



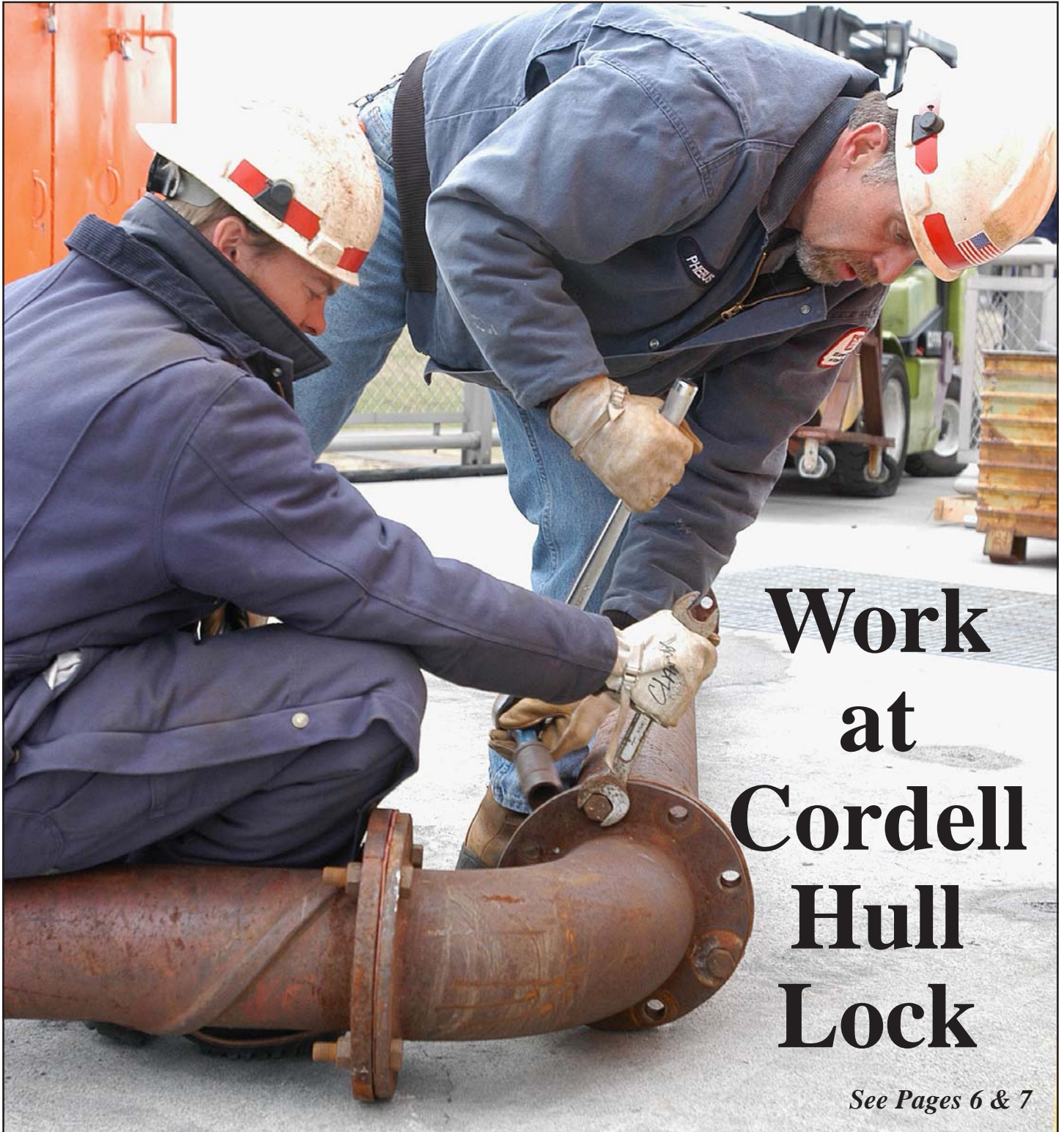
US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Nashville District

# DistrictDigest

Volume 105, Number 3

*Respected-Responsible-Reliable*

March 2005



## Work at Cordell Hull Lock

*See Pages 6 & 7*

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## *SAME Offers Student Scholarships for 2005-2006*

The Nashville Post of the Society of American Military Engineers invites high school seniors and current college students pursuing a degree in the fields of engineering, architecture, mathematics, or computer science to apply for scholarships for the 2005-2006 academic year.

