



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
Rock Island District

# Tower Times

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# Spotlight on the District

By Mark Kane

## Aaron Dunlop Chief, Maintenance Section Mississippi River Project Office

For employees whose career enables them to experience diverse work in many different places, they can not only say they've been there and done that, but they have the chance to discover what they enjoy and where they want to be. Aaron Dunlop, chief, Maintenance Section, Mississippi River Project Office, has had the opportunity to work in a lot of places and says the things he likes most about his job are the people he works with, along with the perks of having one foot in the office while being able to keep one foot in the field.

"I like being part of a great team that gets a lot of work done, which gives me a lot of pride and a sense of accomplishment," said Dunlop. "I also enjoy being able to get out in the field where the real work gets done. Not too many engineers actually get to spend time working around 'toys' like heavy lift cranes, tug boats, and other heavy equipment, I feel pretty lucky. I am also inspired by the countless craftsmen and professionals that we have within our maintenance crews. Their hard work and dedication to the Corps and Mississippi River system is unmatched. We could have all the engineers in the world in our office, but without our maintenance guys the lock and dam system would fail."

Dunlop emphasized how much he's learned over more than a decade since he earned his bachelors of science in civil engineering from the University of Minnesota, and how the Corps rose to the top as the agency he wanted to make his career.

"In the beginning, when I was in college, the Corps chose me," said Dunlop. "Honestly, I really didn't know that much about the Corps of Engineers, the Army or the federal government. Eleven years later, I have a pretty good understanding of all three. I had no idea the opportunities that the Corps and the Army would afford to me. I can't imagine another organization that would have enabled me to have had such a variety of

great work environments. From St. Paul District's Design Branch to director of public works in Heidelberg, Germany, or Corps Headquarters to Military Construction Planning at Installation Management Command, I've had many rewarding jobs that I believe will better enable me to contribute more fully to our great organi-



zation. In February, I chose to come back to the Corps because my time away working for other organizations made me realize that there is no equal in terms of engineering excellence and professionalism."

While the Minnetonka, Minn., native enjoys the time he's able to spend in the field, Dunlop shared the office duties his job entails as well.

"CEFMS, CEFMS and more CEFMS," said Dunlop. "In my spare time, I oversee the extended work plan, budget, equipment purchases, and personnel actions for our maintenance organization, which is comprised of approximately 75 personnel. I

spend most of my time in the office supporting the maintenance staff that is primarily in the field. So I, along with five other maintenance office personnel, spend a fair amount of time keeping up with things related to logistics, credit card purchases, travel, and time keeping issues. On top of that, I try to keep up with Rod Stover, our general foreman, who has overall responsibility for field work execution. Things are always busy, if not hectic, in our office largely due to the emergency response type capability that we have for the river. This is something I really enjoy because it makes everyday interesting and there's always something new to learn."

Dunlop lives in Davenport, Iowa, and is engaged to be married to his fiancée, Ellen, who is an urban planner for the Bi-State Regional Commission in Rock Island, Ill. He has two dogs, a Welsh terrier named Charlie, and a labradoodle named Doug.

His hobbies include playing hockey, basketball, biking and Ju-Jitsu, to name a few.

"I enjoy all outdoor activities and spending time with friends and family," said Dunlop. "I also enjoy watching the Vikings destroy the Packers ... good luck without Favre. I'm not sure if I should even mention the Bears. I'm pretty sure I read somewhere that they were leaving the National Football League to try their luck with Arena Football."

Dunlop's advice to anyone reading this article is, "Your potential is only limited by your own imagination. When there's a fork in the road take it. Try as many new things as you can. Always try to keep an open mind. Remember what you learned in kindergarten, if you do that everything will usually work out fine."

In addition, Dunlop added, "I look forward to continuing to meet and work with everyone else in the District. If you ever want to learn about what our office does or just want to see some cool equipment in action, just give me a call (ext. 4500). I'll be happy to show you around." ■

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# Tower Times

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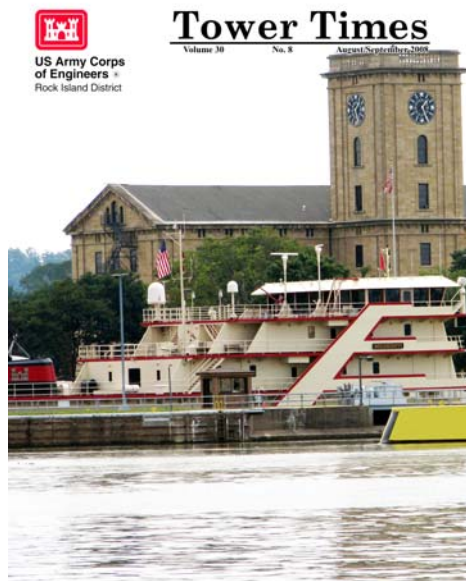
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### On the Cover

The Motor Vessel Mississippi locks through Locks and Dam 15 in front of the Clock Tower Building after hosting the Mississippi River Commission's public meeting held in Davenport, Iowa, on August 13. Photo by Ann McCrery, Corporate Communications. See page 6 for more information about the MRC meeting.

