



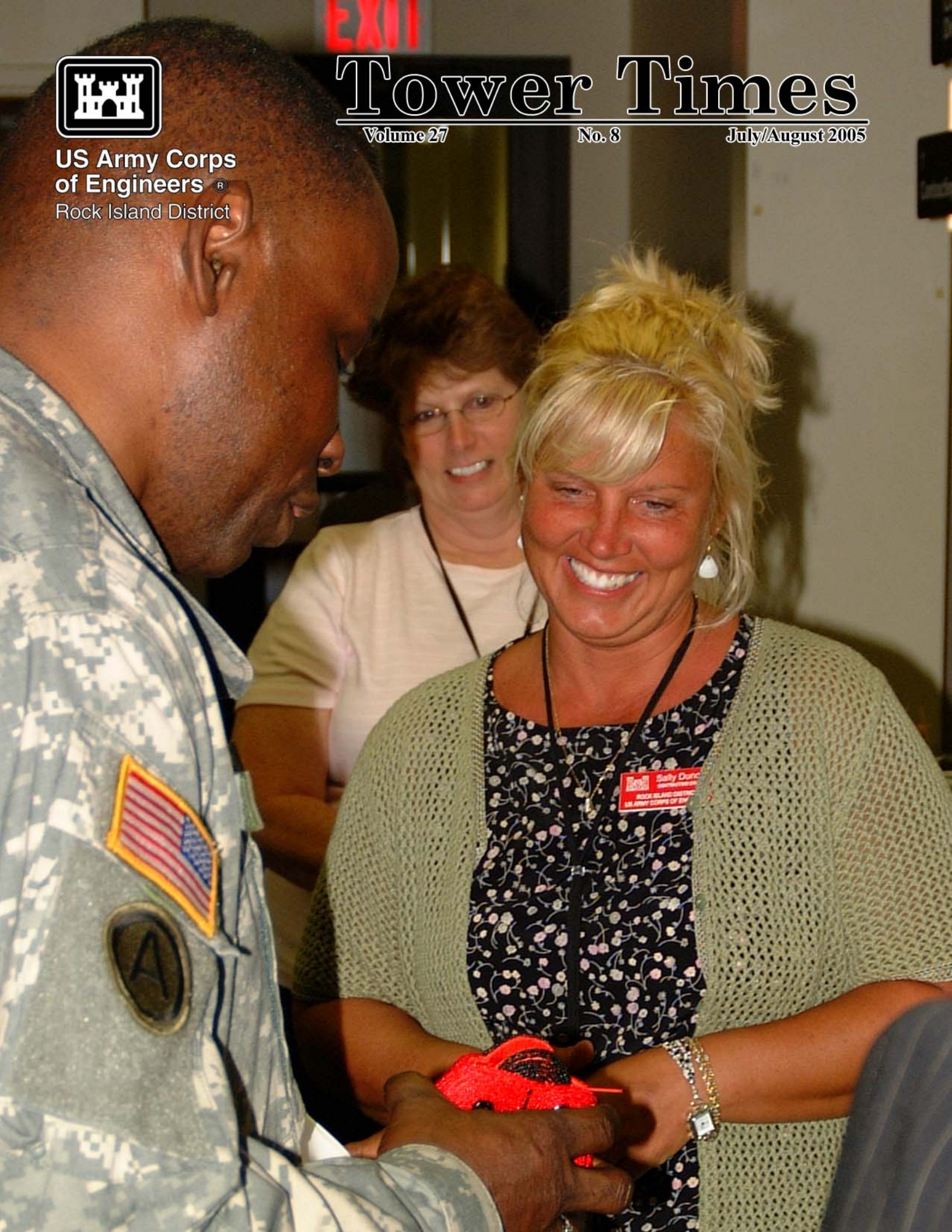
US Army Corps
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Rock Island District

Tower Times

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July/August 2005





Spotlight on the District

Story by Mark Kane

A lot of District employees have hobbies, but few have taken their hobby to the level that Kenny Brenner has. He earlier this summer came in second in the co-angler standings in the Angler-of-the-Year competition in the national 2005 Wal-Mart Forrest L. Wood Walleye Tour.

Brenner, an engineer technician in the Technical Support Branch of the Operations Division, finished the fishing tour with 662 points, just 14 points shy of the co-angler winner after the tour's final regular season qualifier held on Devil's Lake, N.D. He said he finished second overall as a co-angler on the FLW Walleye Circuit.

The Dubuque, Iowa, native's love of fishing goes back to the fact that his parents had him fishing before he could walk, but he said it really caught on in his teenage years.

"I caught a 7 pound trout when I was 14 and got my picture in the Dubuque paper," said Brenner.

Since then, Brenner's interests seem to have stayed around fish or water in some way, shape or form. He served in the Naval Reserves during Vietnam from 1969 through 1970 and saw plenty of water during a cruise in the Western Pacific. Sometime after that, he put three years of college courses in fish and wildlife biology under his belt from Southeastern Louisiana University, as well as Iowa State University.

That education and experience eventually brought him to the District in April 1984, where he started in a GS-4 temporary position in the Technical Support Branch.

Today Brenner works in survey and

channel maintenance, coordinating dredging, working with wing dams and small boat harbors, as well as working as a Corps boat license teacher.

Newsflash ... Brenner says he loves working around water.

"It's a natural fit," says Brenner. "I love the river, fishing and hunting."

When it comes to why Brenner chose a career with the Corps, and why he enjoys



working with the Corps, his answer was a little more specific.

"It's the chance to work with people who are as concerned about the environment as I am," said Brenner.

