



## Spotlight on the District

# Jeanne Elliott

## Chief of Information Management

It is a real pleasure and an honor to have become a member of the Rock Island District Corps of Engineers family. I am looking forward to the challenges inherent in filling the position of your new Chief of Information Management. In working with the IM team thus far, I have been impressed with their talent, professionalism and commitment. We have a common goal of providing the best possible service to all of our customers at the Corps and look forward to everyone's suggestions and assistance in making your IM support the best it can be.

I have 22 years of government service in automated data processing. I started my career as a computer programmer trainee and have worked as a computer programmer, computer analyst, systems analyst, computer specialist, and an Automated Data Processing manager. It seems like only yesterday I was writing Common Business Oriented Language on coding sheets and punching cards, but as we all know, the world has changed radically since then. I would not have dreamed that those huge mainframes could evolve to the 'so much more powerful small PCs' we now have on our desks and take for granted.

I am the mother of two sons, ages 13 and 16, and I also have 2 grown stepchildren.

I came to the Quad Cities four years ago from Chambersburg, Pa., where I worked in systems for the Industrial Logistics Systems Center and Depot Systems Command. Here on the Island, I have worked for the Industrial Operations Command, Information Management, and as Logistics Systems Integration chief for Army War Reserves

Support Command. My husband, Wayne Marshall, works at the IOC.

I live in Bettendorf and, as a matter of fact, I am Joe Kellett's (Construction Division) neighbor.

I have a B.S. degree in Biology with a second major in German. I studied at Philip's University in Marburg, Germany, and taught English at a community college in Linz, Austria. So, if the need arises for German language skills, I will be glad to help. I also taught high school math and science before beginning my government career.

I have had numerous management training courses over the years including

Army Management Staff College, Organizational Leadership for Executives, and Primary Military Education. I also just completed the IOC Civilian Leader Development Program.

I especially enjoy working with people.

I love to travel and am fascinated by other peoples and cultures. I have been lucky enough in both my personal and professional life to see a good bit of the world. While a student in Germany, I traveled through Europe and behind the former Iron Curtain. I have been to Japan, Korea, and Qatar, in the Middle East on temporary duty, and to Hong Kong and Turkey on personal travel. I did a Rotary professional group study exchange to Brazil in 1994.

I enjoy gardening and grow roses as a special interest. I just finished the Iowa Master Gardener training course and will be involved in volunteer gardening projects this year. I am also a wood-carver and a painter. I am a member, and past president, of the Shades of the Mississippi River Decorative Artists, a chapter of the National Society of Decorative Painters. We recently painted a jungle mural in the children's room at Gilda's Club as a service project. I most recently conducted a painting demonstration at the Festival of Trees on behalf of our club.

My favorite medium is acrylics, but I dabble with oils, watercolors and fabric painting as well. I have found artwork to be a wonderful stress release and a great creative outlet. I recommend it to you all. You never know what you can do until you try!

I look forward to meeting everyone and working as part of the Corps of Engineers family here at the Rock Island District.



Jeanne displays a garden bench that she designed out of a pine double bed. Her husband built the bench and Jeanne painted the gnomes and lady bugs.

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District Engineer  
Col. James V. Mudd

Chief, Public Affairs  
Ron Fournier

Editor  
Mark A. Kane

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# Tower Times

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The release of a red-tailed hawk from the Princeton Wildlife Management Area, Scott County, Ill. Story Page 6.

Photo by  
Mark A. Kane,  
Public Affairs

**On the Back**

The cover of the Tower Times, December 1939.

# A Job Well Done

Story by Scott R. Ford, Operations

**T**here are times in our lives when we meet someone, who, by the light of their spirit or by their enthusiasm and commitment to their life's passion, make us better in the things we do. If we are truly fortunate, we can work alongside such a person as they display their craft for the world to see. Those of us working at Coralville Lake were blessed to have such a person in student aide Ruth Colwell, who passed away over the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Ruth ended up succumbing to the cancer that she fought vigorously for almost three years, nearly the entire time of her employment with the Corps of Engineers.

That she continued to attend college classes, continued to work as an interpretive Ranger, and as a widow, continued to meet the demands at home of three teenagers is extraordinary in itself.

However, the way in which she conducted herself throughout even her most desperate moments is what is most inspirational.

Ruth cherished the opportunity to share her love and knowledge of the natural world with children. She was planning a career as an elementary school art teacher when her husband died unexpectedly at age 38 and put those plans on hold. Her time working

with groups coming out to study geology at the Devonian Fossil Gorge or hike the Woodpecker Nature Trail were her times to shine...she was completely in her element, doing what she was born to do.

To bring an ancient Crinoid fossil to life with a story or to help someone contemplate the simple beauty of prairie flowers in bloom came so very easily to Ruth. Thousands of



Ruth Colwell displays a Prairie Kingsnake for a group of fourth graders from Prairie Heights Elementary School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

kids throughout eastern Iowa have been lucky enough to spend some time with her in the natural world that she loved so much, and shared outdoor experiences with her that will last their entire lives. So connected was Ruth to her duties and the young minds waiting to be enlightened that she would often refer to her time here as "therapy," not work.

