



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Vicksburg District

THE Water's Edge

SPRING 2013



The Water's Edge



US Army Corps of Engineers®

News magazine of the Vicksburg District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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Need to Know

PEOPLE

John Burnworth, Rosemary Spears, Arletha Ross and Joshua Neisen

PROCESSES

Change of Command, The future of water control management,
and Fish shelters at Lake Greeson

PROJECT

Regulatory Branch oversees a dynasty



On the Cover

Shown from left to right are Lt. Col. John Tucker, Col. Jeffrey Eckstein, MG John Peabody, Col. John Cross and Barbara Peterson at the Change of Command Ceremony. Photo by Alfred Dulaney.

Commander's Corner

with Colonel John W. Cross



Greetings to everyone,

I would like to thank everyone for their warm welcome to my family and me as we have moved back to Mississippi after nearly 26 years! It is rare for someone in the military to serve so close to where they were reared and directly serve those that have so influenced their growth and education. I am very thankful for the opportunity to serve the Vicksburg District and reconnect with friends throughout the area.

My personal thanks to Col. Jeff Eckstein. Jeff leaves a great legacy of hard work and dedication that is reflective of the Vicksburg District. Jeff will be just down the road at the Engineer Research and Development Center and will continue to be someone I will reach out to for advice.

I am grateful to serve you as Commander of the Vicksburg District; the employees have an excellent reputation. In the past year, as part of the Army's pre command preparation, I have traveled to our neighboring Little Rock and New Orleans districts, along with several visits to Headquarters in Washington, D. C. I have also talked to most District Commanders across the Corps. Everyone has the highest praise for the great employees of the Vicksburg District and their many impressive accomplishments. The District's work touches missions that have influence extending well outside its borders. It is humbling to be a team member of such a fine organization.

Over the next 90-120 days, I will travel to our projects across the District's three-state area to allow me to meet with other team members and further my understanding of our various missions. I will also visit each Division and Separate Office here at District Headquarters to get to know all of our team members.

Finally, I look forward to working with all of our partners and carrying on the great work of our Nation. I am excited to serve the people of the Vicksburg District's tri-state area of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Thank You and Essayons!



From left to right are Col. Cross, his wife Beth, and sons Matthew and David, standing in front of the USS Cairo at the Vicksburg National Military Park.

The future of water control management

By Justin Giles

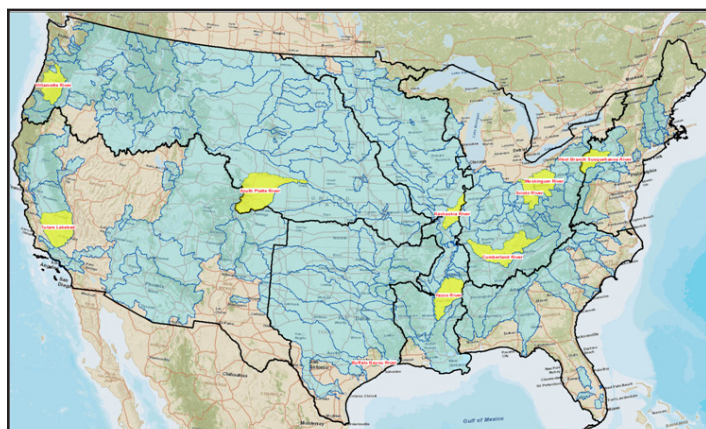
The Modeling, Mapping, and Consequences Production Center (MMC) is working with the Hydrologic Engineering Center (HEC) in support of the Critical Infrastructure Protection & Resilience (CIPR) Program, Dam Safety & Levee Safety programs, and the Corps' Hydrology, Hydraulics & Coastal Community of Practice (HH&C CoP) in producing hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) models on a national basis through the Corps Water Management System (CWMS). CWMS will provide a system-oriented watershed approach that will improve operations of Corps water control projects, allow for near real time flood mapping, and further the ability to look at "what if scenarios" for different rainfall events.

CWMS is a process that can take forecasted rainfall data and incorporate it into hydrologic and hydraulic models such that river stages and flood extents can be analyzed in a rapid manner. CWMS allows for modeling of our reservoirs and levees as a system wide watershed approach and can be used to determine how Corps projects should be best operated to minimize risks at key control points.