Today Brenner lives in Moline, Ill., with his wife of 31 years, Jackie, and their three sons, Kyle, Cory and Troy. Brenner said his son Cory is in the Army National Guard and has already served in Iraq.

Now, with Labor Day drawing closer, Brenner has his eyes on the next level ... the 2005 Wal-Mart FLW Walleye Tour Championship in Moline Sept. 28 through Oct. 1, headquartered at Sunset Park.

One moment Brenner cherishes at fishing tournaments takes place before

Kenny Brenner

Engineer Technician

Technical Support Branch, Operations Division

anyone casts a line in the water.

"At the FLW Walleye tournaments I fish, they always play the national anthem and say a prayer for everyone including our Soldiers and service people around the world," said Brenner. "I can't put into words how much it means to live in a country where we can freely do the things we do."

If a person were betting Vegas odds, Brenner might be the person to bet on, as he's accumulated a string of fishing competition achievements.

"I have several Walleye Club tournament victories," said Brenner. "I placed well in various local money tournaments, finished 25th last year at the Spring Valley Ranger, Crestliner and Lund Tour (now FLW Tour) and finished 40th for the year. This year, I finished seventh at Bull Shoals, 81st at Lake Erie, 28th at Green Bay and 26th at Devil's Lake, N.D.; and this year, finishing second overall as a Co-angler on the FLW Walleye

Circuit."

When it comes to fishing tips, Brenner has some fairly simple ones for anyone wondering how he's been so successful.

"Patience, observation, and trial and error," said Brenner. "And just go and have fun."

Walleye and smallmouth bass rank as Brenner's favorite fish to catch; however, he says he enjoys eating bluegill and sauger fish more than any other.

Brenner's advice to anyone reading this article is that, "Fishing, like golf, is a sport that you can enjoy with family all your life. Time together on God's great earth is precious. I thank God for all my blessings." ■

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District Engineer
Col. Duane P. Gapinski

Editor
Mark Kane

Chief, Public Affairs
Ron Fournier

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July/August 2005

Tower Times

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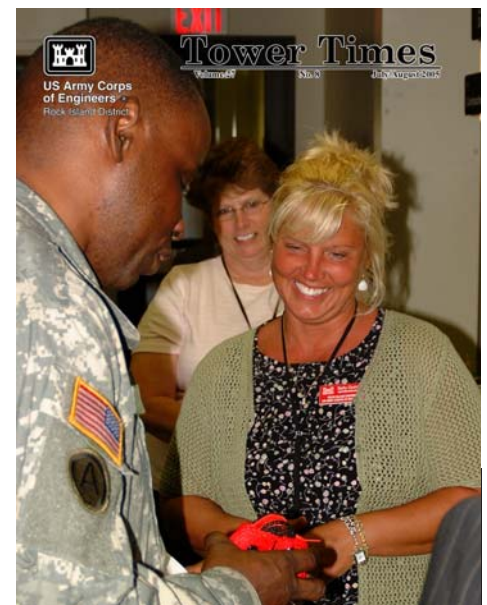
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District Hosts Student Ocean 11
Conference



Battling Invasive Honeysuckle on
Smith's Island 12



On the Cover

Sally Duncan, Contracting, talks with Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Division commander, about the Latvia cultural wall, during Crear's tour of the displays that were part of the District's inaugural Diversity Week.

Contracting and Construction Division created the Latvia cultural wall. For more information on Diversity Week check out pages 4 through 6.

Photo by Mark Kane.

Diversity Week Celebration



Story and photos by Mark Kane

Diversity Week, held June 20 through 24 at the Clock Tower Complex, took place as a week-long event to combine all Special Emphasis Program observances into one week of education and celebration of the people of the Rock Island District, and their diverse cultures and to understand that all cultures share common values.

Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Division commander, spoke at the Diversity Week kickoff and emphasized how important diversity is to our Division.

"To my mind, diversity is not merely the absence of discrimination; more fundamentally, it is the powerful presence of a sense of teamwork and community – one that brings all kinds of people from different backgrounds together, with the end result of creating a whole that is much greater than the sum of the individual parts," said Crear. "My challenge to you is be equally bold and energetic in bringing that kind of teamwork and community into play ... in making the Mississippi Valley Division a true house of diversity."

Story continued on page 6 ➔

From Top Left to Bottom Right

- Adrienne Blackwell, Real Estate, and Doug Davis, Programs and Project Management, go over the results of who was voted out at the conclusion of the Survival workshop. The workshop split participants into two different groups and had them decide what individuals would be selected as the last surviving humans on Earth.
- Ron Deiss, Programs and Project Management, talks about his hand-carved spear fishing lures with Gail Clingerman, previously with Programs and Project Management, and Nicole McVay, Programs and Project Management, during the Talent Day portion of Diversity Week. The inset photo shows the hand-carved spear fisherman Deiss created.
- Judy Gooch, assistant lockmaster, Dresden Lock and Dam, speaks to District employees and attendees during the Diversity Week kickoff about the importance of diversity and her experiences with diversity in the workplace.
- The last food items are laid out as part of the Costa Rica cultural wall display that was located between the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center and the Office of Counsel. The display placed first in the Cultural Wall decorating competition, as well as tying with the Cameroon display for the people's choice award.
- Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Division commander, plays a thumb harp during his visit to the Cameroon cultural wall display outside Information Management. The enlarged photo of the Cameroon native in the background set off the display that earned it first place in the people's choice award, tying only with the Costa Rica display.
- Robert Romic, Information Management, creates a handmade copper-wire tree during the Talent Day portion of Diversity Week. Romic displayed numerous versions of his wire creations.
- Amy Moore, Engineering Division, elaborates on how the District scores in regard to how diverse its employment numbers are during the Affirmative Employment Program for Managers workshop.
- Tracy Street, Programs and Project Management, points out a baby picture to student aides Kassie Keeney and Lindsay Bjerregaard, Programs and Project Management, that was part of her scrapbooking display during Talent Day.
- The dolls in the upper right and lower left hand corners are from the Ecuador display in the Cultural Wall Contest.