# Cedar Rapids Schools Find New Home

By Mark Kane

A ribbon-cutting ceremony held Aug. 21, officially confirmed that the Cedar Rapids Community School District is ready for the new school year despite serious damage to five district facilities caused by the June flooding. The District has completed the installation of 35 modular buildings, which will serve as temporary facilities for the school district's central service offices.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency tasked its federal partner, the Corps of Engineers, to provide the school district a temporary facility. The Corps procured and constructed the modular buildings for \$3.7 million. FEMA funded 75 percent of the project, while the State of Iowa funded 10 percent of the cost.

FEMA helps state and local governments and certain nonprofit organizations recover from a declared disaster. In some cases, it provides help for needs

such as critical public facilities, debris operations, infrastructure assessment, commodities (including water), urban search and rescue, temporary housing, and temporary roofing.

The Corps launched construction on July 12 and contractors worked seven days a week to allow the school district back in by the start of classes. FEMA and the state of Iowa funded the project.

Even using modular buildings assembled on site, such a project normally takes three to four months to complete. FEMA Region VII administrator Dick Hainje said, "Yeah, they moved heaven and earth on this one to get this here (in seven weeks)."

Right now, many of the 130 district central office workers are scattered in makeshift space around the city.

Construction was rapid because the community needed the buildings so badly, said Milton Hauptert, quality assurance inspector from the St. Paul District.

Mark Clark, Emergency Management, is the Corps' Emergency Support Function 3 team leader in Cedar Rapids and said the St. Paul District Planning and Response Team did an excellent job working with the Corps' contractor to complete the project in the limited amount of time prior to school opening.

"In addition, the local community and neighbors were very supportive of the ongoing project, which made our work that much more expedient," said Clark.

The temporary facilities were placed



**Jim Mosner and Dick Otto, St. Paul District, check progress on the school administration buildings being installed on the grounds of Kingston Stadium on Aug. 6. FEMA asked the Corps to install thirty-five modular units by the middle of August for the Linn County Board of Education, which lost the use of its building in the June flood. Photo by Greg Henshall, FEMA.**

at a site selected by the school district, north of Kingston Field. About 130 staff who had been reporting to work temporarily at Jefferson High School will be assigned to the new offices.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District's central offices are critical public facilities.

The temporary buildings, which will also be used for conference rooms, computer equipment, and storage, are equipped to meet the heating and cooling needs of the Cedar Rapids climate and comply with industry standards and local building codes.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District will provide furniture and wiring for communication needs.

Classes started for all 33 District schools Aug. 26.

*Kristina Andino, Cedar Rapids Gazette, and Dave Franzman, KCRG TV9, Cedar Rapids, contributed to the article.*



## **On The 'Net**

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

[www.cr.k12.ia.us](http://www.cr.k12.ia.us)



**Workers can be seen on the wood decking, which connects the Cedar Rapids Community School District buildings on the grounds of Kingston Stadium. Photo courtesy of Alliant Energy.**

# Tracking Invasive Fish in Our Rivers

By Mark Kane

This spring, Fisheries Magazine spotlighted an article in Transactions of the American Fisheries Society, a newsletter featuring an article by Kelly Baerwaldt, a fisheries biologist in the Economic and Environmental Analysis Branch of Programs and Project Management.

The article, Movement and Habitat Selection by Invasive Asian Carps in a Large River, describes how scientists from the Fisheries and Illinois Aquaculture Center at Southern Illinois University use ultrasonic telemetry implants to track 50 bighead and 50 silver carp in the lower Illinois River. Each implant transmits a unique identification number and has a life expectancy of more than a year. Some carp travel as far as 130 km upriver and 80 km downriver and their long distance movements appear to be cued by flooding.

Using stationary and boat-mounted receivers, the researchers also found that the carp tended to stay out of the main channel when water levels were low.

To say the least, information about what we know about invasive Asian carp is growing along with the need to figure out how to decrease their impact on our ecology.