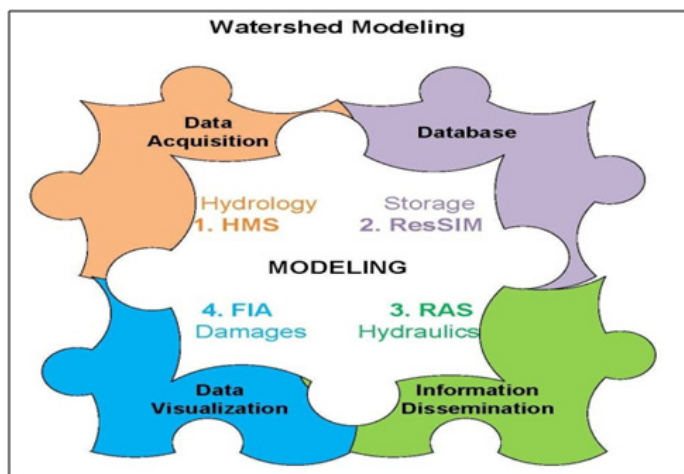
The MMC Production Center is based at the Vicksburg District. The District is supported by more than an additional 20 districts across the United States. Many district staff members from all Corps divisions are part of a virtual team working for the MMC to complete studies. The MMC Production Center also plays an important role in developing and maintaining Corps competency in HH&C engineering, economics, and the geospatial communities. Although CWMS has been utilized by various districts for a number of years, this implementation will create a standardization of CWMS Corps-wide.

There are 212 Corps operational basins throughout the entire Corps. During FY12 the MMC produced CWMS models on two of the basins, the Kanawha River Basin in the Huntington District and the Neuce River Basin in the Wilmington District, as part of a pilot project to develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for future CWMS implementation. The mission was extended in FY13 by ten more basins: Yazoo River (Vicksburg District), Kaskaskia River (St. Louis District), South Platte River (Omaha District), Buffalo Bayou (Galveston District), Scioyo and Muskingum Rivers (Huntington District), Tulare Lakebed (Sacramento District), and West Branch Susquehanna River (Baltimore District). Sixty-one team members from

24 districts in seven Corps divisions were tasked to undertake these ten basins. With projected funding, FY14 could utilize 120 team members or more to complete as many as twenty-five basins. A map of all operational basins is shown below with the 10 basins of FY13 highlighted.



CWMS integrates real-time data acquisition, database storage, flow forecasting of watershed runoff, reservoir operation decision support, river profile modeling, inundated area determination, consequence/damage analysis, and information dissemination into a comprehensive suite of software supporting water management decision processes. The watershed modeling diagram, outlining the key pieces to CWMS, is shown below.



(Continued on page 5)

Fish shelters at Lake Greeson enhance fish habitat

Story by Johnny Cantrell
Photos by Marty Reynolds

The four modeling programs portrayed in the figure can be better described as:

- The Hydrologic Modeling System (HEC-HMS) simulates the precipitation-runoff processes of watershed systems. It can represent a wide range of hydrologic systems, from large river basin water supply and flood hydrology, to small urban or natural watershed runoff. Hydrographs produced by HMS are used directly or in conjunction with other software to support many types of studies; including studies of water availability, urban drainage, flow forecasting, future urbanization impact, reservoir spillway design, flood damage reduction, floodplain regulation, and systems operation.
- The Reservoir System Simulation (HEC-ResSim) simulates the operation of systems of one or more reservoirs to meet storage and flow targets within a river network. Operating goals are defined by time-varying storage targets or “guide curves” constrained by rules defining operational limits. More complex operations can be user-defined by scripts. Regulated hydrographs produced by ResSim can be used directly or passed to additional programs.
- The River Analysis System (HEC-RAS) supports one-dimensional steady flow, unsteady flow, sediment transport/mobile bed computations, water temperature and water quality modeling.
- The Flood Impact Analysis (HEC-FIA) calculates post-flood or forecasted-flood consequences for a user-specified event. Along with HEC-ResSim, it can be used to determine flood damage reduction benefits attributed to individual flood-control projects (reservoirs, levees, and diversions) and for real-time response activities as part of the Corps Water Management System.

Furthermore, various operational alternatives can be evaluated in not only inundation extents but also consequences related to flooding. Damages can be quantified in terms of economic impacts, number of structures that will be impacted, and potential loss of life. In the past, the Corps was limited by the number of inundation maps that could be produced in a day. Now, we will have the ability to produce numerous maps per day using multiple scenarios on a near real time basis. These maps can be provided to state and local government and used by emergency managers to make decisions during a flood event. ◀

Lake personnel at Lake Greeson select small sweet gum and/or elm trees growing along the lake’s shoreline. Why? After collecting these small trees, the trees are cut and placed in the lake for enhancement of fish habitat. This construction and placement of the trees are referred to as brush fish shelters.

Students in the agriculture classes at Murfreesboro High School constructed 20 crappie condos and brush shelters recently at Lake Greeson. Crappie condo is a “localized” term for bamboo structures built with a 5 gallon bucket of concrete as a base. These shelters were also placed in the lake for enhancement of fish habitat.

Over the past 30 years or so the Natural Resources Team at Lake Greeson has placed several thousand brush shelters and crappie condos in all areas of the lake. Since Lake Greeson doesn’t grow considerable amounts of aquatic plants the artificial structures provide much needed protection for the young-of-the-year fish and also attracts larger game species of fish which use the attractors for cover from which they ambush their prey. Not only has the number of catchable size game fish increased but the quality of those fish has steadily improved. Many fishermen who visit Lake Greeson call it the “Best kept secret among the many fishing locations in Arkansas.” ◀

To find brush fish shelter locations please go to each lake’s website.