Scholarships up to \$2,500 will be awarded for the academic year. Complete details and an electronic version of the scholarship application form can be found


on the Nashville Post website at [www.samenashvillepost.org](http://www.samenashvillepost.org). The deadline for application is April 22. Recipients will be notified of awards by June 10 with funds distributed directly to the student's university on August 1. Questions about the program should be directed to William L. James, Regulatory Branch, telephone 615-369-7508, e-mail at [william.l.james@lrn02.usace.army.mil](mailto:william.l.james@lrn02.usace.army.mil). The Nashville Post created the scholarship program in 1990. 



photo by Dave Treadway

## On the Cover

Chris Clabough (left) and Kevin Phebus, Cumberland River Operations Center Plant Unit, tighten the bolts that connect two pieces of pipe that will be attached to a 95 horsepower pump at Cordell Hull Lock March 7 as they prepare to help dewater the facility for the first time in 10 years. The lock will be out of commission until repairs are completed later this month. For complete details, see pages 6 and 7.

## District Digest

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Information about the Nashville District may also be found on the District's homepage at: <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil>.

# Lieutenant Colonel Byron Jorns From Where I Sit

**F**olks ...this month, I want to share a few thoughts on safety. I've noticed a variety of Accident Reports (ENG Form 3394) come across my desk and those reports show some disturbing trends.

First, the Nashville District has incurred an increasing amount of lost-time injuries due to slips, trips, and falls. In the past several months, our workforce has suffered the pains and lost-time from bruised knees, wrenched hips, and twisted ankles.

We can do a better job of taking care of our most valued resource...you... our workforce. Most of these accidents are preventable through situational awareness of the worksite, the safety risks, as well as your own physical limitations when attempting a maneuver. Please remind each other of the simple, but very

## Communication

important, basics of safety in your daily travels such as debris on walkways. Remove/avoid these hazards as you go about your day and look out for your coworkers.

A simple reminder from a friend/coworker is sometimes all it takes. I need your help to ensure that you and your coworker depart the worksite at the end of each day in the same shape you arrived in the morning.

...second, welding related accidents have been on the rise. I know we've accomplished a tremendous amount of work recently and helped to speedily recover from a variety of unforeseen emergencies. However, the need to ensure proper eye protection at all times is key to guarding against debris entering the eye. Wearing the proper footwear to guard against falling debris is basic safety.

...finally, ladder-related injuries have also increased. Please do not become overly confident when using a ladder.

Body position and extended movements can cause falls. Please take the time to reposition ladders as necessary and use the buddy system of anchor support. Of course, always

caution coworkers against unsafe acts. I realize sometimes the excitement of trying to get the work done may distract us from the safety aspects of the mission. ...my view is that one accident is one accident too many.

I need your help. The Nashville District's contractor lost-time injuries this past year is zero. I applaud this unblemished track record of safety.

I see no reason why the safety of our own workforce should be any different. The health of our Corps employees is no less valuable than our contractors.



Please help me take care of our workforce. I can't do this alone, after all *Safety...it's a team effort.*  
...thank you!

## February Employee of the Month

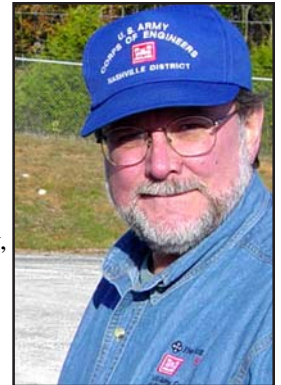
**L**ynn Bowden was selected as the Nashville District Employee of the Month for February.

Bowden arranged many video-teleconferences with the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division and with Headquarters USACE during February. His flexibility, efficiency and willingness to serve provided invaluable support for Nashville District programs and projects.

Bowden was also called upon to provide video support during several retirement celebrations. His assistance with each ceremony was invaluable.

Senior Leaders select the Nashville District employee of the Month from the many excellent employees

identified by the District's chain of command. Selected individuals personify the seven Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.



Lynn Bowden

## Tenn-Tom Chief Waldon to Retire

**D**on Waldon, who has worked to develop and promote the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway for 30 years, will retire June 30 as administrator of the agency that oversees the 234-mile man-made canal that winds its way from Tennessee through Mississippi to Mobile, Ala.

Waldon began promoting the waterway in 1975 and became director of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Authority in 1984. The Mobile, Ala., native joined the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1961 and later joined the staff of what is known today as the Office of Management and Budget and later as a

deputy assistant secretary of the Interior Department. The Tenn-Tom, which provides shorter shipping distances to the Gulf of Mexico, opened to commercial traffic in January 1985.