Baerwaldt and the Corps' role in getting this information are ongoing. Most recently, Baerwaldt's knowledge of ultrasonic telemetry implants was put to good use during the Carp Corral/Goby Round-up, which took place June 16 through 20. During the event, more than 13 boats and their crews from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Corps were stationed on the Illinois and Des Plaines Rivers to look for goby and carp that are known for damaging eco-systems in lakes and rivers.

"Asian carp came from catfish farmers in Arkansas in the southeast, and during storms they escaped and headed into the first stream, and then to larger streams, and finally into the Mississippi River. They made a right-hand turn and headed up the Illinois River," said Pam Thiel, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In recent years, the Asian carp have been moving north. The goal is to keep them out of Lake Michigan so they do not ruin a \$4 million recreational and commercial fishing industry. Asian carp are a danger because they jump and they will out-compete native fish for food.

"Once they get over 12 inches, we don't have any native fish that can eat them, so they just continue to grow," said Thiel.

Brought to the United States to control algal blooms in fish farms, bighead and silver carp can consume up to 20 percent of their weight in microscopic plankton per day. If they get to Lake Michigan and reproduce, it could spell doom for native fish.

Because Lake Michigan's native species already compete with zebra and quagga mussels for plankton, more mouths at the table could push those populations to extinction, experts say.

Once a year, the U.S. Fish and Wild Life Service and the Corps look for Asian carp to track their movements.

"We need to figure out what their movement rates are and what kind of habitats they're using, and how fast they're getting through these pools," said Baerwaldt.

Trolling for carp is done by using electric sensors. If one is caught, researchers implant ultrasound transmitters inside the fish, and then place them back in the water to track their movements.

"It's actually real surgery," said Baerwaldt. "We'll make an incision and insert the tag, suture the fish, get the wound shut, and actually put superglue on the fish's skin to form a water tight seal."

This year the government scientists expressed relief that surveys of the rivers did not reveal any further movement of the Asian carp toward the vulnerable waters of Lake Michigan.

Scientists with the agencies did sight two big head carp and six silver carp about 30 river miles from an electric fish barrier near Romeoville that is meant to keep Asian carp from reaching



**Kelly Baerwaldt sutures a silver carp after inserting a tracking tag into the fish in the Dresden Island pool of the Illinois River while docked at the Big Basin Marina in Channahon, Ill. Baerwaldt said the procedure includes weighing, measuring, determining sex, as well as externally tagging the fish with a flog T-bar tag to let anglers know it is a tagged fish if caught. The fish is released where it was captured, and only released if it is able to swim under its own power. Photo by Rachel Perrine, a Department of the Army biologist intern working in Programs and Project Management.**

the lake -- close, but no closer than fish spotted by previous surveys.

During this year's Carp Corral, the 13th such annual survey, scientists were hoping to capture bighead carp close to the electric fish barrier so they could implant thumb-size ultrasonic transmitters.

Scientists plan to place canister-like sensors in the river that will listen for each transmitter's sonic signature, tracking individual carp as they advance toward the fish barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal near Romeoville. ■



# Investing In Our People

## Around the District

### Saylorville Lake Water Safety Night at the I-Cubs

The 3rd annual water safety night at Principal Park, home of the Triple-A Iowa Cubs, was held on June 28.

Park Ranger Emily Coffin, the coordinator of the event, said that since rangers were busy fighting the flood, volunteers worked the reservoir's water safety booth and helped spread the Corps' water safety message along with Buddy the Beaver who threw out the first pitch.

Summer Park Ranger Eric Redmond provided a water-safety radio broadcast that was given during the game.

At the beginning of the season, the Corps' water safety logo was printed on 35,000 I-Cubs schedules.



Buddy the Beaver winds up to throw the first pitch kicking off the game between the Iowa Cubs and Las Vegas 51s. Buddy is one of an assembly of water-safety friends in the Corps' "Bobber the Water Safety Dog" campaign. Check it out at: [www.bobber.info](http://www.bobber.info). Photo courtesy of Michael Donohoe, Iowa Cubs.

### MRC Hosts Meeting in Davenport

The Mississippi River Commission conducted its annual low-water inspection trip on the Mississippi River August 10-22.

Eight public meetings took place aboard the Motor Vessel Mississippi in selected towns along the river. Commission members met with local residents and heard their concerns, ideas and issues related to the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

On Aug. 13, the MRC held their meeting in Davenport, Iowa, at Oneida Landing.