Diversity Week Celebration

"Unity Through Understanding"

☞ *Continued from page 5*

The District's first Diversity Week Celebration went over with a bang, drawing in crowds of employees through all four days of events at the Clock Tower Complex.

Diversity Week, kicked off that Monday with a ceremony featuring informal presentations and discussions on diversity by Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Division commander, and Judy Gooch, assistant lockmaster, Dresden Lock and Dam.

Nine teams created displays to accurately depict the people and culture of nine different countries as part of the Cultural Wall Contest, which took place Monday and Tuesday of Diversity Week. The countries included Costa Rica (created by Public Affairs, Executive Office, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, and Office of Counsel), Kenya (created by Resource Management and Logistics Management), Turkey (created by Programs and Project Management), Ecuador (created by Operations Division, Emergency Management, and Security), Estonia (created by Safety Office, Internal Review, and the mailroom), Cameroon (created by Information Management), Latvia (created by Contracting and Construction Division), Czech Republic (created by Real Estate), and Thailand (created by Engineering Division).

The judging of the cultural wall displays took place early Monday afternoon, while Crear took the opportunity to see all the displays after the judges. Crear traveled "around the

world," so to speak, in a little less than two hours – sampling the food, learning the culture, and taking in the sites of each display.

Susan Dikeman, Equal Employment Office, said the event was not only fun, but educational.

"We heard many positive comments regarding the interesting information that was provided at each display," said Dikeman.

The winner of the Cultural Wall decorating competition were the creators of the Costa Rica display, while the people's choice winner was a tie between the creators of the Cameroon display and the Costa Rica display.

On Wednesday, Diversity Week featured four workshops in different locations in the Clock Tower. The workshops included: Communicating Across Your Full Spectrum, Survival, Independence for All, and the Affirmative Employment Program for Managers. Each workshop was one-hour long and was designed to inform and heighten awareness for its subject matter.

Thursday showcased the talents of numerous District employees during the Talent Day portion of Diversity Week. Fourteen employees put their talents on display during the event. They included: Elaine Boone, Engineering Division - crochet quilts; Doug Davis, Programs and Project Management - art; Ron Deiss, Programs and Project Management - carving; Jeanne Elliot, Information Management - painting; Angie Freyermuth, Information Management -

art; Sharryn Jackson, Programs and Project Management - therapy dog; Lonni McGuire, Programs and Project Management - turtle clocks; Joe Nobling, Information Management - fiddle; Joni Redman, Information Management - quilting; Robert Romic, Information Management, - art pieces; Jody Schmitz, Engineering Division - craft/candy; Karly Steele, Information Management - art pieces; Tracy Street, Programs and Project Management - stamping; Nancy Vanderleest, Resource Management - crochet/embroider/candles.

Throughout Diversity Week, District employees had the chance to answer diversity questions from the Test Your Knowledge Quiz. Each day of the week a different set of questions were made available that covered women's history, black history, Asian-Pacific Islander heritage, Hispanic heritage, and disability awareness. More than 125 District employees participated, but at the end of the week only two surfaced as overall winners. Joyce Duffey, Central Area Office, had a perfect score of 25 and earned the top place in the field site category, while Judy Kornbrust, Information Management, was close behind with the best score among Clock Tower Complex employees. Each winner received a replica of the Clock Tower Building.

This year's event was the inaugural Diversity Week Celebration, and if the success of the first is any indication of what to expect next year, then the second annual Diversity Week Celebration will be a highly anticipated experience. ■

Corps' Strategic Direction, Permission Slip, Its Impact On Us

By Col. Duane Gapinski, District Engineer

By now you should have received your new Permission Slip, referred to popularly as the Just Do It card, and a copy of the Corps' Strategic Directions brochure. If you have not yet received these items, please contact Public Affairs.

I encourage you to thoroughly read the brochure and Permission Slip. Don't be surprised if you are asked questions about how the Corps' strategic direction affects your day-to-day mission and how you contribute to reaching our goals and enhancing our service to the nation when I (or Brig. Gen. Crear) visit your desk or field site. In other words, Lt. Gen. Flowers' 30-second infomercial still applies.

It is crucial that you adopt the ideas suggested in these materials. You are the key to keeping the Corps moving in the right direction, the Corps needs your continued support to make our vision a reality.

The Permission Slip has been updated and endorsed by Lt. Gen. Strock as the 51st Chief of Engineers. The brochure contains both enduring values embodied within our command and our people, and also strategic directions that will be emphasized in the years ahead.

Lt. Gen. Strock has also produced a Strategic Directions video which can be viewed at <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/video/strategic.wmv>.

The Corps' Strategic Vision is a key component of the Strategic Directions Brochure. The opening paragraph of the Vision states the Corps is "One team: Relevant, Ready, Responsive, and Reliable, proudly serving the Armed Forces and the Nation now and in the future." I believe we exemplify that here in the Rock Island District.

Some of the key ideas in the brochure are that we must improve our responsiveness to customers. We must actively engage those we serve to learn about their vision and goals, which will help us to anticipate their needs. We must also provide earlier and better preparation and coordination, and follow through on the commitments we make.

The enduring values in the brochure include a key excerpt from the Oath of Service that each of you swore to when you entered federal service -- to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies. It also includes the Army Values, which are just as applicable to our personal lives as to our professional careers. There are intentional similarities between the Army Values and the Permission Slip.