Ruth made many of us pause and reflect on our commitment and attitude toward our

mission here. Through the constant nausea, fatigue and pain, she continued - and she did this for years - but the cheerful smile on her face and positive attitude always were there.

Ruth's last interpretive program was captured on videotape. Her first words to the assembled group were, "I'm so glad to be here with you today." She couldn't wait to get started with them. There was so much to learn and see and so precious little time.

When worsening symptoms forced her to stop attending college classes it brought an end to Ruth's employment, but not to her service. Her "therapy" continued on as a volunteer. She volunteered until becoming bedridden.

Some of her last requests centered on her unending commitment to the Coralville Lake Visitor Center. Her extensive collection of rare and unique Iowa geodes was donated at her request. So were some of

her cherished field guides so visitors could be assisted in answering questions about local plants and animals. She requested that some special native plants in her backyard be transferred to one of our prairie remnants, like she had done with several others. Even if she had to leave, she wanted some small part of herself to remain.

Ruth always knew what to do and eagerly challenged herself with new assignments. Everything just seemed better when she was here. Even though she was really just getting started with her life's

work, her time here with us was happy, productive and fun. She served as a wonderful example to us and we miss her greatly. JOB WELL DONE, Ruth.

Just two weeks shy of her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, surrounded by friends and family, Park Ranger Ruth Colwell was laid to rest wearing her U.S. Army Corps of Engineers uniform. 🏠



# HO! HO! HO!

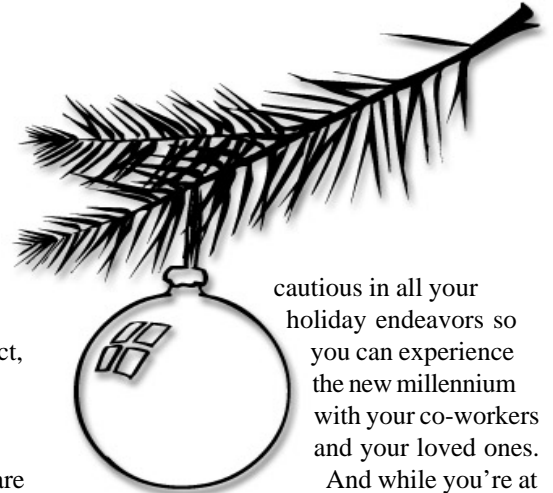
By Col. James Mudd, District Engineer


It has been a pleasure working with each of you, and I wish everyone a happy holiday season.

The holidays bring to mind many things - singing carols, roasting chestnuts by a fire, goodwill towards man and woman, snowmen, as well as the happi-

This New Year's Eve is the window to a new millennium and our future looks extremely bright. In fact, our future is so bright that instead of sunglasses, you better wear a welder's mask!

As we close out the 1900s and prepare



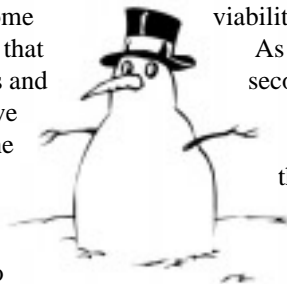
cautious in all your holiday endeavors so you can experience the new millennium with your co-workers and your loved ones. And while you're at it, don't hesitate to toast (water only) to the strong future that you have earned for the Rock Island District. 

District can be pleased with more than their two front teeth.

ness of giving to others. Whatever fills the pages of your holiday memories, this season has the potential to positively impact your attitude for the coming year.

Although the holidays are stressful and can be depressing for some people, it's these challenges that make us stronger individuals and give us a rewarding feeling we can draw from throughout the year.

During this holiday, it's important to realize the reasons why you've been so successful in the past. That success stems from the strong mental foundation you build for yourself beyond the workplace. While other districts celebrate the holidays with an uncertain future, rest assured the Rock Island District has plenty of work ahead.



for the new millennium you can be proud of the accomplishments you've made to protect the citizens of the Midwest, improve environmental conditions along our rivers, and ensure the economic viability of the region.

As you count down the last seconds of 1999, pausing a second to see if the Y2K bug brings the world to a stand still, know that our district is prepared for Y2K. Selected individuals have been assigned to the Emergency Operations Center, a team that will be in place during the holiday season to respond to any Y2K problems.

Celebrate this holiday season in all its glory, but remember to celebrate safely. I depend on you to make this District great and I'm sure others depend on you. Be



# A Return to Nature

Red-tailed hawk  
release concludes Princeton project

Story by Mark A. Kane, Public Affairs

**M**any spectators stood motionless, holding their breath, when their anticipation abruptly ended with onlookers scurrying and yelling, "Heads up!" It wasn't an afternoon of America's favorite past time at Wrigley Field, but the release of a red-tailed hawk from a yellow wooden box at the Princeton Wildlife Management Area in Scott County, Iowa...



