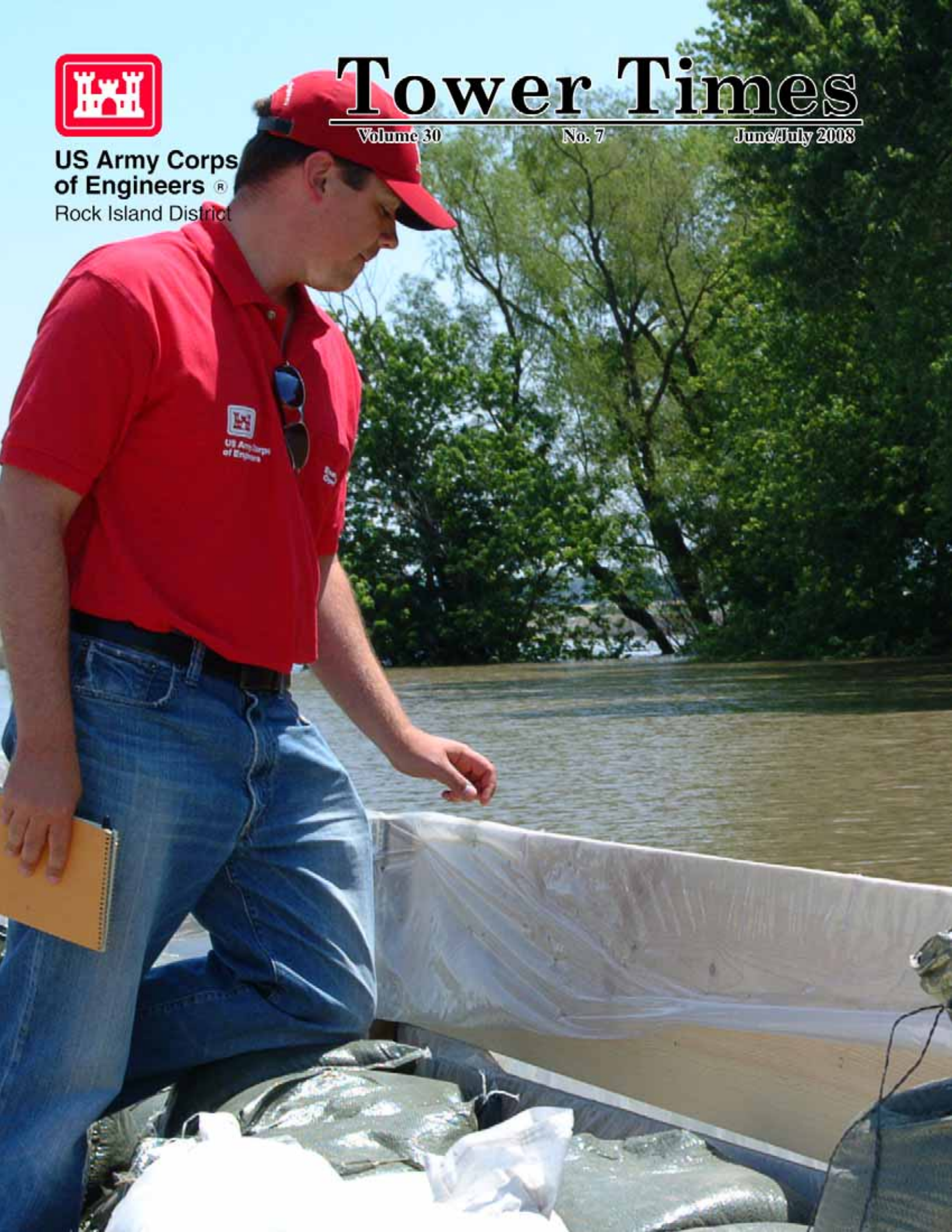

Tower Times

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US Army Corps of Engineers ®
Rock Island District

Spotlight on the District

Matt Stewart

Acting Chief, Lock and Dam Section, Illinois Waterway

Story and photos by Mark Kane

The Flood of 2008 pushed District employees beyond the jobs many were used to doing on a day-to-day basis, which for some employees was a challenge they met head on. Matt Stewart, the acting chief of the Illinois Waterway Lock and Dam Section has enjoyed the job diversity the Corps has offered him so far in his career.

Stewart started working for the Corps in 1995 and has been looking to be involved in challenging positions and experiences ever since.

"I was a CoOp student with the Corps back then," said Stewart. "I was working on becoming an engineer, which happened in 1998. Originally, I was pursuing electrical engineering in school at the University of Iowa, but then I landed the CoOp position with the Corps, and it really opened my eyes and I changed my direction. After that experience, I really just waited and received the opportunity to continue working with the Corps."

Matt Stewart listens to Randy Kinney, a geotech member of the Quincy EOC, as they both assess the effectiveness of the flood-fighting methods used in the south Quincy, Ill., area near Lock and Dam 21.

Stewart is now a geotechnical engineer and to date he said his job has entailed working on Lockport Pool, rehabilitation reports, dam rehabilitation, soil, sediment, levee design, and geotechnical analysis.

Lengthy words weren't required when summing up his job and at what level his work as a geotechnical engineer concentrates.

"We're the base, the foundation," said Stewart.

While Stewart might start at the base, he does anything but stay in one place very long; which is why he continues to enjoy working for the Corps.

"I like the benefits like training and the ability to do different kinds of work from within the same organization," said Stewart. "The Corps has given me the opportunity to bridge into project engineering and the experience dealing with people and managing projects. I really like the fact that I can do so many different things to acquire the technical expertise that can be applied to so many things. It's part of a maturing career. If you have the ability and you're willing, the opportunity is there."

While he has made the most of the professional opportunities during his time with the Corps, Stewart emphasized how important his co-workers have been every step of the way.

