



Mississippi River Project



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Spring is in Full Swing along the Mississippi River

In typical springtime fashion the weather has been playing tricks on visitors to the Mississippi. One day it is sunny and warm and the next it can be frosty and cool. Despite the ups and downs of the temperature our recreation areas along the river remain busy with early springtime campers and boaters. Most of the recreation sites are now open or will be opening later this month.

Dubuque Ranger Station News

21ST ANNUAL ECO-MEET

The staff at our Dubuque ranger station will be hosting the 21st annual Eco-Meet May 11th at Eagle Point Park. There are currently 35 schools signed up to compete. This annual event gives students and teachers a chance to challenge other schools in a friendly completion. The students attend learning sessions on a variety of topics including Water Safety, Animals Around Us, Forestry, and Fish of the Mississippi. These students are then tested on the knowledge they gained from the session and the team with the highest score wins the challenge. This year's sponsors for the event include the Dubuque Audubon Society, Coca-Cola, Papa Johns, and Pizza Hut.



BLANDING LANDING RECREATION AREA OPENING

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces the opening of Blanding Landing Recreation Area on May 11, 2012. Blanding Landing Recreation Area is located on the shores of the Mississippi River thirteen miles south of Galena, Illinois. Facilities at the park include 30 campsites with electrical hookups, 7 walk-in tent sites, shower building with flush toilets, on site camp host, and a boat ramp with courtesy dock. There is no charge to enter the recreation area. The camping fees are \$14.00 per night for electrical sites and \$10.00 per night for the tent sites. Campsite reservations can be made on the internet at www.recreation.gov or by calling Reserve America toll free at (877) 444-6777. Reservations may also be made in person at the campground fee booth beginning May 11th. For additional information please contact: Dubuque Park Rangers, 2595 Kerper Boulevard, Dubuque, Iowa 52001 or call (563) 582-0881.

Thomson Ranger Station News

KIDS TO PARKS DAY – MAY 16

Riverdale Jr. High School will be visiting the Mississippi River Project on May 16th to participate in the National Kids to Parks Day, a National Park Trust Initiative. Students will be visiting Lock and Dam #13 where they will learn the rich history of the Mississippi River and how it has evolved. The students will also participate in a water safety event while there. After lunch, the students will visit the Thomson Causeway Recreation Area where they will enjoy a tour of the Hidden Slough Nature Trail. Students will utilize a nature packet to identify flora and fauna.

THOMSON CAUSEWAY PHOTO CONTEST RETURNS

The Annual Mississippi River Project Photo Contest is returning for its 21st year. Beginning on May 25 amateur photographers will be able to submit photos in three separate categories: Wildlife, Recreation, or Landscape. Photos must be taken on pools 11-16 of the Mississippi River. Participants have until Friday, August 24th to submit photos to the Thomson Ranger Office. If you would like more information regarding the contest, contact the Thomson Ranger Office at (815)259-3628

Mississippi River Visitor Center News



FREE TOURS OF LOCKS AND DAM # 15

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces they will be offering free tours of Locks and Dam #15 starting Memorial Day weekend and running 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.

If you do not have time to attend tours then just stop by for a visit. The Corps of Engineers Visitor Center gives you a great view of the locking through process at Locks and Dam # 15. There is picnicking and restroom facilities, as well as items unique to the river for sale. The visitor center is located on the west end of Arsenal Island in Rock Island, Illinois and is open 9:00 AM till 5:00 PM daily.

The facility is accessible via the Moline or Rock Island entrances 24 hours a day 7 days a week and via the Davenport entrance Monday-Friday from 5:30am-8:15am and 2:00pm-5:30pm. 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.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Ryan Watson – SCEP Park Ranger

I am currently one of the new students employed by the Mississippi River Project in the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) at the Mississippi River Visitor Center and although I started at the end of March, I can already tell I am going to love it here. The rangers here are absolutely amazing and I have already learned so much from them. Although I'm new, this isn't the first time I've been exposed to the workings of the Corps. In 2010, I began volunteering with Ben Vandermyde and other Foresters from the project office assisting with various field projects. Their immense body of knowledge and passion inspired me to continue and strengthen my relationship with the USACE.