Although, the hawk flew into the tent where the dedication ceremony was held, it gave the audience, that was outside the tent at the time of the release, the chance to see the beautiful breed of hawk up close.

The release concluded the dedication of the Princeton Wildlife Management Area, an important environmental enhancement project that restored feeding habitat of wildlife in this backwater of the Upper Mississippi River, in a ceremony held November 12.

The Princeton Wildlife Management Area is part of the Environmental Management Program, which is a joint effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, as well as other state and federal agencies, and the public to improve the backwaters of our nation's waterways for productive resting, feeding, and wintering wildlife habitat.

The project significantly improved an area important to animals such as wetland species, waterfowl, and other migratory birds. This portion of the refuge is part of the Upper Mississippi River Flyway, a major migration route for waterfowl and other migratory birds. The enhancements at the Princeton Wildlife Management Area are

expected to benefit wildlife for years to come.

"Initiatives such as the one we are dedicating could very well be more important to future generations than to even our own. A

healthy, sustainable Mississippi River ecosystem is a legacy we owe our children

and our children's children," wrote Congressman Jim Leach, co-chair of the Upper Mississippi River Congressional Task Force, in a newsrelease about the project.

Col. James Mudd, Commander, Rock Island District Corps of Engineers made the process easy to understand.

"The pools from the Mississippi are being choked off

(caused by silting) because the water isn't moving as quickly as it used to down the river due to the lock and dams. So we need to clean this up,"

said Mudd.

"The program recognizes the multiple uses of the Mississippi River, and strives to maintain a balance between environmental, navigational, and recreational interests."

Since the EMP was authorized by Congress thirteen years ago, 43 projects, such as this one at the Princeton Wildlife Management Area, have been, or are being, constructed in the five-state area.

Another important and effective feature of this program involves the long-term monitoring of the river system. Six field stations staffed by state biologists conduct this monitoring. The long-term monitoring aspect of the program is managed by the

Corps of Engineers and implemented by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Features of the Princeton Wildlife Management Area included excavating approximately 24 inches of soil in three areas to create additional shallow-water ponding areas and marshlands. The excavated material was used to restore the existing perimeter levee and to construct a low-level cross dike. The cross dike subdivided the area into two cells that can be independently managed. Water control structures, one 36-inch gatewell and three stop-log structures, were constructed and the existing 16,000 gallons per minute pump was relocated to the cross dike to greatly enhance water-level management capabilities. Mast (nut producing) trees were planted in selected areas to provide important food resources and

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"The program recognizes the multiple uses of the Mississippi River, and strives to maintain a balance between environmental, navigational, and recreational interests."

- Col. James Mudd

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habitat diversity.

The EMP is a congressionally authorized \$274 million program to plan, design and build a variety of environmental enhancement projects to restore spawning and feeding habitats of fish and wildlife in backwaters and side channels of the upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers.

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"A healthy, sustainable Mississippi River ecosystem is a legacy we owe our children and our children's children."

- Congressman  
Jim Leach

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# Play it Again Sam

## Sammy the Seal visits the Rock Island District

Although he's not flesh and blood, his duties hold a lot of meaning.

Sammy the Seal is part of a cooperative partnership between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District, and the

students of South Park Elementary School, Vicksburg, Miss.

His mission is to go forth and seek out information about environmental projects throughout the Corps.

Sammy chose the Princeton Wildlife Management Area as his first stop. The Rock Island District provided Sammy with an abundance of information about the project to share with the students of South Park Elementary.

The seal will soon visit other exotic ports of call; his next stop... Buffalo, N.Y.



Photo by Mark A. Kane, Public Affairs

The adventures of Sammy the Seal can be found at: <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/pao/sammy.htm>

## Higher Premiums, Fewer Insurers Mar 2000 Federal Health Plan

By Douglas J. Gillert, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The Office of Personnel Management hasn't been able to keep the lid on cost increases to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, which will rise an average of 9.3 percent this year.

As OPM frets over how to control the rising cost of health insurance for the nation's millions of federal employees, it also has seen 43 insurers from last year's plan drop out.

Officials said the dropouts will affect more than 40,000 civilian employees who will have to find a new carrier for 2000.

These changes were announced as the FEHBP open season, which ran Nov. 8-Dec. 13, drew near.

"It is clear that competition in the marketplace has not effectively slowed the

growth in FEHBP premiums," said OPM Director Janice R. Lachance. OPM administers the health plan for federal employees and retirees. "We must consider new and bold approaches so we can continue providing affordable, high-quality health care to our employees, retirees and their families."

Lachance said the increases this year and the past two years are unacceptable. This year's rate increase follows a 9.5 percent increase in 1999 and a 7.2 percent increase in

the plan more efficient.

