



# Mississippi River Project



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®

## Welcome to Summer Along the Mississippi River

The Memorial Day weekend was a great success along the Mississippi River this year. Visitors to the Mississippi River Project's recreation areas enjoyed warm temperatures and good water levels throughout the entire project. With all of our recreation areas open this past holiday weekend we saw more visitors to our project than in many recent years. We are not out of the woods yet for possible high water this summer season but we have certainly started off on the right foot.



## KEEPING PUBLIC LAND PUBLIC



In April of 2012 three and one half acres of Corps Fee Title land (government owned land) was renovated from bluegrass back to hardwood trees and shrubs in Pool 18 along the Mississippi River. After years of nearby homeowners encroaching (mowing) on a three acre site near Keithsburg, IL and a one half acre site in New Boston, IL the US Army Corps of Engineers has reclaimed this government fee title ground. The Environmental Stewardship rangers along with the Muscatine field station rangers planted approximately 2,300 trees with the use of a tractor and a 3 pt tree planter.

The ground was being mowed by adjacent homeowners to gain more real estate and a better view of the Mississippi river. This type of mowing encroachment can be a real problem along the river and lead to the general public not utilizing an area because they think they are walking through someone's "backyard" when they are in fact on public ground that everyone should be able to use.

## MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Mike Back – Engineering Equipment Operator

Mike works for the Mississippi River Project's maintenance crew as an engineering equipment operator. He grew up in Maquoketa, Iowa and has stayed around the area for most of his life. After high school he joined the Navy and served until 1993. Then went on to work in equipment operation at a silica sand mine in Wisconsin. After leaving Wisconsin he returned closer to home and took a job at Wendling Quarry in DeWitt, Iowa before coming onboard with the Corps of Engineers in 2003. He is also part of the Rock Island District Corps of Engineers' dive team that deals with inspection and maintenance on Corps owned structures on the Mississippi River, Illinois River, and all three reservoirs in the District. The dive team is made up of people who are highly trained in working underwater and in low visibility environments. Only a few members of the District can say they have been part of this group who are willing to venture to the depths of the muddy Mississippi and contend the catfish while doing their job. In Mike's free time he spends a lot of time outdoors and enjoys watching sports, riding motorcycle, and snowmobiling.



## Dubuque Ranger Station News

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT GRANT RIVER CAMPGROUND:

- Saturday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM - Veterans Freedom Center Program
- Saturday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM - African Safari Program - Come out and see Africa from the lens of professional photographer Gary Fagan.
- Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 PM - Dubuque Humane Society will be presenting a program
- Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM - High Points - Join Sharon Swiggum as she shares her adventures to the highest points in different states across America.

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.

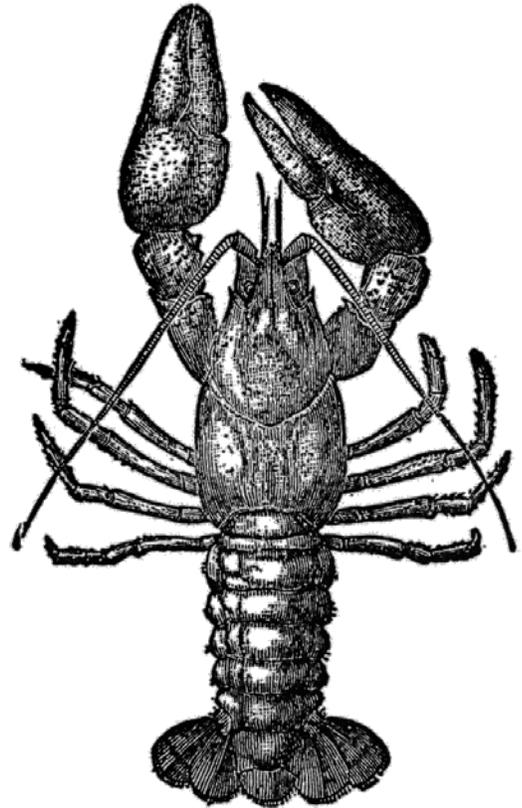
To reserve a campsite contact the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at (877) 444-6777. Campsites may also be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact the Dubuque Park Rangers by e-mail at [mvrodmn11@usace.army.mil](mailto:mvrodmn11@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (563) 582-0881.

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.