"The people are good, they care about each other and have a lot of expertise," said Stewart. "They do it for the right reasons too; they want to do something to make a difference."

This summer's flood was a huge challenge for communities across the Midwest and for agencies like the Corps to provide the highest level of expertise to assist in the flood fighting effort. Stewart's role during the flood was as the Quincy Flood Area Engineer, one of the most challenging and highest visibility positions inside the Rock Island District during the event. As such, he dispatched and coordinated a team of assistant flood area engineers, geological technicians, and administrative support employees to support the Corps' role in the flood fight facing inundated communities on the Mississippi River. Again, Stewart rose to the challenge.

"I like these kinds of opportunities, like this flood fight, getting out in the field and working with the public, coordinating, giving back, making a difference," said Stewart. "It's been a challenge to say the least. It's definitely different than I expected. It has been exciting being part of a 50-person Emergency Operations Center. Everyone has done a great job and exceeded expectations."

The Muscatine, Iowa, native now lives in DeWitt, Iowa, with his wife, Andrea, and their two children.

His hobbies include weightlifting, traveling, and spending time with family.

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Tower Times

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Ben Ferrell, Engineering and Construction, assesses flood waters alongside a temporary batter board and sandbag floodwall at the South River Drainage District north of Hannibal, Mo., on June 18.

Photo by Mark Kane. See pages 4-9 for more information on the Flood of 2008.

District Steps Up to Flood Responsib

By Mark Kane

The Flood of 2008 impacted a huge portion of the Midwest because of record-breaking storms and flooding across multiple states. While the flooding lasted from June 5 through July 25, shorter in duration than 1993, it was more intense, which caused storm and flood levels to approach or set records in many areas.

The majority of property damage occurred along the Upper Mississippi River and its tributaries due to the 14 rivers which flow into the Mississippi River Basin that resulted in high river stages downstream from the area that received the rain.

In response to flood disaster, the Corps supplemented county, city and village emergency flood-fighting efforts with needed supplies and technical assistance.

Support

The Corps also assisted the Federal Emergency Management Agency by coordinating and organizing public works and engineering-related support. This support was given to agencies through the District's own Emergency Operations Center, as well as providing staffing at state and regional EOCs.

At the Iowa state EOC in Des Moines, nearly two dozen government agencies coordinated and collaborated with one another inside the Iowa National Guard building. Three big-screen televisions carried newscasts in front of a semi-circle of desks and computers filled with government personnel.

Perry Hubert, Engineering and Construction, started working at the Des Moines EOC on June 11. He stressed how important it was for the agencies to operate together and gave some insight into how it was done.

"The EOC has been running fluidly through the use of software called WebEOC, which coordinates and collaborates between different agencies involved in the EOC," said Hubert. "It's how we keep track of the missions. For example, a county requests pumps from the state, the state enters it into the software, then it's assigned to the Corps. The Corps receives it and approves it, and puts it out for pick-up or puts it out through someone like Ron Flowers at the Mississippi River Project Office. A mission number is assigned to each request. Of course, it's one more thing to keep on top of here in the EOC along with e-mail and phones, but it's been incredibly effective."

Hubert said the EOC was especially busy June 13 through 15.

"It was a regular beehive," said Hubert. "Even in the middle of the night this place was full. There were briefings being given several times a day."

Another resource the Corps created is a flood fight map to assist in identifying areas along the Mississippi River that may experience water levels exceeding the design height of levees. The map was used to identify levee systems that had the potential for overtopping if National Weather Service forecast crests were reached.

The map is a tool that was used by the Corps to ensure all affected areas were alerted to the projected river levels and that all available resources were directed towards successfully raising levee heights to fend off the Mississippi River's rising waters.

Levees depicted on the map were levees that protect agriculture, residential, or industrial areas, or a combination of the three. Levees that protect environmental areas, such as wildlife refuges, which are designed to overtop during flood events, were not depicted on the map.

"These maps are important documents that assist levee districts and communities in making risk-informed decisions on how to prepare for potential high water, determine needed flood-fighting supplies, and make decisions on impacts to infrastructure," said, Col. Robert Sinkler, District Commander. "Maps such as these help to save lives and facilities. They are a decision-support tool to assist in decision-making during flood events."

At left, Dennis Shannon, chief, Lock and Dam Section, and Bill Gretten, Mississippi River Operations Manager, put on their lifejackets and rain gear while speaking briefly with Quincy Flood Area Engineer Matt Stewart before boating across flood waters to meet with employees at Lock and Dam 21 on June 19. At right, Flood Area Engineers and Geotech members at Sny Reach 3 in Illinois, lend a hand while giving their insight on proper sandbagging techniques. From left to right, Cory Haberman, Karl Schmidt, Jeff McCrery, and Chris Reger.

ility

The map was an extremely successful communication tool and was used by the National Weather Service, the state EOC, and to brief executive-level agency leaders, including President George Bush. The map quickly became a highly sought after commodity following its publication by the Associated Press and was referred to amongst the press as the "The Da Vinci Map."

While the Corps' flood fight map proved to be very valuable, its employees' internal knowledge and years of experience was indispensible. Roger Less, Engineering and Construction, was a prime example of this.

"Once in a while, floods take priority over your personal time… if they saw any problem areas or they needed a more senior opinion, I was called out," said Less, who has worked for the Corps since 1984. "I was the eyes and ears on the ground for our water control people who were making the decisions on Saylorville," the reservoir that strained to hold the Des Moines River.

Less also handled media inquiries, offered assurances to the public and warned elected leaders of worst-case scenarios.

"A lot of people contributed to our ability to fight this flood effectively, but none more than Roger Less," said Des Moines City Manager Rick Clark.

Public Works Director Bill Stowe said Less was an invaluable resource who told officials where the city's levee system was most vulnerable.

"I have such high regard for him," said Stowe.