"My biggest disappointment is we haven't had more private investment," Waldon said. "The waterway offers a lot of opportunities." He said the Corps has identified two locations along the Tenn-Tom that would be ideal for resort development - one in north Mississippi and the other in Alabama. Waldon expects the development to continue to grow as new industry comes to the area and the price of fuel continues to increase.

# Skimmer Boat Arrives at Lake Cumberland

**S**OMERSET, KY (Mar. 2, 2005) — U.S. Representative Hal Rogers announced today that the “skimmer boat” that will collect trash on Lake Cumberland has arrived in Pulaski County. The vessel, which is actually a tow boat with two barges, will collect debris from the lake’s surface and shore line.

“After waiting anxiously for two years, I am pleased to report that the skimmer boat has made its way to Pulaski County,” said Rogers. “This one-of-a-kind vessel was specifically designed and built with the unique terrain and needs of Lake Cumberland in mind. I expect the skimmer boat to make a significant impact on our cleanup efforts at the lake.”

## Process

The three main components of the vessel were unloaded today at the Lake View boat ramp, behind Picasso’s Bistro on U.S. 27 in Somerset. A crane from the U.S. 90 bridge construction project was used to move the 26-foot-long tow boat and the two 60-foot-long barges from trucks to the water. The American Bridge Company provided the crane.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which will operate the skimmer boat, will now begin putting the boat together. Once assembled, Corps staff will begin “test driving” the one-of-a-kind vessel. An official christening ceremony will be announced at a later date. Once in



**The craft designed to help keep Lake Cumberland free of debris arrives disassembled (below) on four separate trucks and is placed in the Lake (above) March 2 by the American Bridge Company.**

photos by Dave Treadway



service, the boat will operate throughout the lake. The Lake View boat ramp will be its base of operations.

The boat’s journey to its permanent mooring ramp was a long one. The disassembled vessel traveled on four trucks to Somerset from Mobile, Ala., where it was manufactured by the Advanced Industrial and Marine Company. The convoy of trucks left Mobile on February 28 and arrived in Somerset late on March 1. The unloading process began early on March 2.

Rogers used his senior position on the Appropriations Committee to secure \$700,000 in the federal budget for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build the skimmer boat. 🏗️

# Bill Hill Named New Chief Counsel

by Dave Treadway

Nashville native William T. (Bill) Hill was unanimously selected as Nashville District's new Chief Counsel early this month.

"Bill Hill brings a wealth of experience to the position," said Lt. Col. Byron Jorns. "I look forward to his teamwork and leadership as the Nashville District continues its public service to the communities of the Cumberland and Tennessee River Valleys."

The Vanderbilt University Law School graduate first joined the District in 1978 after serving as a Deputy Counsel for the Tennessee State Board of Regents, with the State Legislature, and in private practice. He earned his undergraduate degree from Tennessee State University in 1971. Hill served for two years as trial attorney for contracts in the Ohio River Division in the mid-80's.

Most recently Hill served as Labor Counselor and Assistant District Counsel

for the Nashville District. His primary involvement in the government has been in the areas of Personnel and Equal Employment Opportunity law. He served on the Task Force in 1994-1995 that developed and implemented the Corps of Engineers Alternative Dispute Resolution process (Corps of Engineers Early Resolution Process/CEERP), and helped author the Corps' governing regulation. Since then he has trained Corps employees on the subject and served as a mediator in several Corps of Engineers offices. He also represented the government in one of the first mini-trials to settle a \$70 million contract claim.

"I enjoyed my two years as a Division Trial Attorney," said Hill, "because I liked the trial environment. I got to try four cases in federal and state court. Most of the time a government attorney doesn't get to do actual trial work outside the administrative arena." At the same time, he found that he liked preventive law, when one tries to work out solutions to avoid going to court.

The new Chief Counsel sees his role as giving good sound legal advice so that the District is in a sound legal position.



"A Chief Counsel," added Hill, "is only as good as his people. I think we have one of the best legal offices in the country. We all respect each other, we all get along (well together). From my experience, that is not always the case. I want to make sure that our attorneys are challenged with what they are doing, and allowed to develop in other areas. If you take care of your people, they will take care of you."

He feels Nashville District has a vibrant future but also feels that we will have to learn to be more integrated into the regional management plan.

"The question becomes," said Hill, "Are we going to have seven districts, each with the ability to do the same thing? I foresee that we may have some areas of expertise where you have certain specialties located in different districts. To be competitive, we may need specialization. We may have to take out some of the redundancies. If we can do that, I think we will be much stronger, and better prepared. I see it as a good future, especially for Nashville, because we have good people here."