## **Crawdads In The Creek**

**By: Bruce T. Brush**

*The waters of the creek were sluggish and murky.  
I peered down from the trestle with no expectation.  
The last flood left a tangle of tree branches and debris.  
Something stirred below the surface, it was alive.  
One would expect a frog or a tadpole, maybe a minnow.  
But this creature defied any rational being I knew.  
As the water became like a prism their shape was revealed.  
There were more than one and I could see their clawed arms.  
These aquatic strangers seemed to be swimming backward.  
They clutched something of food in their clawed arms.  
My instinct was to capture one and examine it close up.  
But caution seemed to be in order here, they could bite.  
The old trestle was long abandoned, the pilings rotted.  
It was a relic of the steam engine, all the track was missing.  
It was no effort to climb down and dip my hand in the water.  
I clung to a cross brace, darted my hand to grasp a creature.  
It fit easily in the palm of my hand and sat there immobile.  
There we were, up close and eye-to-eye just looking.  
Then in an act of defiance it waved a clawed arm at me.  
This tiny animal suddenly was demanding some respect.  
As we stared at each other a blanket of guilt swept over me.  
This little animal was God's creature, a bearer of life.  
Upon reflection there was a moment of bonding that occurred.  
I lowered it back into it's home and it proudly swam away.*



## **Thomson Ranger Station News**

### **TAKE A TOUR OF LOCK AND DAM #13**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi River Project announces that weekly tours of Lock and Dam #13 in Fulton, IL will begin May 27, 2012. The weekly Lock and Dam Tours will take place every Sunday from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend at 1p.m.

The tours will cover a brief history of the Mississippi River and the purpose of Locks and Dams along the river. All tours will start near the overlook building located at Lock and Dam #13 Day Use Area. All participants must wear closed toed shoes to attend the full lock tour. If you or your group is interested in participating in a tour, contact the Thomson Park Ranger Office at (815) 259-3928 for additional information.

## IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY TURTLE CAMP RETURNS TO THOMSON CAUSEWAY FOR 25TH YEAR



If you have ever spent time in the Thomson Causeway Recreation Area in early spring than you have certainly noticed the orange flags scattered all over Potters Marsh South Camping Loop. This spring marks the 25th Anniversary for Dr. Fred Janzen, of Iowa State University, and his students in the campground collecting data used for documenting turtle nesting.

Dr. Janzen and his students work around the clock to record turtle nesting activity as it occurs. You can spot them collecting turtles, counting eggs and covering nests with steel mesh to protect the eggs from predators. This Saturday June 2<sup>nd</sup> Dr. Janzen will be hosting a Campground program beginning at

7:00pm at the Thomson Causeway Amphitheatre where he will discuss what he has learned over the last 25 years.

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT FISHERMAN'S CORNER CAMPGROUND:

- Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Don Swensson for a presentation on Fishing the Mississippi
- Saturday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Roy Peters for some information on proper upkeep and maintenance for your RV.
- Saturday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Berry Willams will present a program on wood whittling.
- Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 PM – Come hear Kendall Davis as he demonstrates and educates about the art of boomerangs.
- Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 PM – Join Alan Sheidler for a lesson on the night sky in this program on astronomy.

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.

## 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 will be providing a guided bicycle tour of historic Arsenal Island.

Did you know that the town of Davenport was named after a murdered Colonel, or that hundreds of people died while in prison on the Island? The answers to these questions and many more may be found on this relaxing informational ride.

This six-mile ride will be held on Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:30-11:30am. Historic points of interest that the tour will ride by include: the Colonel Davenport Home, the old Moline Lock, RI Arsenal Quarters #1, the Confederate Cemetery, and many more. The tour will begin and end at the Mississippi River Visitor 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. No training wheels are allowed.

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 the tour, please contact the Visitor Center at (309) 794-5338.

### UPCOMING SUMMER OF PADDLING 2012 EVENT – MOLINE, IL

Get an oar in the water on June 7<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 4:00 PM at the Moline Rowing Club located at 1701 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Moline, IL. Try out canoes and kayaks on the backwaters of the Mississippi River. All equipment will be provided for the event and parking will be available at the City of Moline public lot at 17<sup>th</sup> St. and River Drive. To pre-register for this event call 309-794-5505 or e-mail [iovita.a.martin@usace.army.mil](mailto:iovita.a.martin@usace.army.mil). To learn more about the Summer of Paddling 2012 check out [www.sop2012.org](http://www.sop2012.org).

## Muscatine Ranger Station News

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT SHADY CREEK AND CLARKS FERRY CAMPGROUNDS:

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.