When the Birdland levee threatened to give way, it was advice from Less that led officials to say it was time to evacuate the area.

And when the Iowa Army National Guard had questions about whether it was safe to keep troops sandbagging on the weakened levee, it was Less who made the call to stay.

"To be called out there and told 'It's up to you to tell us if it's safe or not,' that's a lot of responsibility," he said. "I spent the next few hours out on the Birdland levee stomping around making sure there wasn't any overly dangerous areas that we should pull people away from."

The Levees

When all was said and done there were 35 levee overtopping incidents due to the flood. The levees, although some overtopped, worked as intended to buy critical time for local emergency management officials to safely evacuate residents. In some cases it has allowed additional time to protect property.

Jimmy Aidala, Operations Division, worked as a geological technician for the Quincy Emergency Operations Center. He saw a lot of levees and emphasized, "These levees are exceeding the capability by five to 10 times, that's what's important to know."

Randy Kinney, Engineering and Construction, worked with Aidala as a Geotech from the Quincy EOC and concurred with his observation.

"The levees are doing exactly what they did in 1993," said Kinney. "The river is acting differently; different peaks and durations. Another difference this time is that communities gained a lot of knowledge from the 1993 flood, and that knowledge has been enacted in the levee districts, so the Corps' role in educating flood fighters isn't as extensive as it was in 1993."

The Corps serves as one of the nation's largest infrastructure stewards and with high visibility assisting with catastrophic flood events, the misperception exists that the Corps has universal responsibility for our nation's levees. However, there is no single agency with responsibility for levee oversight nationwide. The Corps has specific authorities for approximately 2,000 levees across the country. The responsibilities of local levee partners are broad and include levee safety; land use planning and development; building codes, and operations, maintenance,

At left, Park Ranger Jeff Nelson, Lake Red Rock, coordinates with local officials about flooding in the area. Middle, John Behrens places rip rap as part of the overall pumping solution he created at Saylorville Lake. At right, employees at Lock and Dam 21 construct a barrier between their facility and the flood waters. A boat can be seen in the foreground which enables them to get to their building.

repair, rehabilitation and replacement of the levee.

The majority of levees in the Iowa tributaries are not within the Corps' authority. Regardless of levee ownership, the Corps works closely with state and local emergency managers to inspect, advise and assist communities with professional engineering expertise and materiel during flood fights. Certification of levees for FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program is the responsibility of the local levee owner or sponsor. Many levees were originally constructed to protect agricultural assets, but subsequent unrestricted community and business development has drastically changed the risk and consequences in protected areas.

While more flood fighters came to endangered levees with more information than they had in 1993, the fight was still an uphill climb; one where reassurance and insight from the Corps played a big role at the Two Rivers Levee District between Muscatine, Iowa, and Burlington, Iowa.

Dean Cerny, Engineering and Construction, is a Flood Area Engineer for that levee district, which has three levees, Two Rivers Upper, Middle, and Lower. While the Two Rivers Upper overtopped, the other two levees didn't, which was partially due to Cerny's efforts.

Area citizens had been flood fighting when water began to seep through the sandbags on the levee. At that point, they became discouraged. They were getting in their cars ready to give up and go home. That's when Cerny told them that he thought they could save the levee, if they all worked together. He was calm and professional and told them exactly what needed to be done to save the levee. Because of his efforts, and the community's ability to work together to put his ideas into action, the levee was not overtopped.

Rivergages.com

The Corps provides the public with information about current water levels and National Weather Service predictions of future levels, through our website, www.rivergages.com.

The website is an invaluable resource and was a crucial tool used by the Corps, local, county, state, and federal agencies, the media, and by any citizen who could access the Internet. This information is available to the public 24 hours a day and can assist them in making planning decisions for their community or personal property.

The District's Water Control Section helped to create the site, which is critical to the section's mission of coordinating water management activities at the District's 12 locks and dams on the Mississippi River, eight locks and dams on the Illinois River, as well as the three flood control reservoirs - Coralville, Red Rock and Saylorville. The data that goes into rivergages.com is received from roughly 180 gages located on rivers and streams in the Upper Midwest. Every hour, the information recorded at the gages is transmitted to the District office via the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite-East. The data collection effort involves teamwork and partnering fostered through a cooperative agreement between the Corps and the U.S. Geological Survey and National Weather Service. The USGS assists Corps staff by helping maintain gages and by taking stream-flow measurements so river flow can be correlated with water levels.

In 1993, the information that is now at everyone's fingertips via the Internet and rivergages.com wasn't nearly as readily available. In 2008, having this tool put Corps employees, government agencies, and the public on the same sheet of music when it came to where water levels have been, what they are, and where they're forecasted to go to in the future.

The Reservoirs

One of the key components to water level information is ensuring that people who live around the District's flood control reservoirs are aware of the situation and how that impacts the

reservoir levels. During this flood event, the Corps' dams at Red Rock in Knoxville, Iowa, Saylorville in Johnston, Iowa, and Coralville in Iowa City, Iowa, performed as designed. There were no issues or concerns with the dams' structural integrity or operation.

All three of the reservoirs reached their full storage capacity and began releasing water over their spillways, or through its spillway tainter gates (Lake Red Rock) and while they operated as designed, the volume of water simply exceeded their storage capacity. At Coralville, the water crested at 3/10 of a foot above the 1993 level on June 14. At Red Rock, water levels were approximately three-and-a-half feet below 1993 levels. At Saylorville, water levels were approximately one foot below the levels recorded during the 1993 flood.

One of the success stories from Saylorville Lake was the fight to keep the water from overtopping the Big Creek Barrier Dam, which protects the Polk City Sewage Treatment Plant.

John Behrens, Engineering and Construction, is considered one of the District's top pump experts and was called in to the area to solve the issue. Behrens had confronted similar problems in the area during the floods of 1993 and 2001.