In June 1995 he became the first attorney to receive the Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Award from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

He and his wife Etheleen, who is Associate Dean for Curriculum Development at MeHarry Medical College, have four children, Yolanda, Billye, Stewart, and Steve. 🏠



Zarna Surti, Ann Marie Gideon, and Mary Catherine Moore, students from Franklin Road Academy, sing an inspiring acappella version of the hymn *Amazing Grace* before Dr. Reavis L. Mitchell, Jr., professor of history at Fisk University, came to the podium as guest speaker. The theme for the 2005 observance of the Black History Month Program was "The Niagara Movement."

Audiovisual Specialist Lynn Bowden videotaped the observance



and will make it available to anyone who was not able to attend.

# Cordell Hull Lock Gets March Makeover

Story and photos by Dave Treadway

Members of the Cumberland River Operations Center (CROC) moved into the usually quiet confines of Cordell Hull Lock March 1 and will leave at the end of the month once all repairs have been made. The lock, on a 10-year schedule, was last dewatered in 1995.

Project Manager Gerald Choat explained March 7 what was planned as workers scurried about placing pumps, pipes and other equipment into position to perform the maintenance.

"On the lower end of the Lock," said Choat, "we are going to replace the hydraulic pipes. The replacements will be stainless steel. There will be three, 2-inch stainless steel

pipes all the way across the bottom of the lock.

"Those were damaged," Choat explained, "when the Warioto came into the lock to do some dredging and in the process, the towboat caught a log and ripped them from their anchorage. Our initial repair was done with black iron pipe and that just won't stand up to the catholic corrosion.

"We will remove the existing haulage unit here for use at Old Hickory Lock and take the track from the top of the lock wall to Kentucky Lock for use there. Kentucky Lock is getting a new tow haulage unit and with this 400 feet of track (which is not used at Cordell Hull because all traffic is recreational) then Kentucky Lock will only have to buy an additional 200 feet of track.

"In the valves (of the lock) we are rerouting the grease lines. We are installing new hydraulic flex line in all four valves to ensure no ruptures in the lines in the near future.

"Down on the lower gates," continued Choat, "we will probably find some welds that will have to be re-welded. We've had some leaks around some of the miter blocks. We'll have to use some kind of backing material in those to stop the leaks. They are not leaking in the miter blocks themselves, but the leaks are in behind the miter blocks. Whenever we do the inspection, any required repairs that we find in the valves, any worn top seals or side seals, will be replaced.

"After all that is accomplished, time permitting, we will move and set the emergency dam on the upper end because we have a pintle seal on the upper river gate that needs to be replaced."

Charlie Bryan, Lockmaster at Old Hickory and Cordell Hull Locks, pointed from the lock wall to two pumps on the deck of Derrickboat #11, the Manitowoc. "Those two pumps," said Bryan, "rated at 177 horsepower, will pump all the water out of the chamber, once we have them set in

place. They can pump it out in about 9 or 10 hours."

Choat plans to ensure that all repairs are completed by working employees four days a week, 10-hour days with only one shift. Normally a project manager would work two 10 hour shifts seven days a week during a dewatering to reduce the delays of river traffic but at Cordell Hull there is no commercial traffic.

Three people will be on duty Friday, Saturday and Sunday to check pumps, monitor water levels, coordinate with the powerhouse and with Hershel Whitworth in the Hydrology & Hydraulics Branch.

Bryan indicated that he has spoken with several towing companies about shipping cargo from upstream of Cordell Hull but nothing has materialized.

**Bobby Holt (right) and Anthony Certeza rig a dewatering pump March 7 so it can be set in place by Derrick Boat Operator Jason Bradley (right inset) to pump the water from Cordell Hull Lock.**





The Derrickboat Manitowoc and barges loaded with equipment from the Cumberland River Operations Center fill Cordell Hull Lock (above).

In photo at left, Plant Unit employees Bobby Holt, Tony Gray and Anthony Certeza (left to right) help set dewatering pumps in Cordell Hull Lock March 7.

Donald Berryman and Ben Amos (photo at far left) assemble discharge pipe for one of the two 95 horsepower dewatering pumps that will be used to drain the lock chamber.

# Directions from the Chief of Engineers

Someone has said the primary purpose of a leader is to determine the organization's direction, to stand in the ebb and flow of accomplishment and say, "We go this way." Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock did just that recently when he spent three days touring the Pacific Ocean Division, speaking to and visiting with Corps employees there. The following are excerpts from his speeches and other comments.

**Serving The War Fighter** — "The work you do everyday definitely makes a lasting impression on our Soldiers serving our country. Nothing impresses a young Soldier more than coming home to his greatly improved living quarters and new training facilities. Enhancing his or her morale translates into an eager and highly motivated Soldier. You are ALL making that a reality."