The new Campaign Plan focuses our efforts and will help us provide better, faster, cheaper, safer, and greener solutions. The Plan's first goal prepares us to be ready and responsive in support of



national-security objectives around the world. The second and third goals will enhance our relevance and reliability as we perform our civil works and military program missions. I encourage you to read the campaign plan at: www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/vision/plan.pdf.

As always, I appreciate your continued support of the Corps' refined strategic direction and the tenets of the Permission Slip. Essayons! 🇺🇸



From Top Left to Bottom Right

- Steve Fairbanks, Operations Division, is assisted by Steve Hall, Internal Review, in picking out a door prize.
- Scott Pettis, Engineering Division, turns over another burger of the vast amount of hamburgers and hotdogs prepared at Corps Day.
- Cory Haberman, Engineering Division, throws a pie at Col. Duane Gapinski, District Engineer, in the place of winning bidder Maj. Melody Smith, Deputy District Engineer.
- Competition heats up on the sand during the volleyball tournament.
- A youngster readies himself to spring across the bounce house that was put to good use by many children at the event.
- Janet Hancks, Contracting, lays down her card during the Euchre tournament, while JoAnn Wilgenbusch, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, David Bequeath, Engineering Division, and Steve Johnson, Programs and Project Management, plan their next move.



Corps Day 2005

Award Winners

Employee of the Year

Professional Occupations

Kirk Sunderman, Engineering Division

Technical Occupations

Nancy Vanderleest, Resource Management

Trades and Crafts Occupations

John Greif, Operations Division

Public Contact Occupations

Thomas Guillaume, Operations Division

District Commander's Lapel Pin

Kenneth Ayers, Operations Division

Glen Baugh, Operations Division

Mari Fournier, Resource Management

James Hipschen, Operations Division

Thomas Lafrenz, Information Management

Kevin Landwehr, Engineering Division

Sherri Lewis, Programs and Project Management

Amy Moore, Engineering Division

Jacqueline Peterson, Operations Division

Scott Pettis, Engineering Division

EEO Champion of the Year

EEO Champion of the Year, Supervisory

Karen Grizzle, Real Estate

EEO Champion of the Year, Non-Supervisory

Angela Freyermuth, Information Management

Suggester of the Year

David Washington, Operations Division

Pathfinders Graduate Certificates

Bonnie Bernat, Noah Clatt, Ronald Faletti, Angela Freyermuth, LaShell Harper, Toby Hunemueller, Troy Hythecker, Eric Johnson, Jason Jones, Perry Jones, James Kelley, Laurie Kotecki, Robert Petruney, Stephen Reeder, Heather Schroeder, LuAnn Steen, Mathew Zager, Adam Ziegler

Honorary Awards

The following individuals are recognized for their selfless service to our country in support of the Global War on Terrorism: Christian Hawkinson, Mark Hoague, Paul Holcomb, Charles Thieling - Superior Civilian Service Award and a Commander's Coin; David Bequeath, David Dierickx, Randall Kracium, Thomas Mack, Mary Peschang - Commanders Award for Civilian Service and a Commander's Coin; Robert Adams, Rick Granados, Janet Hodges, Toby Hunemueller, Theodore Kerr, Jennifer McDermott, David McIlrath, Nicholas Peschang, John Quick, Larry Spengler, George Sporer, Kathryn Soska, David Swanson, John Van Watermeulen, Matthew Zager - Achievement Medal for Civilian Service and a Commander's Coin; Patrick Flaherty, Rowland Fraser, Michael Mannhardt, Harold Schweiger - Certificate of Achievement and a Commander's Coin

Federal Executive Association, Quad-City Chapter Certificate Recipients

The following individuals were recognized for their selfless service to our country in support of the Global War on Terrorism at the Federal Executive Association annual luncheon on May 5. These individuals were presented with a certificate from the Federal Executive Association: Eric Aubrey, Robert Balamut, David Bequeath, Dana Brosig, Randy Brotherton, Peter Corken, Julie Fisher, Janet Hancks, Mark Hoague, Terry Hoover, Randall Kracium, Jason Larsen, Kevin Peel, Jonathan Perrault, Mary Peschang, Nick Peschang, Robert Petersen, Steven Russell, Karl Schmitz, Penny St. Clair, Charles Theiling, James Trail, Ralph Werthmann

Special Honorary Awards

David Purdy, Operations Division, - Secretary of the Army Medal of Honor; Timothy Olson, Resource Management, - Department of the Army, Finance Officer of the Year; Ronald Fournier, Public Affairs, - Michael C. Robinson Award as the Corps of Engineers Public Affairs Officer of the Year; and Thomas Mack, Construction Division, - Mississippi Valley Division's 2004 Construction Excellence Award Winner

Volleyball Tournament Winners

Jeff Hopkins, Mississippi River Maintenance Crew, and Brice Bennett, a family friend of Hopkins

Euchre Tournament Winner

Janet Hancks, Contracting

Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees Inductees for 2005 on page 10 ➤

Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees Inductees for 2005

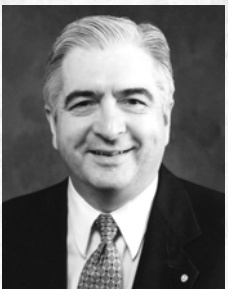
Thomas F. Crane



Crane was born in Burlington, Iowa, on Aug. 22, 1932. He began the practice of law and his federal career as an attorney with the Legal Section of the Rock Island District on June 29, 1959. In only eight years, Crane was promoted to District Counsel, a position he held for 32 years until his retirement on July 2, 1999. Crane's 40-year career with the Rock Island District was devoted to selfless public service, dedication to the welfare of the Rock Island

District and the citizens of the region, and accomplishment of the District's mission in strict accordance with the law and ethical standards of conduct. Crane's career is most noteworthy for the creative transitioning of legal services and Corps programs through the modern era. Dramatic legislative changes and federal agency restructuring during the second half of the 20th century significantly transformed the legal requirements with which federal agencies must comply. Crane's distinguished career spanned these turbulent decades. He met the challenges and pro-actively shaped the Office of Counsel to succeed in providing professional, reliable and timely legal services in the 21st century. Crane's expertise in contract law and agency authorities was highly coveted. He was a leader in legal services automation and innovation. From completion of Saylorville Lake, to rehabilitation of multiple locks and dams, to emergence of environmental restoration programs, Crane's tireless efforts and sound legal advice have contributed greatly to the nation's resources.