About 300 health plans participate in FEHBP. There are seven, open fee-for-service plans available worldwide. Most members also can select from HMOs and point-of-service plans that are available locally.

No reason was given for the 43 insurers that dropped out of the plan for 2000. However, OPM said the insurers were required to notify their members that they need to select a new plan during the open season.

"Military Report," an on-line newsletter posted a list of the dropouts on the Internet in its Sept. 23 edition at [www.militaryreport.com/healthins.htm](http://www.militaryreport.com/healthins.htm).

In 2000, biweekly premiums will average \$30.10 for individuals and \$64.67 for families.

All participating insurers and premiums are listed on the web at:



<http://www.opm.gov/insure/00rates/index.htm>



Photo by Mark A. Kane, Public Affairs

**A member of the Rock Island Arsenal community receives information at the Blue Cross information desk during a recent health fair held on the Army post.**

1998. To control future increases and improve the program overall, Lachance said OPM will submit legislative proposals early next year to improve the quality and cost effectiveness of health plans by raising the standards for participating health insurers. She also hopes to make





# Winter



## It's Baaaaaaack!

### By Jeff Cochran, Safety

**W**inter driving can be inconvenient, annoying, even infuriating. But you can offset those aggravations and minimize the special risks of winter driving. The main thing is to give yourself plenty of time to get to where you are going. Visibility is another big hazard of winter driving. In heavy snow, keep your lights on. Stop and clean your windshield and lights if necessary. Get off the road before you get stranded by worsening weather conditions.

### Getting started

Here are some routine precautions to help you avoid car starting problems:

- ☑ Get an engine tune-up in the fall.
- ☑ Switch to winter-weight oil if you aren't already using all-season oil.
- ☑ Be sure all lights are in good working order.
- ☑ Have the brakes adjusted.
- ☑ Check battery and voltage regulator.
- ☑ Make sure battery connections are good.
- ☑ If the battery terminal posts seem to be building up a layer of corrosion, clean them with a paste of baking soda and water. Let it foam, and then rinse with water. Apply a thin film of petroleum jelly to the terminal posts to prevent corrosion and reconnect.
- ☑ Be sure all fluids are at proper levels.
- ☑ Check antifreeze, it should not only be strong enough to prevent freezing, but fresh enough to prevent rust.
- ☑ Make sure wiper blades are cleaning properly. Consider changing to winter wiper blades, which are made for driving in snow. They are covered with a rubber boot to keep moisture away from working parts of the blade.
- ☑ Don't idle a cold vehicle's engine for a long time to warm it up - it could harm the engine. The right way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it.

### Getting unstuck

If you should find yourself stuck, here's what to do:



Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way. Keep a light touch on the gas and ease forward. Don't spin your wheels - you'll just dig in deeper. Rocking the vehicle is another way to get unstuck. (Check your owner's manual first - it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse and back again. Each time you're in gear, give a light touch on the gas until the vehicle gets going. For front-wheel drive vehicles, snow tires should be on the front - the driving axle - for better traction in mud or snow.

### Equipment and supplies

Here's what you'll want to have on hand, especially in an emergency:

- ☑ Snow shovel.
- ☑ Scraper with a brush on one end.
- ☑ Tow chain or strap.
- ☑ Tire chains.
- ☑ Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- ☑ Abrasive material (cat litter, sand, salt, or traction mats).
- ☑ Jumper cables.
- ☑ Warning device (flares or reflective triangles).
- ☑ Brightly colored cloth to signal for help.
- ☑ Empty coffee or similar type can containing candles, matches (in a watertight container) or a lighter, high-energy food (dried fruit, for example).

For more information on winter weather, check out the web:



National Weather Service;  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>  
 Quad-Cities Weather;  
<http://www.qconline.com/weather/>  
 Ice Pack;  
<http://www.icepack.org/>



As clocks throughout the Midwest strike the bewitching hour on Friday, Dec. 31, and millions of champagne corks pop in celebration, a small group of dedicated Rock Island District employees will toast the new year in a cramped, sparsely furnished room on the Clock Tower's third floor - fingers crossed and ready to go into action.

There will be no champagne, no hors

these operations have also been trained in emergency preparedness procedures to ensure these systems operate effectively and efficiently in the event of computer failure.

In addition, the District's third-floor Emergency Operations Center staff will be monitoring all infrastructure systems through the millennium change. If any disruption should occur, this posture

should minimize any impacts and assure a prompt response to an unforeseen challenge.

VCRs, security systems, computer-aided dispatch, and other timed/dated applications.

The issue is of such importance that President Clinton established a special Y2K Council. The Council's purpose is to oversee Federal efforts to have government computer systems make the year 2000 transition successfully. In addition, Federal agencies have agreed to take the lead to inform their constituents of the problems their systems may face in the year 2000.