The president of the MRC is Division Commander Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, who presented a summary of national and regional issues affecting the Corps and Commission programs and projects on the Mississippi River and its tributaries.



Jack Bell from Mississippi River Levee District 16 shares his thoughts with the Mississippi River Commission about how money should be spent to improve levees on the river.

### Retirements ...

**Marion Miller**, lock and dam operator, Lock and Dam 22, Operations Division, retired Aug. 31, after dedicating 23 years and 5½ months to the federal government.

**Leon Hodges**, supervisory natural resources specialist, Natural Resources

Management Section, Mississippi River Project Office, Operations Division, retired on Aug. 31, after dedicating 30 years and two months to the federal government.

**Patricia Kremer**, secretary (office automation), Lock and Dam Section, Mississippi River Project Office, Operations Division, retired Aug. 31, after dedicating 33 years to the federal government.

**Dennis Sterritt**, lock and dam operator, Dresden Island Lock and Dam, Illinois Waterway, Operations Division, retired Aug. 31, after dedicating 30 years to the federal government.

**Clotiel Finney**, budget analyst, Manpower and Management Analysis Branch, Resource Management, retired Aug. 1, after dedicating 30 years, one month, and 20 days to the federal government.

**Suzanne Simmons**, public involvement specialist, Economic and Environmental Analysis Branch, Programs and Project Management, retired Aug. 1, after dedicating 32 years and 10 months to the federal government.

### Sympathy ...



**Aratus Scott**, 89, of Rock Island, Ill., died July 29, at Heartland Health Care Center in Moline, Ill.

Scott worked in Survey for the District and retired from federal service in 1981 after 43 years of government service.

He served in the Army Air Corps as a tail gunner and gunnery instructor during World War II.

# SUPPORT, SACRIFICE FOR CORPS

Thanks to our employees who are deployed or have completed duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism, as well as those who are deployed or have completed duty in support of Natural Disaster Relief Operations

*Thank You For Serving!*



A listing of all the current District employees who are, or have been, involved in supporting the Global War on Terrorism and Natural Disaster Relief Operations can be seen on the District's Internet at:



[www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/TowerTimes/support-for-corps/support-for-corps.htm](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/TowerTimes/support-for-corps/support-for-corps.htm)



## Coast Guard Commandant Visits Locks and Dam 15

Story and photo by Mark Kane

The Coast Guard Commandant, Adm. Thad Allen, received a first-hand look at Locks and Dam 15 and the Mississippi River Visitor Center during his visit to the Quad-Cities area on July 25.

Allen's visit is one of the first to a District facility by the highest ranking active duty member of a branch of the military.

At Locks and Dam 15, Allen received a tour from the lockmaster, Steve Felderman, the Mississippi River Operations Manager, Bill Gretten, and the District Commander, Col. Robert Sinkler; as well as a tour of the Visitor Center from Park Ranger Samantha Heilig.

The Commandant's visit was centered on meeting with Coast Guard units and industry representatives to discuss this summer's Midwest flood response and recovery operations and the future of the Western River's vital role in the nation's marine transportation system.

Prior to meeting with District officials, Allen met with crewmembers from Coast Guard Cutter Scioto and the Marine Safety Detachment in the Quad Cities about the flood response.



Adm. Thad Allen tours Locks and Dam 15 with Steve Felderman (left) and Col. Robert Sinkler (center) during the lockage of a barge. (Inset) Allen's official photo as Commandant of the Coast Guard.

# Division Commander, FEMA Administrator Come to District

Story and photos by Mark Kane

**O**n the first day of August, the Mississippi Valley Division Commanding Officer, Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, visited District headquarters for the first time after taking command of the Division to meet and formally recognize numerous employees involved in flood response and recovery operations for the District.

Walsh recognized many of the faces because he had met them in the field during his whirlwind tour of the flooding just weeks prior the visit.

The Division commander's arrival took place less than an hour after the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VII administrator, Dick Hainje, concluded his trip to the District to get his own personal insight into Corps operations.

Hainje took the time to get a thorough look at Locks and Dam 15, which included a hands-on tutorial of how to open and close the upper-miter gates at the lock. ■



**(Top) Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, MVD Commander, stands with Jeff Tripp (left) and Bob Riebe (right), Engineering and Construction, highlighting the District's newest employee, as well as its most seasoned flood area engineer, who worked in support of the District's flood response and recovery operations this summer. (Bottom) Dick Hainje, FEMA Region VII administrator, receives a hands-on lesson in locking procedures at Locks and Dam 15 from Jim Trail, the assistant lockmaster.**



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