He worked with the team to get 13 pumps to help pump water from the dam, which prevented the dam from overtopping. This saved the sewage treatment plant from flooding.

Since the construction of all three District reservoirs, there has never been a failure. All Corps reservoirs are built to stringent engineering standards to ensure they will withstand record flood events. Each reservoir is under observation to ensure its structural integrity and safety. During flood events, the Corps evaluates the dams on a daily basis by reading piezometers, which are permanently located at different elevations within the dam. A piezometer measures internal hydrostatic pressures of the dam. The dams are also visually inspected several times a day during flood events.

Corps dams are designed to withstand enormous pressures and water levels. All of the Corps' reservoirs are operated to conform to a strict, standard regulation plan that is coordinated by the Corps with local, state and federal agencies with water resources responsibilities. This standard includes regulation of releases during flood events.

The Locks and Dams

The flooding on the Mississippi River caused most of the locks to close. At some locations the water was between three to five feet over the top of the lock walls. For all the locks to re-open, water had to be below the lock walls and the miter gates, and cleanup and needed repairs had to be done by lock personnel.

At Lock 17 alone, more than 700 gallons of oil was removed, properly disposed of and replaced with fresh oil.

Specifically, that lock was closed to navigation due to high water on April 22 and re-opened again on April 25, only to close again on April 26 and remained closed for 13 days till re-opening on May 8. That was just a warm up for the high water to come. At 2:53 a.m. on June 12 the lock was closed again to navigation due to high water and wasn't able to re-open until 8 a.m. on June 27.

The dates are different from one lock to another, but one thing remains the same … the hard work, flood preparations and flood fighting done by lock employees paid huge dividends to protect the sites and assist them in opening as soon as possible.

Work that had to be done by lock employees before the locks could re-open included removing oil, cleaning out gearboxes and replacing oil; hosing off and cleaning the lock walls; inspecting gears; replacing gate motors and brakes; and removing lots of driftwood.

Melissa Walker, Des Moines Register, contributed to this article.

Working alongside a temporary batter board and sandbag floodwall, Terry Jorgensen (center), St. Paul District; Joe Dziuk (left), and Glen Hotchkiss (background), Rock Island District, survey rising waters at the South River Drainage District just north of Hannibal, Mo., during the hot afternoon hours of June 18.

Flood Area Engineer Adam Ziegler references a point north on the Mississippi River toward Lock and Dam 20 at the levee located at Canton, Mo., while fellow FAE, Leo Keller, speaks with Canton levee inspectors.

Flood-Threatened Towns Connect with Corps

Story and photos by Mark Kane

Trillions and trillions of gallons of water inundated the Upper Mississippi River Basin already flush with moisture and saturated soil resulting in overtopped reservoirs and levees in Iowa and down the Mississippi River, as well as flooding on the Rock River Basin and Illinois Waterway.

Water levels across the region threatened to met or exceed levels unseen since 1993.

Employees from the Rock Island District, augmented by personnel from districts across the Corps, were dispatched from their day-to-day jobs to work for one of five Corps' Emergency Operations Centers set up in Iowa and Illinois.

Employees serving in Geological Technical Teams and as Flood Area Engineers interacted with people in communities across the region. Their red shirts, which displayed the Corps castle, quickly appeared in towns and areas at risk of being flooded by high water.

Glen Hotchkiss, Engineering and Construction, said, for the most part, the communities were glad to see the Corps' red shirts in their town.

"You run the whole gambit when it comes to hearing comments from people," said Hotchkiss. "Everything from telling us that they're glad we're here to we've seen this before, and we don't necessarily need your help."

Newer and younger Flood Area Engineers like Adam Ziegler, Engineering and Construction, and Leo Keller, Programs and Project Management, had a lot of success talking with people in communities like Canton, Mo., and really helped to enhance the Corps' relationship with the public.

Jimmy Aidala, Operations Division, said Ziegler and Keller came into the community with open minds and were like sponges soaking up information from other Corps FAEs and Geotech members, as well as from people in the communities inside the levee district they were assigned to.

"It's really amazing," said Aidala. "Some of us bring a lot of knowledge to the situation; because we were here in 1993, but sometimes that doesn't jive as well as you might think it would with local community members. Adam and Leo might not have 'been there and done that,' but they're really relating to the community, using their training, and combining it with what they're learning from people in the communities like Canton."

In Canton, Ziegler and Keller's relationship resulted in them pairing up with two of the community levee inspectors using their personal utility vehicle. As a result, the four were able to cover their inspection of the levees quickly, while sharing thoughts, insight, and assessments about

Randy Kinney, Engineering and Construction, shares his geological assessment about the seepage found at the base of the levee with a communtiy levee inspector at the upper Indian Grave levee district near Ursa, Ill.

the condition of the levees, the sandbags, and future efforts to keep Canton dry.

Jeff McReynolds, Canton's emergency management director, who led the effort to fortify the levee protecting the town, met with the Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, during the chief's visit to the town. McReynolds specifically told Van Antwerp that Ziegler and Keller gave him the most reliable information and that both proved to be an incredible asset to the town's flood fight.

Terry Jorgenson, Engineering and Construction, St. Paul District, had additional positive thoughts about his interaction with community members fighting the flood.

"I'm impressed, the group here is great and supportive," said Jorgenson. "The locals are stressed, but they're focused. I'm also impressed with how hard they're working. The communities aren't just waiting around, they're getting after it. I was in Hannibal the first day. The locals there, the fire department, the sewer guys, they're very concerned, which is good. They're paying attention to the details and asking a lot of questions, which is good. You could tell they really care about their communities."

Joe Dziuk, Engineering and Construction, initially worked as a FAE in the Des Moines area, then moved down to support the Corps' Quincy EOC. Dziuk said the communities' confidence in the Corps has increased exponentially.