- Saturday June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00 PM, Fairport Fish Hatchery, 3390 Highway 22, Muscatine, IA, meet Ken Snyder from the Department of Natural Resources fish hatchery to learn how a fish hatchery works and tour the facility.
- Saturday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM, Clark's Ferry Campground, perfect the art of knot tying with Bob Burchett.
- Saturday, June 16<sup>th</sup> 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, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 PM, Shady Creek Campground, Berry Williams will explain some of the techniques and woods he uses when he whittles.
- Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM, Clark's Ferry Campground, come and learn about greyhounds and the Quad Cities Greyhound Adoption program.

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 firewood.

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.

## **STILL LOOKING FOR A BLANCHARD ISLAND VOLUNTEER CAMPGROUND HOST**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces that it is looking for a Fulltime Volunteer Campground Host to work at Blanchard Island Recreation Area from May 15, 2011 to October 15, 2011. Blanchard Island Recreation Area is located along the Mississippi River just south of Muscatine, Iowa. . The campground host is responsible for the daily tasks of greeting park visitors, informing campers of self-registration procedures, cleaning the restrooms daily, cleaning out fire rings weekly, and informing the park rangers of maintenance needs. Volunteers will not collect nor handle money. Hosts provide an average of 21 hours of volunteer service per week and may serve for the entire recreation season. Click here for a full job description. The volunteer selected for this position is provided a campsite with water, electric, and a dump station in the park. If you are interested in volunteering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers please contact Park Rangers by calling 563-263-7913 or email [kevin.j.zidarich@usace.army.mil](mailto:kevin.j.zidarich@usace.army.mil).

## **SUMMER OF PADDLING EVENT ON LAKE ODESSA**

The Summer of Paddling 2012 is a series of paddling events on the Mississippi River for new and experienced paddlers and is an outcome of the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative (MRCC). The MRCC partners (Federal and State agencies working with non-governmental organizations) are striving to provide Americans and visitors from around the world with opportunities to experience the Mississippi River through recreational and stewardship programs. Together we can preserve the corridor; a corridor rich in history, culture, lore and wildlife.

The US Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project participated in a Summer of Paddling 2012 event, the Louisa County Youth Jamboree, hosted by the Louisa County Conservation Board on Lake Odessa on May 5, 2012. The day's events included a chance for area youth and their families to experience canoeing and kayaking first hand at Shafer's Access on the Lake Odessa Wildlife Complex, located near Lock and Dam #17 on the Mississippi River. Canoes, kayaks, life jackets and were provided as well as experienced kayakers to assist with those new to paddling.

The Louisa County Youth Jamboree was a great success with over 150 youth and their families attending the event. More Summer of Paddling 2012 events are scheduled up and down the Mississippi River. For more information on upcoming Summer of Paddling 2012 events, visit [www.sop2012.org](http://www.sop2012.org)

To read a news article printed in the Muscatine Journal about this event you can visit [http://muscatinejournal.com/news/local/a-good-day-for-the-great-outdoors-louisa-county-calls/article\\_7157c6ea-97e2-11e1-a865-0019bb2963f4.html](http://muscatinejournal.com/news/local/a-good-day-for-the-great-outdoors-louisa-county-calls/article_7157c6ea-97e2-11e1-a865-0019bb2963f4.html).

## Quincy Ranger Station News

### SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS MEETING



Illinois and Iowa state chapters of Society of American Foresters (SAF) held a spring meeting in Quincy, IL on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. The joint chapter SAF meeting had a main focus in floodplain forest dynamics and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) timber management of floodplain forest on the Mississippi River in Rock Island District. Attendees arrived at the COE campground, Bear Creek, and began their trip to six

field site locations on Long Island and Ward Island. At these field sites, SAF members were informed of cooperative management on COE property with the Fish and Wildlife Service and the state agencies of Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. SAF members had the chance to view tree plantings, forest management sites, and timber harvests. Transportation to and from locations by boat gave everyone a firsthand experience and reference to challenges with working on the Mississippi River. Presenting information and providing transportation for the field tour portion of the meeting included COE Natural Resource Specialists from St. Louis and Rock Island Districts, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Attending the meeting included

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federal employees, state foresters, private land owners, university professors, and college students, 50 members in total. Foresters and individuals came from six different states to attend this meeting; Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, New York, Tennessee, and Indiana. Of those attending, two foresters are currently National SAF District Council Representatives and one immediate past President of SAF.

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**Thank you,**

**Natural Resource Management Staff**

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