Dudley M. Hanson



Hanson was born in La Crosse, Wis., on Jan. 20, 1941. Hanson began his career with the Rock Island District in 1961 as an engineering aid. He received his bachelor's of science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Iowa in 1964, a masters of science degree in Structural Engineering from the University of Iowa in 1968, and a master's of science degree in Public Works from the University of Pittsburg in 1970. He served in Engineering Division as a civil and structural engineer, becoming assistant chief in 1980. He

became chief of the Planning Division in 1986. His career culminated as the deputy for Programs and Project Management. His influences in the District are many. He oversaw the standup of the first Program Development office external to Engineering Division and initiated the District's first Strategic Planning effort. He was responsible for the initiation of the Upper Mississippi River – Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study, and the start up of the Upper Mississippi River System – Environmental Management Program, both multi-district efforts. Throughout his career, Hanson successfully handled large, complex, and nationally significant water resource challenges. His ability to work in a collaborative manner, to anticipate water resource trends and needs, and to identify and nurture talent, left a legacy impacting the entire Upper Mississippi River Basin. His work was in the finest tradition of public service and advanced the reputation of the Rock Island District and the Corps of Engineers.

George E. Johnson



Johnson was born in Sturgeon Bay, Wis., on Feb. 28, 1933. Johnson graduated from Sturgeon Bay High School in 1951 and then entered the Marine Corps in 1952 after completing high school. After an honorable discharge in 1955, Johnson returned to Wisconsin, and began his training as a civil engineer at the University of Wisconsin. He received his bachelor's of science degree in Civil Engineering in 1960, and shortly afterward

began his career with the Corps of Engineers in Rock Island as a civil engineer trainee. Following several promotions, he became chief of the Water Control Section in 1969. In 1970, he earned a master's of science degree in Civil Engineering from Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. In 1976, Johnson became chief of the Hydraulics Branch as a supervisory hydraulic engineer. In 1992, several branches consolidated, and he became the chief of the Hydrologic and Hydraulics Branch. Johnson was elected to the Iowa State Chapter of Sigma Xi and is a fellow of American Society of Civil Engineering. In 1981, he was recognized as the Engineer of the Year by the Quad-Cities Engineering and Science Council. He later become involved with and served as president of that council. Throughout his life, Johnson exhibited a strong commitment to the community. He has served on the board of supervisors for Milan, Ill., and the Rock Island Public School Board, including a term as president of the school board. He has been very active in Rotary International, serving as Rock Island Rotary Club President from 1990-1991. Johnson was a mentor to many young engineers who are guiding the District today. His integrity and professionalism will continue at this District well beyond his 40 years of government service.

Doyle McCully



McCully was born in Saultillo, Miss., June 11, 1931. McCully started his Army career when he served on active duty from 1952 through 1954. He joined the Corps of Engineers in 1958, serving in various positions in the Huntington District and at Headquarters. He arrived in Rock Island as chief of Engineering in 1973. In 1989, he was reassigned as a special assistant to the District Engineer, a position that later became the Deputy District Engineer for Project Management. McCully served

during times of great change in the District and in the Corps of Engineers. The District completed many flood-damage reduction projects and began ongoing efforts to rehabilitate navigation facilities. He helped to nationally define the position now known as the Deputy for Programs and Project Management. He was a strong proponent for customer satisfaction, improving project management in the District, and employee training. He was a key member of the CP-18 Executive Development Program. An outstanding executive, McCully was committed to the long-term health of the District and especially to the missions it serves.

District Participates in Student Ocean Conference

By Mark Kane

Rock Island District employees joined with staff members from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Geological Survey, National Resource Conservation Service and other federal agencies, for the first Student Ocean Conference to be held inland on the five-state Upper Mississippi River watershed.

In an effort to educate the public about marine issues, an attempt is being made to reach out to students of coastal communities (and those communities of waterways that feed into the ocean) across the country. The venue for this collaborative effort is known as the Student Ocean Conference, and the objective is to educate and empower students about protection of the marine environment.

A Student Ocean Conference is coordinated through a Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center in partnership through Coastal America. The National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, located in Dubuque, Iowa, has been voted as one of Iowa's number one attractions and became the first Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center (in June 2004) located on an inland waterway.

The CELC coordinated the local Student Ocean Conference, held in mid-May, with the Corps and other partner

agencies. This specific conference reached out to regional high school teachers and students to explore issues about the environment; specifically hypoxia, the Mississippi River Watershed and its link to the Gulf of Mexico.

The District's involvement in the two-day conference included providing some of the boats the teachers and students used to see the Mississippi River, as well as a lock tour given at Lock and Dam 11 by lockmaster Bill Hainstock. George Millar, Engineering Division, and John Punkiewicz and Karl Schmitz, Operations Division, piloted the Corps' boats that were used in the event.

Dorie Bollman, Programs and Project Management, coordinated the District's involvement in the event.