"As we've been out there more and more, they've been seeking to really get information from us and to give us information as well," said Dziuk. "Once they get to know us and find out our capabilities, they've interacted with us a lot more."

The District had 84 employees in Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and Wisconsin to proactively work with communities, local and state officials, and levee districts to assist the public in minimizing flood damages.

Inside the Rock Island District's area of responsibility, the four field Corps' Emergency Operation Centers were established in Des Moines, Iowa; Iowa City, Iowa; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and Quincy, Ill. The Rock Island District's permanent Emergency Operation Center, located in Rock Island, Ill., coordinated the District's emergency operations efforts.

The Corps issued more than 13.4 million sandbags, enough to stretch from San Francisco to Washington D.C. In the Mississippi Valley Division alone, more than 61.7 miles of plastic sheeting was issued along with 94 pumps to support flood fighting efforts in the Midwest. More than 300 Corps employees were directly involved in flood fight efforts.

SIUC Graduate Puts Career Ahea

Semantically, it doesn't seem like much of a leap from lumberjack to forester. The reality, however, is much different.

Ben Vandermyde graduated from Southern Illinois University in June with degrees in Forestry and Administration of Justice. He put his lumberjack days behind him June 28 in order to pursue a career in forestry with the Corps of Engineers.

While an undergraduate at SIU, Vandermyde was an eager participant in the Forestry Club's lumberjack competition.

"They asked me to help them out with an event," Vandermyde said. "I wasn't really sure what I was getting into. I got out there and saw them chopping wood and running chain saws. I was hooked right away.

"I just kind of got hooked into it and started traveling with them."

The lumberjack skills Vandermyde honed through his years at SIU were more nostalgic than practical.

"I've learned about all these skills and techniques that foresters would have to do," he said. "The skill and technique that lumberjacking takes is what everyone in the profession had to know."

It seems logical that the Morrison native would put some of those skills to use in his new position as a Mississippi River forester for the Corps.

Not so.

"I probably won't ever touch a saw on duty," Vandermyde said. "I'm a land manager. I'm going out there and doing inventory."

However, he doesn't feel learning the lumberjacking skills, or competing in contests, was a waste of time.

"When I'm up there doing that, I'm keeping the legacy around," he said. "Cutting through a tree with a long bow saw, that's unheard of any more. It's like a lost art. It really appealed to me."

Although Vandermyde plans to do a few exhibitions in the future, he put his competitive days behind him June 28, when he competed in the Stihl Timbersports Collegiate Series Championship in Columbus, Ga.

Vandermyde competes in the Stihl Timbersports Collegiate Challenge Central Divison Championship held Oct. 6 at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. He won the overall competition which advanced him to the Collegiate Championship held June 27 in Columbus, Ga. Photo courtesy of Stihl.

He qualified for the event last October while competing in the Collegiate Foresters Conclave. Vandermyde was one of just six college students to advance to the competition. Although he finished sixth, Vandermyde was thrilled with his effort in the stock chainsaw.

"I was really happy and excited about that," he said. "I was running within a second of what the pros were doing. It was like 10-11 seconds. I actually beat a handful of the pros. I was pretty excited about that. I love the competition. It is a sport I'm very interested in, alongside the history that goes with it.

"I really enjoy competing and cutting through that wood," he said. "It really is an enjoyment. Every time I'm up there I'm trying to beat my previous time."

"The competition was just incredible at the pro level. Just watching them rip through that wood, it was just amazing. How often do you get to go to a pro event and they are willing to talk to you and help you out? They were so laid back and so willing to share skills and techniques."

Vandermyde also competed in the underhand chop and single bucksaw.

When he picked up the ax for the underhand chop — the first collegiate event — it marked the first time he had held one since he was put on emergency flood duty a month earlier.

Vandermyde said the competition was intense, but so is his first assignment with the Corps. He was assigned to Mississippi River flood duty at Quincy, Ill.

"I had everything lined up — wood and everything — but since the emergency call came, I haven't had any time," he said. "There was a two-day stretch in there where I actually worked 46 hours. That doesn't leave much time for practice.

"I've been putting all my energy on the flood alert," he said. "This area down here was of very high concern. It was only a foot or two under what the 1993 flood did.

"I'll be doing flood clean-up for the rest of the summer, inspecting levees and recreational areas, picking up what the flood has done."

Before the flood

Vandermyde, 23, is a self-declared river rat. He grew up in Morrison, Ill., less than 20 miles from the mighty Mississippi, and

d of Lumberjacking

SIU-Carbondale is just as close to the river.

"I love the land," he said. "I grew up in the country, and I want to die there."

While his recent focus has been on saving lives, homes and land, his true heart is with the trees.

"Timber trespass is a close issue to my heart," said Vandermyde, acknowledging the immediate ironic scene it creates as a Timbersports competitor. "I'm interested in being a consultant with landowners and helping them know what to do with their land and their trees.

Ben Vandermyde competes in the Stihl Timbersports Collegiate Challenge. Photo by Rick McFarland, ESPNOutdoors.com.

"When they don't have help, it's kind of like going to court without a lawyer."

Vandermyde said the key to having a proper ecosystem in regards to forestry is to harvest the correct number of trees in the right places. He said it's not about pushing something to the brink of survival; it's about keeping the forest healthy.

"I'm at an advantage at this time in our country because I'm educated in the ecosystems process," he said. "I have a pretty good grasp on the dynamics of the forest.

"I'm studied into that area. When I walk into the woods, I can see what can be taken and what can happen, and what will actually benefit the land."

Before it was a sport, dismantling timber was a means to an end, and that's something Vandermyde connects with.

"When I hit up on that ax it makes me feel like I'm part of something," he said.

And then it rained

It depends on where you live as to how much and when the rain started, but those living anywhere near the Mississippi will agree that too much of one thing is not good.

Vandermyde, fresh out of college, got the call early and moved his belongings to Quincy, Ill., a couple miles off the river.