**Mission Expanding Globally Through Talented Workforce** — "We

have a great team of military and civilian employees. Structures are important, but they don't get built without great people to build them."

**Corps Needs to Continue Perfecting Its Mission** — "We need to maintain our construction momentum, focus on mission execution, look for innovative ways to improve and reach out more effectively to our stakeholders," Strock said at a recent town hall meeting. "My challenge to you – the people who are the backbone of our command efforts – is to be better, faster, cheaper and safer in every task we do."

**Reach-Back Critical to Supporting Soldiers, Employees** —

## Communication

"The Corps' is projecting a strong influence in rebuilding and creating new infrastructure in Iraq," Strock said. "The use of tele-engineering has also greatly



Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock

increased our abilities to provide direct support to our deployed forces in Afghanistan. We definitely are making a difference in both countries."

**On-Site Communications Vital** — "Meeting the customer face-to-face at a project worksite opens a vital door of communications - for direct communications between the Corps, contractor and customer. Sometimes we may overlook these opportunities, which can be so useful to the completion of a project."

**Relationships Important** — "It's been my experience that the relationship between the contractor and the Corps is the most important aspect for the successful completion of any project. The Corps strives to ensure the information flow is seamless at all levels."

**Priority One** — "Priority number one is supporting the global war on terror. Our military construction (MILCON) budget almost doubled in 18 months due to the global war on terrorism. As the new Chief, my intent is to build upon the momentum, vision and values sent forth by the previous two chiefs (of Engineers) and keep striving to improve our processes and people. Together, we will make that happen."

**Final Word** — "Maintain the momentum we have achieved so far, focus on mission execution and take care of each other. Always remember who we serve and the mission before us." 🏠

## Employee Now Published Author

by Dave Treadway

Donna Pendergrass, an office Assistant in the Safety and Occupational Health Office, is excited about her future as a writer. The newly published author is now marketing her first book, a romance novel entitled *Thief In My Heart*, and said, "My road is unlimited, I'm going to just go where it takes me!"

The Nashville native grew up with two brothers and two sisters and graduated from Stratford High School.

She has enjoyed writing poetry since childhood because "it's just the way I express myself in words." She estimated that collection now contains "more than 300 poems on just about every topic, from spiritual, to love, to hate," which she hopes to also one day publish.

"But," laughed Pendergrass, "my next book will probably be more inspirational, I will call it my 'Oprah' Book."

She has five children, four girls and one boy, ranging in age from five to 11, whom she calls her little angels.

Fellow employee, mentor and author Diane Frost helped her find a publisher, encouraged her to pursue her dreams, 'and the rest is history.' Frost pointed her to IUniverse, a

self-publish, print-on-demand company that allows authors to retain rights to their work in the event a major publisher 'discovers them' and wants to pick them up.

Donna's real dream is to one day be a motivational speaker. She wants to encourage others to pursue their dreams, never give up, no matter the circumstances.

"I want everybody to know, especially high school kids, that if something adverse happens, it isn't the end. I had my first child while still in high school but I didn't quit, I went on to finish school and others can too. I want to encourage them to stay focused. I want to be a model they can follow."

Pendergrass published the novel under the pen name, D'jonaa', created from her first initial and those of each of her children.



Donna Pendergrass





Cordell Hull Mechanic Pat Lamkin and the artwork he created for the sixth floor of the Estes Kefauver Federal Building.

# Master Craftsman Leaves His Mark

Story and photos by Dave Treadway

**C**ordell Hull Lock and Dam Equipment Mechanic/Operator Pat Lamkin has served the Nashville District for 32 years.

But it is not that service for which he may be remembered most in the Nashville District Office.

Lamkin was recently asked by Steve Moneymaker, along with team-members Anita Jarrett, Freddie Bell and Amy Agoo, to build a replica of the Corps Castle for display on the sixth floor of the Estes Kefauver Federal Building, one of the floors occupied by the Nashville District, and he created an original that could well be called a masterpiece.

“Work like this is not usually what I do as a Lock Operator or Mechanic,” said Lamkin. “I work with wood as a hobby. I’ve built china hutches, chests, and gun cabinets. There’s just about nothing I haven’t made,” revealed the Elmwood, Tenn., resident.

“The design was my idea so it’s the first of its kind. I used three kinds of wood. Most of it is red oak, the inlays are of black walnut, and I used a little birch veneer. It contains no plywood.”

The artwork immediately received rave reviews and generated more work

for the woodworking hobbyist. He was asked by Operations Chief Mike Ensch to make a miniature of the Castle.