"We took them to the Pool 11 Islands, Stage 1, of the Sunfish Lake Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project, and talked about the wildlife habitat," said Bollman. "I also spoke to them at Eagle Point Park and gave them an overview of the locks, the river, the navigation system, the Corps' missions, and a little about our international role in supporting the Army in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as talking about career opportunities with the Corps."

Bollman said the event did an excellent job in teaching the kids the inter-relationships between the activities in the Upper Mississippi Water-



George Millar pilots one of the District's boats on the Mississippi River during the Student Ocean Conference, while Dorie Bollman (located top middle of the boat), a teacher, and group of students look on from the boat.

shed and their relationship to the events in the Gulf of Mexico.

"It was really successful," said Bollman. "The kids in my boat had never seen forested bluffs and just being on the river was a real treat and educational experience."

The students also had the chance to visit farms in the area, as well as the experience of traversing a lock.

"The kids got to lock through 11 and Bill Hainstock gave a very good talk on how the locks work between lockages," said Bollman.

Bollman said that twice as many teachers in the region applied for the Student Ocean Conference than were able to attend.

"Those that were accepted had the trip paid for through a grant," said Bollman.

The Student Ocean Conferences are funded by the National Geographic Society's Geographic Education Foundation in collaboration with the Sustainable Seas Expedition, and Coastal America and its CELCs and federal partner agencies.

Bollman said that students were picked by age group and essays they wrote describing why they wanted to attend.

"The program targeted science and biology students who are young enough to be influenced on career decisions," said Bollman. ■



Karl Schmitz pilots one of the District's boats on the Mississippi River during the Student Ocean Conference, while a teacher and her students look on from the boat.

Volunteers from Pleasant Valley High School, recruited by Living Lands & Waters, work to dig up one of the numerous honeysuckle plants that were removed from Smith's Island.



Battling Invasive Honeysuckle on Smith's Island

Story and photos by Mark Kane

Amur Honeysuckle, *Lonicera maackii*, an invasive shrub that outcompetes with native plants, was threatening to cover Smith's Island near Locks and Dam 14, until the District partnered with Living Lands & Waters to get rid of the pesky plant.

Living Lands & Waters, the foundation created by river man Chad Pregracke, has coordinated removal events on the island for the past three years. They recruited volunteers from the Pleasant Valley High School volunteer program and Augustana College along with businesses such as LaFarge North America to name a few. To date, nearly six acres of honeysuckle have been cleared.

To say that removing honeysuckle takes a lot of work is definitely an understatement.

"This year, sixty-five volunteers worked a total of 660 grueling hours to pull, cut, pile and chip a mountain of honeysuckle," said the efforts organizer Joe Lundh, Mississippi River Project Office.

Amur Honeysuckle, originally a native to Asia, is an invasive plant that was introduced for ornamental plantings, erosion control, wildlife cover, and food. It produces an abundant amount of seeds, which are dispersed by birds. The plants can grow up to 20-feet tall and can shade out nearly all vegetation underneath them.

It's no wonder the plant caused problems on Smith's Island and why there was a need to get rid of it.

"Their efforts have made a dramatic difference in wooded understory on Smith's Island," said Lundh. "This gives native woodland species an opportunity for recovery."

The effort is part of the preparatory work underway for highlighting the Smith's Island Nature Trail during the scheduled 18th Annual National Trails Symposium, which will be held Oct. 19 through 22, 2006, in the Quad Cities. The one-mile long Smith's Island Nature Trail was recently designated a National Recreation Trail by the Department of the Interior.

The symposium provides an opportunity for greenways and trails advocates, managers, planners, and users, outdoor product providers, as well as conservationists, private landowners, and tourism and business interests to come together to communicate and experience an inspirational and educational conference. The symposium addresses both non-motorized and motorized trail issues. ■



The roots of an Amur Honeysuckle plant give way to the removal efforts from the Living Lands & Waters volunteers.

On The 'Net

www.mvr.usace.army.mil/missriver/SmithsIsland/Smith.htm

www.americantrails.org/quad/



Coralville Lake Veterans Trail Adds 11 Names

On Memorial Day 1989, a barrier-free trail was dedicated as the Veterans Trail in honor of all veterans who have served in the military. The quarter-mile trail was constructed to accommodate wheelchair users, users with

walking disabilities, as well as able-bodied users, and is situated among mature maple and oak trees. It features a bird observation area, various rest areas, and an 80-foot bridge, all named for past honorees.



Col. Duane Gapinski presents retired Maj. Gen. Robert Sentman with a certificate of appreciation during the Memorial Day ceremony held May 30 at East Overlook Picnic Area at Coralville Lake. A bench along Veterans Trail at Coralville Lake also was dedicated in Sentman's name. Photo by Jonathan Woods, Cedar Rapids Gazette.

Each year on Memorial Day, the District, and organizations dedicated to Johnson County veterans, honor veterans for their courage and dedication while serving with the military by adding their names to the trail.

The public is asked to nominate veterans for this recognition.

This year, two new rest areas were added to the trail. Ten veterans' names were added to a monument located at the first rest area; while the second rest area had a limestone bench added displaying retired Maj. Gen. Robert

Sentman's name.

During the Coralville Lake ceremony that officially added this year's names, Sentman said the veterans are being honored for their, "courage and dedication" while serving in the military. Sentman works throughout the year to recognize area veterans.

More than 500 people attended the ceremony at East Overlook Picnic Area, which is located across the road from Veterans Trail and included the presentation of the awards and a flyover by three Stearman biplanes used for training during World War II.

The total number of veterans recognized at the trail has now climbed to 110 with the addition of the 11 names added this year.