### The Situation

"Throughout the District, long-established procedures are already in place for emergency operations to minimize disruption in the event of natural or man-made difficulties," said Terry Stieger, Emergency Manager. "These same procedures will be followed in the event of Y2K disruptions to operations."

District water control projects represent the greatest potential "life and health" vulnerability to Y2K disruptions. Water control information is shared with states, cities, local governments, and the general public. The District's water control infrastructure includes 20 lock and dam sites and three reservoirs, at which the level and flow of water is controlled on a continuous basis by data gathered from more than 176 data collection platforms located throughout the District. These projects serve a variety of purposes: flood damage reduction, navigation, municipal and industrial water supply, agricultural water supply (irrigation), fish and wildlife conservation, water quality control, and recreation.

### The Verdict

"We think we've done everything reasonable to eliminate, and prepare for, a Y2K disruption," said Stieger.

The District has not identified any mission-critical operational problems associated with the embedded processors used in any of our water control projects.

All locks have emergency generators for powered operations and can be

## Celebrating Y2K the Government Way

By Ron Fournier, Public Affairs

d'oeuvres, no music, and no immediate celebration. Because if one thing is for sure, no one really knows what's going to happen when electronic clocks turn over to 00:01 on Saturday morning, Jan. 1, officially kicking off the year 2000 (Y2K).

It's not that we haven't prepared. Over the past 18 months, system testing and evaluation has

been conducted throughout the District as a part of the Corps' comprehensive action plan to ensure no critical systems fail when clocks start rolling over. The plan included extensive technological evaluation and established redundant safeguards in many crucial systems. All

District systems associated with the critical operations of navigation, hydropower and water control are expected to successfully transition into 2000. Employees associated with

### The Challenge

The challenge arises from a long-standing computer programming practice of using only two digits to represent a year - "97" as 1997 for example. When these computer systems encounter the year 2000, the two-digit year "00" may be

interpreted as "1900" instead of "2000." As a result, many computer systems - except for the most recent software and hardware versions - may fail to

function or may produce errors after Dec. 31, 1999. This problem is not confined to computer systems. Any date-sensitive electronic device may be affected. For example, it may affect airline schedules,




Sometimes you have to look at the lighter side...

operated manually on short notice. Locks and dams can be controlled indefinitely by on-site generators and, although it is generally not a high-traffic season, all communications between river traffic and District lockmen are wireless.

Our three reservoirs, Coralville, Saylorville and Red Rock, are also able to operate by on-site staff. In the event of a Y2K failure, reservoir staffs will carry out functions normally performed by computers. Generators are on site to operate regulating gates, if required.

"We haven't overlooked our customers either," said Stieger.

Levees, for flood damage reduction, are also a part of the District's water control infrastructure. Most of the federal levees, for which the District has responsibility, are operated and maintained by non-federal sponsors. The District has contacted levee sponsors and offered to assist them with their Y2K technical assessments of the water control features in these levees.

"Although we've prepared extensively for Y2K, it wouldn't be wise for us to assume the best and not have the Emergency Operations Center in action on Dec. 31," said Stieger. "Sure, we'll miss the fun, but what else is there to do on New Year's Eve?" 

For more information on Y2K, check out the web:

<http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/im/ceimp/publicy2k/>

<http://cnn.com/SPECIALS/1999/at2000/index.html/>

<http://cnn.com/TECH/specials/y2k/>

<http://www.microsoft.com/y2k/>

<http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/y2k.html/>

<http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov/mks/yr2000/community/community.htm/>

## Y2K bug - Fact or Fiction?

**Fiction: This is just another data processing project.**

**Fact:** No. 2000 is the first century change for automated systems. Unlike most data processing projects, the problem exists worldwide, and its due-date cannot be postponed. Even if an organization successfully changes all its systems by the year 2000, the failure of a single key supplier or service provider could still greatly affect operations.

**Fiction: It is a problem that only exists with mainframes and old computers.**

**Fact:** No. It is both a hardware and software problem for virtually all machines and programs on all platforms, computer types and brands. Although the problem may affect the mainframe community most, midrange and personal computers are by no means safe. Computers have an internal clock that may or may not work properly after midnight on Dec. 31, 1999. Some computer clocks could reflect 1900, 1980 or 1984, and others will accurately move into the year 2000. This problem affects the operating system and real-time clock of a computer. Software applications need to be evaluated regardless of platform. A data mismatch can exist in any level of hardware or software from micro-code to application programs, files and databases.

**Fiction: The year 2000 problem will affect only computers.**

**Fact:** It is a significant problem across all industries and may affect any business, organization or person using computer or computer-driven facilities. Any system or program, including desktop software, could be affected if two digits are used to represent the year. Data sharing adds to the possibility of contamination by two-digit data. In addition, building infrastructures, such as elevators, security systems, phone systems, environmental control systems, etc., may also experience problems or may cease to function. All systems, not just computer systems, need to be evaluated for year 2000 readiness.