"I was in charge of one location, of unloading, figuring out what and where the need was and sending supplies," he said. "The river came up real quick. They were looking at a 500-year flood almost overnight."

It was in that moment, when he took the call for emergency help, that Vandermyde went from part-time forester and part-time timber competitor, to full-time sandbag loader, unloader and distributor.

"One day there were 14 trucks parked when I got to work and we moved nearly 2 million sandbags that day," he said. "As soon as we got done with one truck, another one would move in."

In the three weeks he was on the job before the Timbersports championships, Vandermyde said he personally saw more that 8 million sandbags move, along with dozens of water pumps and countless other flood fighting materials.

He said he was working 100-hour weeks, but even when he went back to his camper to rest, work was all around him.

"I'd see people fighting the flood right there at the campsite with sandbags," Vandermyde said. "I'd get up the next morning and go to work. I knew those were the people I was trying to help—people who were just trying to do what they can.

"A friend of mine caught a bass off the back of the camper — 8 feet away. And that's in an area that's usually at least a half mile from the river."

The work was so hectic, Vandermyde went straight from work to catch his flight for the Timbersports Collegiate Finals, and he went straight back to work after the return flight.

Overall, Vandermyde said the flood fighting efforts in Illinois have been a success.

"For the most part we lucked out," he said. "A lot of levees held."

As for his Timbersports career, Vandermyde said he wasn't going to let his performance at the championships affect his attitude, but he knows it will never be a career.

"I don't know that I'll ever have the time available to commit to be a pro, and I don't know if I'll have the resources," he said. "But I do intend on doing a couple side events a year and bumping into these guys every once in a while."

Les Winkeler, The Southern Illinoisan, and Kyle Carter, ESPNOutdoors.com, contributed to this article.

Who's Profiling Whom?

By Liz Robinson, Equal Employment Opportunity

Racial and ethnic profiling has been in the news a lot even before 911, and it has always been controversial.

Everyone agrees that there is a need for prevention of both "common crime" and terrorist incidents in order to provide more security for all of us. We also all agree that one of the reasons why we have not had major terrorist incidents in this country has been the success of the intelligence and law enforcement community in identifying terrorist cells or persons interested in committing terrorist acts.

Each of us in life does our own form of profiling. We do this when we look for friendly and unfriendly faces at parties or social events in which we do not know most of the attendees or when deciding to strike up a conversation in a long slow line. We look for who does or does not work for the store where we are shopping when we have questions about the merchandise.

Certainly, profiling is a much more common behavior than many of us suppose. It is a key to being able to identify or be aware of "hunches" about dangers or something being not quite right. In security situations it is absolutely necessary. The key is deciding when and upon what basis we will profile. When we profile based solely on race or ethnicity (without regard to any other factors), we may be acting upon stereotypes that may or may not be true for that individual. If our profiling hunch based solely on racial or ethnic background proves wrong, then the results could be unfair to the individual profiled and could potentially result in severe consequences for that profiled individual as well as the possibility that a real culprit might avoid being detected. If our profiling strategy is based solely on race and/or ethnicity, we may be leading ourselves into missing out on or ignoring behaviors that certainly should be profiled. This leads to the suggestion that one good basis for profiling should be observable behaviors, regardless of the race or ethnicity of the person. Some examples of behaviors that should alert us might include:

- Behavior (without proper authorization) such as an inordinate or unusual interest in the technology at the site, taking detailed photographs of the site, staying around a longer than usual period of time or taking aerial photographs, etc. A person walking whose gait seems hampered by something they may be hiding in their clothes, especially if there are visible lumps and bulges arouses some suspicion.
- Examples of persons whose behavior gives the appearance of being guilty of something:
    - A person who is looking around nervously, as if to see if he or she is being watched or is looking for another person to make an appearance.
      —A person, who when noticed or accosted, is sweating profusely on a day that is neither hot nor windless.
    - A person who is trying to hide or get away if an official vehicle or a person in uniform arrives on the scene.
- Anyone who is lurking in an area where they have no business, especially if it is in an area off limits to the public, where it is unlikely that they got lost.
- A campsite with strange smells or noises coming out of it from a locked camper may also arouse suspicion, regardless of the race of the occupants.

However, when we are dealing with behavior that is neither criminal nor suspicious of criminal behavior, we need to ask ourselves whether this behavior would be considered suspect if the persons were of our own race or national origin group. For example, ask yourself if the race or ethnicity of the people involved makes a difference in your assessment of the situation:

- You encounter a large gathering of people who are talking and laughing loudly, playing loud music and dancing at a recreation site. Would you feel differently if the party goers were non-minority, mixed minority and non-minority, or minority only?
- You observe a pleasure craft that is not just a small fishing craft lock through and notice that the boaters are all minorities. Are you more likely to wonder how they can afford this boat or if they have the skills to handle it than if they are non-minorities? (Incidentally there are organizations devoted to promotion of recreational boating for minorities. There is no reason why they might not enter our District's waters on one of their trips.)
- You need to tell a visitor that their behavior needs some correction or that you need to have them check in and pay. Would your concerns or approach be different based upon your assumptions about the visitor based upon his or her race or ethnicity?

We need to ensure that each of our legitimate visitors has a positive experience and would consider returning to our facilities. We are the face of the Corps, not only to our local regular visitors but to others who may pass through or come from a greater distance be it campers, recreational boaters or commercial boat crew, or day use visitors. Minorities are a growing part of our customer base and need to feel their presence is welcome.

There are people who look at racial and ethnic profiling from a security standpoint and have many reasons why they believe that a person's race and ethnic group is, by itself, a reason to profile that individual. Among the reasons they give are the following:

- People of certain racial, national origin groups represent a disproportionate number of persons convicted of such offenses as drug trafficking or dealing.
- There is no need to target a specific racial or ethnic group because of their race or national origin; however the

characteristics for which we profile correlate disproportionately with members of these races and ethnic groups. (For example a preference for a certain type or color of vehicle or travel route by a group of drug dealers or traffickers.)