For more information about Veterans Trail, call the Coralville Lake administration office at (319) 338-3543, Ext. 6300, or go online to www.mvr.usace.army.mil/coralville/VeteransTrail.htm.

Dick Hogan, Cedar Rapids Gazette, contributed to this article.

Timeline

1988 – During the fall, construction completed on quarter-mile-loop, barrier free trail at Coralville Lake.

1989 – Memorial Day, trail dedicated as the Veterans Trail in honor of all veterans who have served in the military.

1989 – Bird observation area dedicated to Daniel Vickroy.

1990 – Eighty-foot bridge dedicated to Richard Pelechek.

1991 – Rest area dedicated to Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Ralph Neppel.

1992 – Rest area dedicated to E. Raymond Campbell.

1993 – Rest area dedicated to Bill Doherty.

1994 – Rest area dedicated to Edwin, Earl, Guy, John, Donald, Lyle and Robert Seydel.

1995 – Rest area dedicated to Martin Dvorak, Waunetta Stubbs, Bob Watkins, Fred Hahn, George Neitderhisar, Carl Villhauer, Leo Villhauer, David Villhauer, Louie Villhauer, Herman Villhauer, and Howard Villhauer.

1996 – Rest area dedicated to William Tucker, Philip Von Stein, Richard Grell, William Bock, Robert Randall, William Meardon, Clifford Cox, Harold Cox, Louis Cox, and Donald Cox.

1997 – Granite rock added to the trail and eight names ceremoniously inscribed: Lauren Tonne, Dale Hostetler, Thomas Fountain, William Hutcheson, Robert Burns, Donald Farnsworth, Albert Hieronymus, and Donald Brannaman.

1998 – Seven names ceremoniously inscribed on the rock: Earl Barnes, Charles Callen, Bill Crow, Willard Freed, James Lynch, Richard Martin, and Howard Stock.

1999 – Six names ceremoniously inscribed on the rock: Maynard

Sexton, William Knowling, Rex Flansburg, Robert Bowers, Roy McAtee, and Harry Eister.

2000 – Seven names ceremoniously inscribed on the rock: George Dane, Terry Michel, Reed Parker, David Patten, Earle Scheetz, Curtis Utley, and John Wilmoth.

2001 – Eight names ceremoniously inscribed on the rock: John Beranek, Bernard Collins, Leo Embree, Louis Ernst, Donald Erusha, Daniel Knuckey, Leonard Tomash, and Gary Weppler.

2002 – Additional rock added to the trail and nine names ceremoniously inscribed: Dean Andersen, Bernard Aldeman, Robert Forbes, Harry McGrath, Cyrus Shockey, Theodore Spivey, Leonard Tepoel, Steven Wieneke, and Robert Williams.

2003 – Twelve names ceremoniously inscribed on the new rock: Richard Feddersen, John Fenstermaker, Dale Hill, Charles Hromidko, Victor Kostiw, David Mitchell, Merle Nevenhoven, Charles Plymale, Richard Reihman, Anthony Rocca, Ronald Schump, and Gary Spevacek.

2004 – Nine names ceremoniously inscribed on the new rock: Michael Alber, Ralph Baughman, Leonard Fuhrmeister, John Jones, William Peterson, Charles Pratt, Francis Thoman, Partrick Zenishek, and Gordon Zumwalt.

2005 – Two new rest areas added, one with a monument with 10 names ceremoniously inscribed: Garlyn Ash, Steven Clark, Junior Courtney, Danny Curtis, Harlan Henely, Michael Hess, Clarence Hightshoe, Leo Slattery, and Reno Walter. The second rest area had a limestone bench added with retired Maj. Gen. Robert Sentman's name ceremoniously inscribed on it.



Investing In Our People

Around the District

Smith Earns Bronze Star

Maj. Melody Smith, Deputy District Engineer, was presented with a Bronze Star Aug. 5, for her work in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service in connection with military operations against an armed enemy or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. The Bronze Star Medal is the nation's fourth highest combat award.

Smith earned the Bronze Star Medal for her meritorious service while serving from February to June as the Al Asad resident officer in charge of the Corps of Engineers Central District during Operation Iraqi Freedom. As the officer in charge, she proactively took responsibility of key construction projects and rapidly established communications and procedures with tactical commands to improve the district's capabilities. Her outstanding efforts as a leader were critical in the completion of 52 projects valued in excess of \$20 million.

Smith's military service includes command and high-ranking positions in the 34th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy); 36th Engineer Group (Combat); 63rd Engineer Company (Combat Support Equipment); Camp Zama, Japan; the Defense Threat Reduction Agency; and the Savannah and Rock Island Districts, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Knollenberg Earns USACE Planning Award

Camie Knollenberg, Programs and Project Management, earned the Corps of Engineers' 2004 Planning Excellence Award.

Knollenberg earned the award for promoting the use of innovative technology and state-of-the-art planning tools during the Lake Belle View Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration study, which was used to complete a superior planning product.

Specifically, the District's first use of virtual-reality technology was used to create the Lake Belle View Virtual Tour, a tool that was used to provide before and after views of alternatives at six locations in the project area.

This innovative tool proved valuable at public and stakeholder meetings to convey the design of each plan.

District Commander's Award

Samantha Heilig, Operations Division, received the June Commander's Award.

Heilig earned the award for taking over as chair of the Pathfinders Mentoring Program Committee while the previous chair was on maternity leave.

Sherri Clark, Contracting, received the May Commander's Award.

Clark earned the award for proving to be instrumental in conducting market research in conjunction with meeting the District's small business goals.

Robert Romic, Information Management, received the April Commander's Award.

