 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 month of July includes the following:

- Saturday, July 2, 2011 at 7:00 PM, Clark's Ferry Campground, Don Swenson will offer a free fishing program. Bring along a fishing pole (Don will also have some) and enjoy fishing while learning some time honored fishing techniques.
- Saturday, July 9, 2011 at 7:00 PM, Shady Creek Campground, Don Swenson will offer a free fishing program. Bring along a fishing pole (Don will also have some) and enjoy fishing while learning some time honored fishing techniques.



- Saturday, July 16, 2011 at 7:00 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 the presentation.
- Saturday, July 23, 2011 at 7:00 PM, Clark's Ferry Campground, Mike Hutchison of Iowa Parrot Rescue will present his parrots and explain his rescue program.
- Saturday, July 30, 2011 at 7:00 PM, Clark's Ferry Campground, Join Bob Burchett and learn to perfect the art of knot tying.



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](mailto:mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (563) 263-7913.

## Quincy Ranger Station News

It has been a rollercoaster ride for the Quincy area, in regards to high water. Just when the rangers think they are going to be able to access their recreation areas, Mother Nature unleashes her fury on the Mississippi River watershed and squashes all hopes of getting recreation areas useable. Water levels should be right around the action stage (15 ft.) for the 4th of July weekend with, weather pending, a substantial amount of boaters in pool 21.

A farewell goes out to Cody Alger, as his last day with the Corps is on the second of July. Cody was the lead ranger at the Quincy field station for nearly a year and a half and is moving on with the USFWS as a refuge officer. Cheers Cody, as we wish him the best. Brent Groesch will act as interim lead ranger with help from retired annuitant, Dennis Franks.

## IL DNR BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION

There is still one more chance to attend an IL DNR boating safety education course in the Quincy area. If one chooses to operate a boat in Illinois between the ages of 12-18, boating education is required. However, boating education is valuable knowledge to be had by all boat operators and passengers, especially on dynamic bodies of water, such as the Mississippi River. Class will be held at the Quincy Boat Club in Quincy, IL and is a mandatory 8 hour class with course subjects including: Basic

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Boating Safety; Equipment requirements; motorboat registration and titling; Illinois boat laws (Missouri & Iowa laws can be applicable and discussed due to geographical location); Navigation; Personal watercraft; and Emergency Measures. The state of MO will recognize an IL certificate as a valid boating education course. The course date is:

July 9, 2011 – 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (1 hr. lunch break)

For more information or to register for the class, contact the Quincy Rangers @ 217-228-0890

**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](mailto:mvrodmn15@usace.army.mil) Website - <http://www.missriver.org>