- Criminals, drug dealers, drug abusers in this neighborhood are most likely to be members of the predominant racial ethnic group in the neighborhood. If we do not target them, then we cannot rid the neighborhood of these crimes.
- When you see a person of a different race or ethnic group in this neighborhood at odd hours of the night, you have to wonder what business they have being there; especially if a break-in or other crime has taken place recently.
- The biggest and most violent gangs in the area are predominantly composed of certain racial or national origin groups. The only way we can break them up involves targeting persons who have the common characteristics of members of these gangs.
- We are fighting a war against terrorists, the majority of whom happened to be young Middle Eastern Muslim men. It is only prudent and common sense to profile and carefully scrutinize persons fitting this profile even if they are U. S. citizens or legal residents.

Other persons have acknowledged the need for some form of profiling, however they believe that using race and ethnicity as a major basis for that profiling creates more problems than it resolves. They provide the following reasons for their viewpoint:

- Profiling is based upon stereotypes that may or may not be true for the specific individual who is stopped. Consider the young black man who was left on the side of the road with his Ford Explorer dismantled by police when he was driving to a job interview, because they assumed he could not afford this vehicle.
- Racial profiling builds up resentment in the minority community and a resultant distrust of law enforcement officials.
- It causes people who could provide critical information to law enforcement officials to hesitate to share information that might thwart a terrorist act or convict a criminal. They fear that they may bring on the scrutiny of innocent persons from all over the neighborhood and may be punished by neighbors who bring to bear "anti-snitching" pressure.
- There have been a number of incidents of innocent and unarmed minority victims of police shootings due to police misjudging the situations or people they encounter.
- If we profile only Middle Eastern Muslim men, we may miss the real terrorists. Al Qaida would love to recruit European appearing men and women because of the unlikelihood that they will be caught in a dragnet or be deemed suspicious. Consider that persons carrying out terrorist activities have included Timothy McVeigh, a non-minority man; an Irish woman on the way to Israel who unbeknownst to her was carrying a bomb placed in her bag by her fiancé; a Sandinista working with a Palestinian terrorist assisting in helping a hijacking; a Japanese Red Army member who attacked Ben Gurion Airport in Israel; and of course the British-Jamaican shoe bomber.
- The end results of studies of persons stopped solely because of their racial or ethnic groups (and not other behavioral characteristics) shows that such stops by police are not an efficient means of identifying and stopping criminals and that the proportion of persons who are arrested is likend unto "finding a needle in a haystack."

In the final analysis we need to carefully consider our actions and our treatment of our visitors and customers. Providing security for our projects, our nation, and our legitimate visitors is an absolute necessity. However, we must also ensure that unnecessary or unprovoked profiling or disparate treatment of visitors based solely on their race or ethnicity does not occur. It is a District goal to provide all of our legitimate law-abiding customers and visitors an experience that is safe, peaceful, secure, and pleasant.

Corps Day 2008 Award Winners

Employee of the Year

Engineer of the Year
Thomas Heinold, Engineering and Construction

Professional Occupations
Colleen Carlson, Operations Division

Technical Occupations
Danet Dexter, Operations Division

Trades and Crafts Occupations
David Armentrout, Operations Division

Suggester of the Year

Brady Beckman, Operations Division

Honorary Award

2007 Planning Award for Environmental Planning Excellence
Illinois River Basin Restoration Comprehensive Plan with Integrated Environmental Assessment

District participants in this project included:
Mary Craig, Ronald Deiss, Karen Hagerty, Sharryn Jackson, Lonn McGuire, Marshall Plumley, Mary Rodkey, Suzanne Simmons, Jodi Staebell, and Brad Thompson, Programs and Project Management; Heather Bishop, Troy Hythecker, Terri Kirkeeng, and Kirk Sunderman, Engineering and Construction; Rodney Hallstrom and Joanne Lieving, Real Estate.

Around the District

District Commander's Award

Barbara Lester, Engineering and Construction received the May Commander's Award.

Lester earned the award for successfully managing a heavy workload of construction contracts and providing the leadership of the Central Area Office, which greatly facilitated the reopening to navigation of Lock and Dam 19 as scheduled on March 11. In addition, Lock and Dam 11 opened 25 hours early to navigation on March 14.

JoAnn Wilgenbusch, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, received the April Commander's Award.

Wilgenbusch earned the award for accepting and working as the temporary Incentive Awards Committee secretary from Feb. 1 through March 31, in addition to her regular position, and outside the scope of the CPAC.

The duties included taking monthly minutes, scheduling and arranging the monthly IAC meetings, making copies of nomination packages and assuring proper coordination with supervisors and the District Commander.

Retirees Mark Your Calendar

Retirees, sign up now for the annual retiree's luncheon on Sept. 3, at the Quad-City Botanical Center, 2525 4th Avenue, Rock Island, Ill. Social hour begins at noon with the luncheon following at 1 p.m.

The price this year is $15 per person, which includes admission to the center's patio and sun garden.

Checks should be written to Sandra Dixon and mailed to Sandy Dixon, 8109 9th Street W., Rock Island, IL 61201-7733. Payment and/or reservations are needed no later than August 27.

If you have questions contact Sandy Dixon, DIXONS3JSS@aol.com (309) 787-5782, or Barb Morgan, morgan-ent@msn.com (309) 798-2990, or Bonnie Donelson, (563) 381-3143.

Attention golfers, there will be a golf tournament held at Duck Creek Golf Course the morning of the luncheon. If you are interested, contact Dick Fleischman no later than August 20, at (563) 391-2585, or e-mail him at whitey@netexpress.net.

Retirements ...