Romic earned the award for providing customer service to the Fiscal Year 2005 Leadership Development Program class, while continuing to provide service to the rest of the District.

Congrats ...

Congratulations to **Rachel and John Fellman**, Engineering Division, on the birth of a baby boy, Zane Michael, July 7. He was 7 pounds, and 19 inches long.



Congratulations to **Tom and Mary Gambucci**, Engineering Division, on the birth of a baby girl, Catherine Jessica, June 16. She was 7 pounds and 8 ounces, and was 20 inches long.

Retirements ...

Jeffrey Pignato, maintenance mechanic, Coralville Lake, Operations Division, retired July 31, after dedicating 13 years and 10 months to the federal government.

Edward Foxworth, assistant lockmaster, Lockport Lock, Operations Division, retired July 1, after dedicating 33 years and two months to the federal government.

Sympathy ...



Richard Buller, 74, of Prophetstown, Ill., formerly of Erie, Ill., died June 18, at Genesis Medical Center, Illini Campus, Silvis, Ill.

Buller retired from the District in 1996 after 24 years of service.

He served in the U.S. Navy from 1948 through 1952 and then spent many years with the U.S. Naval Reserves.

SUPPORT, SACRIFICE FOR CORPS

Thanks to our employees currently supporting the Global War on Terrorism

Eric Aubrey, Randy Brotherton, Scott Bullock, and Ron Plante, Engineering Division; Bob Balamut, Lance Gardner, and David Varner, Operations Division; Rod Hallstrom and Ron Williams, Real Estate; Randy Kraciun, Programs and Project Management; and Nancy Pierce, Logistics Management.

Robert Emmert and Kyle Retzlaff, Operations Division; and Chris Churney, Engineering Division, are District employees currently serving on military active duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism through their respective reserve units.

Thanks to our employees for their support of the Global War on Terrorism

Maj. Melody Smith, Executive Office; Eric Aubrey, Dave Bequeath, Dana Brosig, Pete Corken, Ben Ferrell, Julie Fisher, Dan Foltz, Christian Hawkinson, Mark Hoague, Brian Lane, Larry Melaas, Ron Plante, Nicholas Peschang, Joel Peterson, Tom Reinhardt, Richard Rupert, Ray Tatro, Charles VanLaarhoven, and Judy Walters, Engineering Division; Bob Balamut, Randy Brotherton, Alois Devos, Dave Dierickx, Terry (Sam) Hoover, Lee Myers, Steve Russell, Karl Schmitz, John Stiffey, James Trail, David Varner, Randy Walters, and James Wilson, Operations Division; Darryl Carattini, Perry Hubert, Randy Kraciun, and Mary Peschang, Programs and Project Management; Randall Braley, Daniel Holmes, Paul Holcomb, Tom Mack, and Rick Stebens, Construction Division; George Sporer, Ralph Werthman, and Ron Williams, Real Estate; Jan Hancks, Contracting; and Nancy Pierce, Logistics Management.

Eric Aubrey, Scott Bullock, Kevin Peel, and Scott Pettis, Engineering Division; Jason Larsen, Jonathan Perrault, Robert Petersen, and Larry Reeve, Operations Division; are current District employees who completed military active duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism through their respective reserve units.

Thank You For Serving!



Retiree Luncheon Sept. 7

By Barbara Morgan, District retiree

The annual retiree's luncheon is being held at Hickory Garden Family Restaurant, located at 3311 Hickory Grove Road, Davenport, Iowa.

The luncheon will be held the first Wednesday after Labor Day, Sept. 7, with a social hour at noon and the luncheon at 1 p.m.

The menu for the buffet luncheon consists of chicken, roast beef, mashed potatoes, cole slaw, rolls and butter, and beverages. The cost is \$10 per person

and includes gratuities.

Dick Fleischman will chair a golf tournament on the morning of the event. If you are interested, contact him no later than Aug. 16, at (563) 391-2585, or e-mail him at white@netexpress.net. Dick needs your handicap to make the pairings, so have that ready when you contact him.

All retirees and their spouses or guests are cordially invited to attend. It is a lot of fun, so we hope to see everyone there.

Reservations are necessary, so please call Bonnie Donelson at (563) 381-3143,

Barbara Morgan at (309) 798-2990, Jan Krahl at (309) 787-1915, or Nancy Berg at (309) 788-9851. You can also e-mail Barbara at morgan-ent@msn.com.

Checks for the luncheon should be mailed to: Bonnie Donelson, 6355 132nd Street, Blue Grass, Iowa 52726, no later than Aug. 25.

Not everyone has a current e-mail address or receives the Tower Times, so please spread the word to other retirees.

Hope to see all of you at the luncheon. Let's have a great turn out like last year.

IN HONOR OF

Women's Equality Day

You're Invited to a
Round Table Discussion

with the
*Federal Women's
Program Manager
Amy Moore*

August 25, 2005
ABC Conference Room
11:30 - 12:30

*Feel free to bring
your lunch!*

Discussion Topics

- What is SEPC?
- What does the Federal Women's Program Manager do?
- What do you need to make the next step in your career?
- What programs are available to help you advance your career?
- What programs would you like to see enacted at the District?

Women's Equality Day

85th Anniversary Celebration

August 26

In 1971, the U.S. Congress designated Aug. 26 as Women's Equality Day. The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution granting women the right to vote. This was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil-rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world's first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, N.Y.

The observance of Women's Equality Day not only commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, but also calls attention to women's continuing efforts toward full equality. Workplaces, libraries, organizations, and public facilities now participate with Women's Equality Day programs, displays, video showings, or other activities.

On The 'Net

www.nwhp.org/events/equality-day/history-of-equality-day.html

womenshistory.about.com/od/wed/



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