**Fiction: This is just hype.**

**Fact:** Unfortunately there are a lot of groups (e.g., consulting firms, software vendors, etc.), who are exploiting this situation for financial gain. However, as your organization begins to comprehend the problem and assess your situation, you will soon begin to determine what is fact, what is fiction and what the true impact to your particular operations will be.

**Fiction: This won't affect me.**

**Fact:** Virtually anyone who relies on computers or electronic devices that refer to date and time may be affected. This may affect your reporting systems, 911, dispatch and communications systems, and even the microcomputers that help run your apparatus and air condition your stations. When the year 2000 arrives, non-compliant systems may not work as expected.



# Race to 2000

By Pamela Drum, Engineering

Hello fellow fitness fans! As most of you know, the Wellness Committee, part of the Rock Island District Welfare Association Committee, has been sponsoring the Fitness Challenge '99, Race to 2000!

There are 50 Rock Island District employees, including four from the Peoria field office, who have signed up to get in shape, feel better, and have fun!

Starting Aug. 14 and continuing through Jan. 2, the latest version is a little different than what's been done in the past. Previously, miles only were recorded for a period of three months. This time, work outs can be recorded in minutes to allow for physical fitness activities that can't be measured in miles, such as weight lift-tae-bo; and

The thought worked out an minutes a day, for 20 weeks, minutes. prefer this flex-mileage can for the traditional individual their time traveled on a mails them to



ing, aerobics and for five months. is that if a person average of 20 five times a week, they'd log 2,000 Many people ible system, but also be recorded tionalists. Each keeps track of spent and/or miles daily basis and e-Wellness Commit-

tee President Jacqueline Chandler who is posting them on the RIDWA Bulletin Board.

Participants received a T-shirt with a man and woman racing for the 2000 finish line for their \$15 entry fee and will receive three milestones for every 500 minutes logged and an additional milestone for finishing the race. "Ironmen" and "Ironwomen" who double the required 2,000 minutes, or more, will receive a certificate signifying their feat. The first milestone for those at or above 500 minutes is sweat socks. Other milestones include power bars, hand towels with the previous Challenge symbol "Sticky" (a stick figure, perhaps representing the slimmed down contestants) and movie tickets.

Although this venture is not a contest, those involved are encouraged to work out with others (enrolled in the Challenge or not), best their previous times and mileage, and, in general, shape up, get healthy, and most of all enjoy themselves! Some fun activities during working hours and outside of work have already been coordinated in conjunction with the Fitness Challenge.

On Oct. 4th, a dozen brave souls volunteered to be "pie people" and be auctioned off to receive a chocolate or Jell-O pie in the face by the highest bidder. The participants included the following people: Mike Bunch, Jeff Cochran, Pam Drum, Ron

Fournier, Tom Heinold, Larry Jones, John Kincaid, Gary Loss, Col. James Mudd, Steve Russell, Capt. Kenn Shoemaker, Steve Vanderhorn.

More than \$200 was raised, with the proceeds going toward the milestones. A salad day is currently being planned and a couple of other fund-raisers are also in the works.

On Oct. 15th, the first after-hour group "sports-related" activity was held. Over two dozen staffers, their families and friends, ventured out to ComedySportz, an improvisational comedy troupe consisting of two, four-person teams and a referee who compete for points as part of a nationwide competition. They hold an annual "laugh-off" for the highest scoring teams in different locations around the country. This event was enjoyed by all, with everyone planning to indulge again in the near future.

Upcoming gatherings may include a local Mallards hockey or Thunder basketball game, or an ice or roller skating party at a local rink. Anyone can join in all of these on and off-site activities, not just those who are Challenged!

The Wellness Committee is also responsible for maintaining the Fitness Room. Proceeds of a recent excess equipment sale netted almost \$200, which will help us to repair and maintain the room and its contents, as well as help to cover the cost of the milestones and the party (within Corps guidelines) we are planning after the Challenge is over.

The Fitness Challenge has been conducted for many years in the District, helping to promote a healthy, active lifestyle among employees. Our main goals are to gain a healthy attitude, maintain physical fitness, get involved with fellow employees and mostly to have fun! So for all of my co-workers, get up, work out, log in and enjoy!



Photo by John Kincaid, Engineering  
Gary Loss, Programs and Project Management, feels the "pie-wrath" of an employee that put her money where his mouth was, and helped out the Wellness Committee.

Both employees and family members participated in the fundraising event.

# Rock Island District Exceeds CFC Goal; Commander Honored



Photo by Mark A. Kane, Public Affairs

Tom Fratzke, Construction, holds two toy tractors up for display as employees place their bids on the small pieces of farm equipment during the CFC auction.

The Rock Island District's final Combined Federal Campaign figures are in, and the District exceeded its goal of \$28,000 by \$1,750 to end at \$29,750.

The district met and exceeded its goal through various fund-raising activities and employee contributions.

The activities included a chili cook off, CFC auction, a rally walk and a pumpkin decorating contest.