Also, I am a full-time student at Western Illinois University-Quad Cities in Moline where I am finishing up my Bachelors of Science degree in Recreation, Park, & Tourism Administration. This wonderful program has provided me with the skills and knowledge to be a potentially valuable asset to the Mississippi River Project. I am looking forward to meeting more of the great people within the project during this busy rec. season.



IL DNR BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION CLASS - MAY 12

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces that they will be offering a free boating safety education class. The class will be held on May 12th, 2012. The class will run from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. This class is recommended for people who are new to boating on the Mississippi, families that enjoy weekend boating adventures, or seasoned boaters who would just like to brush up on their safe boating knowledge. Anyone over the age of 12 can be certified. Those under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. This is a classroom based safety course and will not include on-the-water experience. Upon successful completion of the class and exam, participants will be issued an Illinois DNR Boat Safety certification which is honored in both Iowa and Illinois. These classes will be held at the Mississippi River Project Office (located near Locks and Dam #14) address of: 25549 – 182nd Street in Pleasant Valley, Iowa 52767. Pre-registration is required, space is limited, and the classes fill quickly. To register, contact the park rangers at (309) 794-5338.

Muscatine Ranger Station News

BLANCHARD ISLAND VOLUNTEER CAMPGROUND HOST NEEDED

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. Click here for a Volunteer Host Application.

SHADY CREEK RECREATION AREA OPENING



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces the opening of Shady Creek Recreation Area on May 4, 2012. Shady Creek Recreation Area is located on the shores of the Mississippi River just upstream of Fairport, Iowa. Facilities at the park include 53 campsites with electrical hookups, shower building with flush toilets, on site camp host, and a boat ramp with courtesy dock. There is no charge to enter the recreation area. The camping fees are \$16.00 and \$18.00 per night for electrical sites. Campsite reservations can be made on the internet at www.recreation.gov or by calling Reserve America toll free at (877) 444-6777. Reservations may also be made in person at the campground fee booth beginning May 11th. For additional

information please contact: Muscatine Park Rangers, 810 Main St., Muscatine, Iowa 52761 or call (563) 263-7913.

Quincy Ranger Station News

HANNIBAL COURTESY VESSEL SAFETY INSPECTION

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mississippi River Project announces that the U.S. Coast Guard and the Corps' Quincy Park Rangers are offering a Courtesy Vessel Check on Saturday May 5th from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the "Treasure Chest" parking lot; on Lyon Street between 3rd and 4th in Hannibal, MO. Are you new to boating or a seasoned boater with questions concerning boating safety and safety equipment required aboard your vessel? Will your vessel and safety equipment pass a U.S. Coast Guard safety check? Well, now is your chance to find out!

Vessel checks will be performed to U.S. Coast Guard and State standards; all vessels passing the safety check will be issued a 2012 U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Safety Check sticker. To take advantage of this special courtesy safety check bring your vessel(s)/or personal watercraft to the Treasure Chest parking lot on May 5th and start the boating season off right. If May 5th is not convenient, additional safety checks are scheduled on May 12th in LaGrange, MO and May 19th in Quincy, IL. Contact the Mississippi River Rangers at (217) 228-0890 for additional information. Make boating safety your #1 priority in 2012. Remember: "Boat smart. Boat safe. Wear your PFD!"

IL DNR BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION CLASS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mississippi River Project announces that the Quincy Corps' Rangers and the Quincy Boat Club will co-sponsor an IL Department of Natural Resources (IL DNR) Boating Safety Education Class. The eight (8) hour class is free and course subjects include: Basic boating safety; Equipment requirements; Motorboat registration and titling; Illinois boating laws; Navigation; Personal watercraft (PWC); Emergency measures. Upon successful completion of the class, participants will receive an IL Boating Safety Education Certificate. Illinois State law requires individuals 12 through 18 years of age to have a Boating Safety Education Certificate before they can operate a boat or PWC, without adult supervision. **The IL DNR Boating Safety Education Class meets Missouri's requirements for non-residents requiring boat operators born after Jan 1, 1984 to receive boating education.** Classes will be held at the Quincy Boat Club on Wednesday, May 9th and Thursday, May 10th. Classes will run from 6:00 p.m to 10:00 p.m each night and **both** sessions must be attended to successfully complete the class. Additional classes are scheduled for June 9th and July 14th. Contact the Mississippi River Rangers at (217) 228-0890 to pre-register for this class or future classes.

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,

Natural Resource Management Staff

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

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