“That was harder,” revealed Lamkin, “because the inlays were smaller and I had to build templates to hold the tiny pieces for the router.” The miniature was presented as a retirement gift to Operations Manager Richard Puckett.

## People

Charlie Bryan said Lamkin excels at everything he does.

“He does a super job,” said Bryan, “not only in his woodworking, but in his lock and dam work too. He is very proficient in everything he does.”

Lamkin grew up in Bardstown, Ky., and has been working with wood for as long as he can remember.

“The more you do it, the better you get,” said the father of two and grandfather of five. “The other day I was going to throw away some picture frames that I made about 30 years ago and my wife said, ‘No you’re not, those show your humble beginnings!’”, precisely why he had planned to pitch them out.

Steve Moneymaker helped Lamkin bring all his tools and artwork into the Federal Building one Thursday and the Master Mechanic installed the signature

artwork alongside other images of the Corps Castle obtained by Freddie Bell from the Corps History Office in Washington, D.C. He installed it after hours when traffic near the elevator would be minimal.

Pat Lamkin has left his signature on Cordell Hull for the past 20 years.

Now when visitors exit the elevator on the sixth floor of the Federal Building, there is no question about who lives and works there. Lamkin’s signature, and that of the Corps of Engineers, is now there as well. 🏰

## Screenings For Health

**T**he Federal Employee Health Unit in Room A440 of the Federal Building will offer diabetes screening during March. Come by any day and have your glucose screening (finger stick) done. Be sure to fast before coming in. The Health Unit opens at 6:30 a.m. Monday - Friday.

**Weight Watchers at Work --** A new session will start March 30 and be held on Wednesdays in the Federal Building. A meeting of interested employees will be held March 23 at 11:30 a.m. in Cafeteria A. Please respond to Melissa Cothron by e-mail: [Melissa.Cothron@irs.gov](mailto:Melissa.Cothron@irs.gov). 🏠

# The Corps Crowd

## Congratulations to .....

...Vernon Daniel Capshaw, son of David Capshaw, lock and dam operator at Nickajack Lock, for earning the Boy Scouts of America's highest award, the Eagle Scout. The award ceremony was held February 19 at the Jasper Church of Christ. ...Barry Moran, who recently passed the requisite exam and is now a registered professional engineer.

... Carol and Ray Duke, superintendent at Cordell Hull Power, whose daughter, Jana, has been selected Valedictorian at Upperman High School in Putnam County. Jana achieved a 100.5 GPA and 4.5 QPA.



**Jana Duke**

...Wanda Coleman, human resources specialist, Human Resources Office, on the marriage of her oldest daughter, LaDawna, to Christopher W. Fisher on February 18.

...Vicky Caldwell, Planning, Programs and Project Management Division, on receiving the Office of the Secretary of Defense Award for Excellence for significant accomplishments during her six-month assignment with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller.

## Baby Brigade to ...

...Diane Frost, whose daughter, April, and son-in-law, Brian, had a healthy baby boy February 17. Her first grandson, James Caleb, weighed 6.9 pounds and measured 19 and 1/2 inches long.

...Amy and Jon Summers, park ranger at Lake Barkley, on the birth of their daughter. Audrey Marie was born February 18 at 3:38 p.m. She weighed 6 pounds, 12 ounces and measured 19 and 1/2 inches long.



**Audrey Marie**

## Welcome to ...

...Teresa Bowlin, who was selected as the

new park contract clerk at Old Hickory Lake. Teresa is a native of Hendersonville, and we are happy to have her as part of the Old Hickory team.

## Farewell to ...

...Cindy Smith, Natural Resources Management Branch admin assistant, who was selected for a position at Fort Campbell and worked her last day with the Corps on March 4.

## Sympathy to ...

... the family of David L. Buckner, Fort Loudoun Lock, who passed away in January.

... Jeff Orten, (Operations-Resources) and Peyton Orten (Cheatham Resources), whose father, Carl Orten, passed away on Sunday February 6 in Springfield, Tenn.

... Steve Moneymaker, Operations Division, whose father, Elmer "Clack" Moneymaker, passed away February 16.

...Catherine Elliott, office manager, Eastern Regulatory Field Office, Lenoir City, Tenn., whose father passed away February 16.

...Mark Herd, Cordell Hull resources manager, whose father J. D. Herd, passed away February 16 at Cookeville General Hospital. J. D. Herd retired from the Corps while working at Center Hill Resources.

... the family of Elbert Scott, retired superintendent of the Dale Hollow Power Plant, who passed away February 22.