The Rock Island Arsenal CFC program raised more than \$373,000, exceeding the original goal of \$324,500.



The Rock Island Arsenal CFC committee awarded the 1999 CFC Leadership Award to Col. James Mudd.

Mudd earned the award through authorizing and participating in the most "fun" fund-raising events held on the Arsenal.



## Hard Hat of the Year

Tom Barickman, Construction Division, has been selected as the Hard Hat of the Year for the Rock Island District. This is an annual award for outstanding construction inspectors, construction representatives, civil-engineering technicians, or engineers. A Mississippi Valley Division recipient for this award is also selected from the District nominees. Barickman's dedication and willingness to serve the Corps of Engineers wherever duty called, over the last year, has been outstanding. Barickman spent most of FY99 on temporary duty at either Lake Chautauqua, Puerto Rico, Davenport, St. Paul District, or Locks and Dam 14. In every place he served, he received great compliments on his fine work. Barickman helped the District use Supervision and Administration costs efficiently, and he greatly contributed to the quality of the Corps construction products.

## TSP Open Season

Thrift Savings Plan Open Season is in affect, Nov. 15, 1999 - Jan. 31, 2000.

During this open season you may begin contributing to the TSP, change the amount of your TSP contributions, or allocate TSP contributions to your account among the three investment funds. Want more info.? [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov)

## LUNCH AND LEARN

### Looking for something different to do during lunch?

Stay on the lookout for upcoming "Lunch and Learn" speakers.

Recently The Special Emphasis Programs Committee brought two special speakers to the Rock Island District.

John Punkiewicz, the Individuals with Disabilities program manager, gave a program entitled "Inclusion for All." Punkiewicz discussed the process that he and his wife have gone through in

pursuing inclusionary education for their twin daughters who have Downs Syndrome.

In celebration of Native American Heritage Month, the SEPC hosted Eugene Swarts, a local historian who has researched and disputed facts about Black Hawk the warrior. Swarts related his knowledge about himself and Native American history in the local area.



# Happy Holidays to the Corps Family

By Lt. Gen. Joe Ballard, Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

During the holidays, people look back and reflect on the lessons of the previous year. But this should be a time to look forward as well! Although the next century and next millennium doesn't really start until 2001, we will all celebrate the turning point when 1999 rolls over to 2000. So this is a good time to look to the future. The Corps is changing and growing, and we're more ready than ever to meet the challenges of a new millennium. Response 2000 received its first real-world tests this year and came through with flying colors. During Hurricane Georges the Corps provided ice, water, roofing, debris removal, and emergency power throughout Puerto Rico. During Hurricane Floyd, we assisted in damage surveys, controlled floodwaters with our reservoirs, supplied emergency ice and water and temporary housing, and managed sandbagging operations. The Corps also provided vital damage survey and clean-up work in Oklahoma after the tornado in May.

New concepts like Divisions as Business Centers and One Door to the Corps ensure that outside agencies will continue to consider us the "Engineer Team of Choice." This past year, other agencies have sought our expertise in growing numbers. To name just a few, Jacksonville District was an important part of the effort to write the Central and South Florida Comprehensive Review Study which will restore the Florida Everglades. The U.S. Agency for International Development requested Transatlantic Programs Center's help to repair damage after the terrorist bombing of the American embassy in Nairobi. After a gas pipeline explosion in St. Cloud, Minn., the Minnesota Department of Safety turned to St. Paul District for technical expertise. When a ski-equipped C-130 fell into a crevasse in the Antarctic, the National Science

Foundation called on the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory to find crevasse-free taxiways and work areas to free the aircraft.

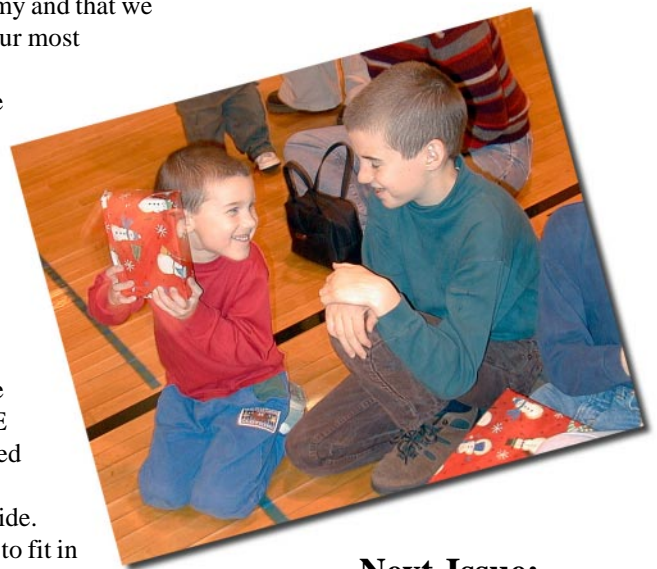
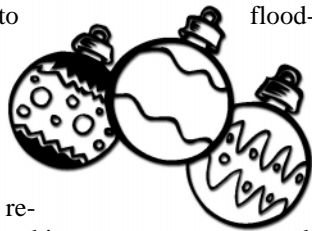
Our first and most important mission of supporting the Army also continues to flourish. From replacing flood-damaged buildings in Korea, to building SEAhuts in Kosovo, to managing a quarter-billion dollars in projects at Fort Benning, Ga., the Corps is making a difference in the Army. At bases throughout the world, soldiers and airmen and their families have brand-new or renovated homes, barracks, schools, and other quality-of-life facilities. And innovations like the Installation Support Forward program, re-engineering Military Programs, the Theater Construction Management System, and tele-engineering will ensure that the Corps is firmly embedded in the Army and that we will continue to carry out our most important mission.