James Dunkin, supervisory facility management specialist, Lake Red Rock, Operations Division, retired July 1, after dedicating 26 years and five months to the federal government.

Gregory Weist, information technology specialist, Customer Assistance Branch, Information Management, retired June 3, after dedicating 35 years and six months to the federal government.

David Armentrout, crane operator supervisor, Project Maintenance Unit, Maintenence Section, Mississippi River Project Office, Operations Division, retired June 1, after dedicating 36 years, one month, and 20 days to the federal government.

Jack Merten, hydrologic technician, Water Control Section, Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch, Engineering and Construction, retired May 31, after dedicating 26 years, one month, and 13 days to the federal government.

Sympathy ...

Lawrence "Larry" Parker, 59, of Fulton, Ill., died July 5, at Mercy Medical Center North in Clinton, Iowa.

Parker was a lockman at Lock and Dam 13 and retired March 1 with 40 years of government service.

He served as a Boatswain Mate 3rd Class in the Navy during the Vietnam War.

Paul VanHoorebeke, 73, of Rock Island, Ill., died June 27, at Trinity Medical Center, West Campus, Rock Island.

VanHoorebeke was a civil engineering technician for the Corps for 42 years and retired in 1996.

He served in the Army from 1958–1967.

NOTE

Please send achievements, births, and obituaries for this page to the editor at: mark.a.kane@usace.army.mil.

Without your input, we may not receive the information that enables us to inform the District.

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

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

Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees Inductees for 2008

Daniel J. Holmes

Daniel J. Holmes was born in Fairfield, Iowa, on March 2, 1951. He received a bachelor degree in civil engineering from the University of Iowa in 1973 and served in active military duty and as an engineer officer assigned to the 2nd Armored Calvary Regiment, Germany.

He began working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a civilian in 1977, and came to the Rock Island District in 1978 as a project engineer in the Engineering Division. He received a master's degree in civil/environmental engineering from the University of Iowa in 1981.

Holmes served in many positions from Chief of the General Engineering Section, to Chief of the Construction Division between 1997 and 2005.

From January through June 2004, he volunteered to serve in the Global War on Terrorism in Baghdad, Iraq, as the Director for the Program and Project Management Directorate, Gulf Region Division. Holmes contributed significantly to the reconstruction efforts in Iraq and was awarded the Superior Civilian Service Award in June 2004.

He also received the Army Commendation Medal during active duty; and the Rock Island District's Engineer of the Year award in 1984.

Holmes displayed a positive attitude and professional approach in all of his endeavors and his dedication to duty was unmatched. His honor and integrity were always above reproach.

Holmes died on Aug. 27, 2005, after a courageous 15-month battle with Burkitt Lymphoma.

Dale R. Rossmiller

Dale R. Rossmiller was born in Moline, Ill., on Jan. 4, 1942. He received his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, in 1964.

After starting his career at the Rock Island District in February 1964, he left for 3½ years of military active duty as an engineer officer, serving in Japan and Germany. Upon returning to the District, he served as design and project engineer in the General Engineering Section for the Big Creek Terminal Dam Spillway at Saylorville Dam, as well as Rockford, East Moline, Fulton, Clinton, Bettendorf, and Burlington local flood projects.

In 1975 he earned his master's degree in engineering management from the University of Iowa. He was promoted as the first chief of the Project Management Section and later served as chief, General Engineering Section. In 1991, he was selected as chief, Design Branch, where he managed a wide range of navigation, flood control, environmental, recreation, and emergency response missions.

He was awarded the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service for his leadership during the historic 1993 Mississippi River flood fight and recovery efforts. During his career, he served temporarily as Chief, Plan Formulation Branch; Assistant Chief, Engineering Division and Chief, Operations Division. He retired in May 2003, after 39½ years of Federal Service, at which time he was awarded the Meritorious Civilian Service Medal and the Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal.

Marvin Hubbell (Left), Programs and Project Management, views before and after restoration photos of Pool 11 on the new EMP display at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium. Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh (right) cuts the ribbon at the new display with Dubuque councilman Ric Jones on his left, and to his right Pete DeKock, district director, Cong. Bruce Braley's Office; Robyn Thorson, regional director, Midwest Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Linda Lucy, staff assistant, Sen. Tom Harkin's office; and District Commander, Col. Robert Sinkler.

Environmental Management Program Exhibit Unveiled

Story and photos by Justine Barati

In late May, the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium and the Corps of Engineers celebrated the completion of the museum's Environmental Management Program exhibit and updated disappearing ducks display with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The ceremony took place at the museum in Dubuque, Iowa.

Guest speakers at the event included Jerry Enzler, the executive director of the museum, Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, commander of the Mississippi Valley Division of the Corps, and Col. Robert Sinkler, District commander.

The Corps worked in cooperation with the museum to create an interactive display for the public to learn more about the Corps' EMP and how it has improved the river environment for fish and wildlife. The display is an expansion of an already existing display called "The Case of the Disappearing Ducks." It includes information about the EMP and how multiple federal agencies and other stakeholders have worked together, and continue to work together, to improve the river.

Enzler estimates that a quarter million people will see the new display.

"The exhibit just touches the surface of the program. Animals in the main channel (of the river) rely on these efforts. What we do here on the upper Mississippi affects what happens on the rest of the river. You can't separate the Mississippi River from the Gulf (of Mexico). What we do here is regionally significant and nationally and internationally significant. The world needs to know about this (the EMP)," said Enzler.

Walsh said the exhibit was "just wonderful" and celebrated our good working relationship with the museum and will be here for hundreds of thousands of visitors.

Robyn Thorson, regional director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said that this is "a great river, a great partnership, and a great community." This display will tell our story "vibrantly" she said and thanked the Corps for our leadership on the display.

Display materials include an interactive computer game, pictures, and reading materials for people of all ages.

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