...retiree William (Bill) B. Carter, whose wife Rebecca passed away in February.

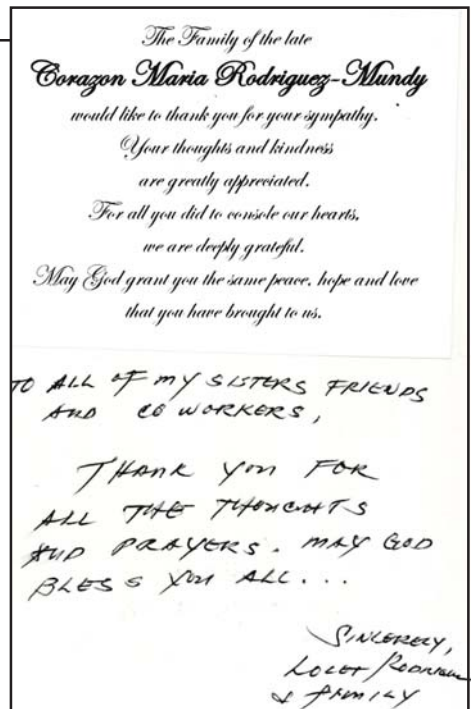
## Best Wishes to ...

...Harold Lewis, supply technician at Old Hickory Lake, who recently underwent hip surgery and radiation treatments.

## Thank you ...

"...for all the cards, words of sympathy, visits to the funeral home, plants and flowers that so many of you have provided during the days following the death of our father. Your kindness has been overwhelming and is greatly appreciated." *Jeff and Peyton Orten and Families*

...Shirley Dunn (former Nashville employee now at Louisville) expressed her appreciation for all the prayers, cards and financial help from her Corps Family.



(She is still in need of about 460 hours of donated annual leave to bridge the gap to disability retirement. The potential impact to her health insurance premiums is a major concern if she goes into a "leave without pay" status.)

..."We would like to thank everyone for the cards, phone calls, visits and prayers during the sickness and passing of our father, J.D. Herd. Your overwhelming expressions of comfort and support have truly made a difficult time more bearable. The compassion expressed by the entire Corps family will always be remembered. Dad valued the many friendships he made during his employment with the Corps. Again thanks for your loving support. *Mark Herd*

## Upcoming Events

Walk on the Wild Side April 2 sponsored by Castle Club. Contact Sue Crofutt or Rachel Owens in Human Resources or Kristal Jones in Contracting.  
March 16, 10 a.m., Room A-640 - Women's History Month Program. The speaker will be Patty Coffey, acting deputy district engineer.  
April 28, 9 a.m., Room A-640 - Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day  
June 28 - July 1, Room A-640 - Annual Career Enhancement Workshops  
October 12, 10 a.m., Room A-640 - Hispanic Heritage Month Program 🏠

# Winners Announced in 2004 USACE Photo Contest

by Dave Treadway

**W**ildlife Biologist Mike Watkins, who works with 18 lake projects in the Kansas City District to develop and manage upland and wetland wildlife habitat, captured the Sweepstakes title in the USACE National Water Safety Photo Contest for the third time. He earned the title first in 2001 and again in 2003. The 22-year veteran of the Corps works extensively with endangered species including Bald Eagles, the subject of another of his winning entries in the Flora & Fauna category.

He also earned first place in the Commercial Boating, Boat Mishaps, and USACE Employees in Action categories.

"Taking water safety photos has evolved into a delightful challenge," said Watkins. "I always enjoy taking photographs of people enjoying our Corps' lake projects in a safe and conscientious manner." Watkins made the switch last year to all digital photography. He now shoots

with both the Canon 10D and 20D. The biologist's association with Canon goes back to 1989 when he captured first place in the outdoor division of the Canon International Photo Contest.

When asked if the Boating Mishap photo was live or set up, Watkins revealed the photo was not staged.

"I have always contended that it is better to be lucky than good. I was simply in the right place at the right time. One Saturday afternoon I went on boat

patrol with a couple of rangers at a lake near my residence. It was one of the few times I was able to shoot photos last summer. While on patrol we came upon the swamped sail boat and I shot the photo as the ranger was throwing the rope to the stranded individuals. I thought about asking the ranger to throw the rope a couple of more times so I could perhaps get a better shot, but the people had been in the water for quite some time and were pretty water logged. I just got lucky...although it helps when your camera shoots five pictures per second!"