But what gives me the most faith in our future is our people. There has been no shortage of Corps volunteers to serve in austere conditions in Kosovo and Albania. I'm never prouder than when I hear people like Clint Anuszewski from Baltimore District say, "We at USACE believe in a totally integrated Army, with soldiers and civilians working side-by-side. As civilians, we're looking to fit in and be in the trenches with the Army. I'll move out of the tent when the soldiers are out of tents." After the tornado in Oklahoma, Corps workers collected personal items they found and took steps to return them to their owners. Corps people like Mike Rosales and Matt

Burg in Little Rock District unhesitatingly risked their lives to rescue a mother and her baby from a flaming wreck. John Lindermann of the Transatlantic Programs Center is helping build a missile storage facility in Russia. He and other folks from TAC have joined with people from Bechtel National Inc. to support a Russian orphanage near the project site. With people like these in the Corps of Engineers, I know our future is in good hands.

I am proud of the Corps of Engineers and how far we have come during my time as Chief of Engineers. I look forward with anticipation (and no fear at all) to the challenges of the New Year, and the new century, and the new millennium.

The Corps family wishes you a safe and joyous holiday season, and a happy, exciting New Year.



## Next Issue:

**The Annual Corps Family Christmas Party. Pick up next month's issue for a look.**

# Holiday Fun!



## Across

1. The jolly man
3. He comes after Vixen
6. The elf's specialty
8. The number of reindeer  
(not counting Rudolph)
10. Where Santa lives
11. He comes after Prancer

## Down

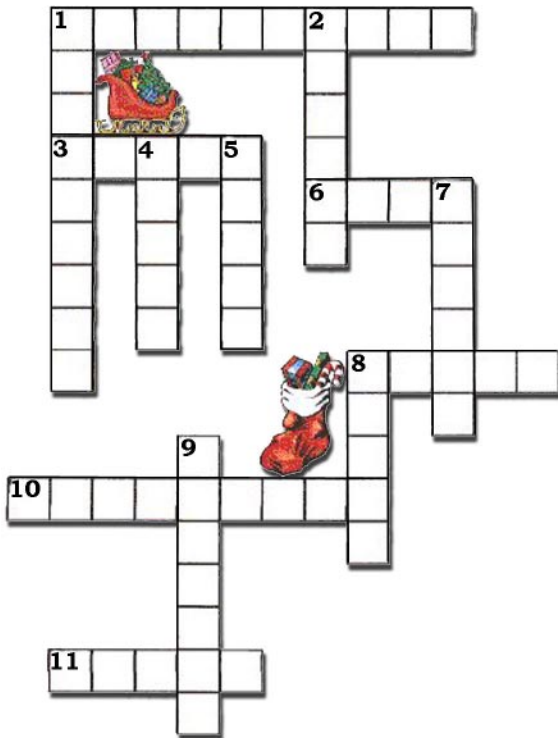
1. They hang by the chimney
2. They twinkle on your tree
4. The air is filled with \_\_\_\_\_
5. They hold your ornaments
7. What the reindeer pull
8. Santa's little helpers
9. Santa squeezes down this

Santa takes a timeout after delivering toys to children around the world. Can you bring color to this holiday scene?

## Holiday Word Hunt

C A K O O B C D U E  
 O H O L I D A Y Z L  
 O P R E S E N T S Z  
 K H Z I U O D F O Z  
 I O X Y S O Y L K U  
 E L E E R T S A X P  
 S L O R N A M E N T  
 Q Y Z Y L I M A F S  
 T O Y S A T N A S P

| List:     |          |
|-----------|----------|
| holiday   |          |
| holly     |          |
| book      | ornament |
| candy     | presents |
| Christmas | puzzle   |
| cookies   | Santa    |
| family    | toys     |
| tree      |          |



Answers to crossword puzzle:  
 Across: 1. Santa Claus 3. Comet 6. toys 8. eight 10. North Pole 11. Vixen  
 Down: 1. stockings 2. lights 4. magic 5. trees 7. sleigh 8. elves 9. chimney