Lucius J. Duerksen, Kansas City District, earned first place honors in Water Sports and a second in Hunters and Anglers. Linda Lamb, Seattle District, earned first place honors in the Scenic Water Views. Mary Weidel, Detroit District captured first in Hunters and Anglers. Others winners included J. Scott Strotman, Louisville District, second place in Commercial Boating and third place in Water Sports. Charles Lee, Vicksburg District, earned a second in Water Sports and a third in Boat Mishaps. Earle Rich, Jacksonville District,



**The above photo of a Corps Ranger at Rathbun Lake, Iowa, was taken by Wildlife Biologist Mike Watkins (inset) and was named the Sweepstakes Winner in the 2004 USACE Water Safety Photo Contest.**

## Water Safety Team Looks at Numbers to Focus Efforts

by Dave Treadway

**W**ater-related fatalities at Corps of Engineers projects again exceeded 100 during a 12-month period when final totals were revealed at the end of 2004.

The number stood at 144 but still represented the second lowest total for water-related deaths since 1971. There were 141 water-related deaths in 2003.

Those numbers represent a sharp decline from the 475 recorded in 1971, the year the Federal Boat Safety Act was passed and the U.S. Coast Guard and the States began working within the forum of NASBLA, the National Association of Boating Law Administrators. The number of fatalities fell steadily during the next 15 years.

The Corps of Engineers began promoting water safety nationwide through an annual, unified safety – education campaign in 1986 and in the years that followed, only four times have the number of water-related fatalities exceeded 200.

Former Park Ranger Lynda Nutt was appointed to lead the Corps Water Safety efforts in 1994.


"I immediately formed the 'National Operations Center' supported out of Walla Walla District," said Nutt, "and the National Water Safety Products Advisory Committee in the fall. My goal was to bring ownership of the existing program back to the field, and open communications with our end product users.

**For complete story, go to <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/pao/digest/>**

placed second in Flora & Fauna, Mark Dotson, Savannah District, placed second in Boat Mishaps, while Robert D. Crone, Rock Island District, placed second in Scenic Water Views. Mark L. Meador, Mobile District, earned third in USACE Employees in Action, Deb Norton, Walla Walla District, in Scenic Water Views, and Richard M. Bailey, Jacksonville District, in Flora & Fauna.

Lisa Freeman, Louisville District, earned an Honorable Mention for a photo of volunteers cleaning trash from a Corps lake. The Water Safety Team plans to make Volunteers a separate category next year.

More than 290 photographs were entered and will become part of the collection featured on the Corps Digital Visual Library at <http://images.usace.army.mil/photolib.html>.

The Nashville District Public Affairs Office coordinated the 2004 Photo Contest and helped judge the entries. 

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## *Just To Be On The Safe Side . . . Drivers in the Spotlight*

by John Tibbels

Following the release of a new study on distracted driving funded by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, AAA announced a plan for addressing the issue of distracted driving.

“Education is the key to helping the public recognize and manage distractions while driving,” said Mark Edwards, Ph.D., AAA managing director of Traffic Safety. “We will also encourage manufacturers to design the least distracting devices possible and emphasize to Congress the need for funding of necessary research.”

In its “10-Point Action Plan”, AAA pledged to launch a national education campaign. AAA kicked off its campaign by offering the free educational brochure “Drive Safer, Talk Later—A Guide to Cell Phones and Driving”.


AAA will work with state departments of motor vehicles to ensure beginning drivers understand the dangers of distracted driving.

The agency will work with international motor clubs to develop a protocol to test the distractibility of in-vehicle devices.

They will encourage manufacturers to adopt standards for in-vehicle communication devices. AAA will testify at congressional hearings on distracted driving in the House of Representatives.

They will also promote educational remedies to state and local policy makers.

They will encourage new research into the effects of distraction on drivers. They will then disseminate current research on the results of that study and communicate the results of other new studies to policy makers and the public.

AAA will incorporate instruction on driver distractions into driver education programs to include novice driver, driver improvement and older-driver programs. They will encourage corporations to educate employees and customers. AAA will work with its partners in the traffic safety community to disseminate safety information to employers. 



**Members of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division consider applications for Section 531 funding Feb. 11. A total of 34 applications for Section 531 funding were received from potential customers throughout the Upper Cumberland Region, which is spread over Louisville District, Huntington District and Nashville District. The team, which met in Nashville, rated two of the applications as innovative and considered another as a request for a storm water project. ‘531 funding in the amount of \$1.5 million was at stake. The Kentucky Department of Water and the PRIDE Program also rated the applications before the winning projects were chosen. The City of Hyden requested the smallest amount (\$100,000) while the City of Eubank requested the largest (\$2,445,000). Winners will be announced by Cong. Hal Rogers on April 11.**