Garrett Gills places a brush fish shelter in Lake Greeson.



Working together to become accredited

By Ashley Ebersole



Emergency management is a young field of study, but it's a long-standing mission of the Corps of Engineers. This organization has been trying to reduce damages from floods since the 1800s. Managing risk and public safety has been a major task of the Corps since it was created, and we are usually successful with our capabilities in disasters.

Unfortunately, our communities have always tested those capabilities by flirting with disaster and developing in flood-prone regions and on seismic fault lines. With the addition of increasing oceanic temperatures, or what some consider global-warming, the likelihood of disasters continually increases. As a result, key agencies responsible for managing risks and disasters, including the Corps, will have to increase their capabilities and standardize their processes in order to maintain their success rate with managing disasters.

The Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) is the non-profit organization that administers the emergency management program accreditation process. After an organization does a self assessment, EMAP will assess the methods in comparison to the national standard. Naturally, seeking this accreditation as an emergency management agency will ensure we are performing to a national standard in the race against disasters. We are planning to complete this assessment in 2014.

The national standards required

for accreditation are based on the grandfather doctrine of public safety and emergency management, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1600. These 64 standards are based on comprehensive emergency management (prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery from natural and man-made disasters). That may sound like a lot of standards to meet, but the Corps already excels in many of these metrics. We simply have to document or demonstrate our procedures as proofs in our assessment.

In the coming months, you will hear more about EMAP and may be asked for your expertise in documenting the things you already do on a regular basis. You may already have examples of processes, or may simply need to explain a method in writing. For example, we may ask your assistance in documenting plans and tests of notification systems, meetings and agreements with partners and stakeholders, security procedures, or processes for financial management. Once compiled, we will then plan a course to meet the metrics we identify as weak or missing, and proceed toward our assessment.

It is important to note that EMAP assessments are not an evaluation of an office labeled as "emergency management." We will be evaluated as an entire district, as a system of emergency management. Just as with a flood or hurricane response, it takes

the expertise and efforts of the entire district to accomplish our missions. Our accreditation will be based on that same level of proficiency, as a district.

There are many reasons to proactively seek EMAP accreditation before it is eventually required: (1) Compiling the information needed for accreditation will provide a complete package of guidance to the future generations of leadership here at the District. (2) EMAP accreditation is one of the strategic initiatives in emergency management currently monitored by Headquarters. (3) The Huntington District has successfully achieved this accreditation as the first federal agency in the EMAP program and has offered their support to the 20 Corps districts currently enrolled in this pursuit. (4) Additionally, all sister districts within Mississippi Valley Division are enrolled to become accredited, and all three states within the District boundary, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, are EMAP accredited, requesting the same standards of their counties and parishes.

It is our turn here at the District to prove our capabilities and improve where we can for the success of the District, the communities we support, and the resilience of our nation. Thanks in advance to those who will contribute to the process. We look forward to working together to achieve this accreditation. ◀

Freeboard - Emergency Management and Logistics

By Bucky Wall

Overview

The purpose of the FREEBOARD system is to provide data management, reporting and mapping support for flood fight and hurricane emergency response operations in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Command staff can use the mapping based inventory, personnel and inspections reports called situation reports or sitreps to stage critical personnel, equipment and raw materials to areas where they are needed.

When is it used

Freeboard is used during high-water events as determined by a Corps district. A high-water event can be localized flooding or a regional event such as a hurricane landfall or flooding along a major river.

Who uses it

Local district personnel are deployed in support of high water events. These deployees in Freeboard are divided into four categories.

Authorized Users

Authorized users input the raw data into Freeboard as it is reported to them from deployees in the field. Raw data would be locations of deployed personnel, raw materials, equipment, staging areas and inspection sites.

Sector Commander

Users classified as sector commanders may create, edit and de-

lete inspection sites and emergency measures. Sector commanders are in charge of a set geographic area, such as sections of a levee along a river.

Engineering Adviser

Users classified as engineering advisers enter engineering recommendations for inspection sites.

Area Engineer

Users classified as area engineers manage equipment, personnel, raw materials and create the final situation reports and other chain-of-command reporting mechanisms.

EOC Officer

EOC officers can access all of the functions of Freeboard and assist all personnel with trouble shooting and give training to new users of the system.

How It Works

- *Issue is identified* - When a high water event is declared, deployees of the district and others are positioned to watch sections of the emergency area such as a levee, for possible issues. When a problem is identified, such as a sand boil, an inspection site is located by Geo-Positioning Satellite (GPS), photos are taken and the issue is reported to an authorized user who generates an inspection report in Freeboard.

- *Issue is reported and classified* - The inspection report is then reported through Freeboard to the sector commander and the engineering adviser. Recommendations are issued for each

inspection report and personnel, equipment and raw materials are requested from the inventory at the closest staging area to the sand boil site.

- *Issue is Resolved and Reported* - The area engineer determines the priority of the work to be performed and reports up the chain of command. The command staff and Emergency Operations Center personnel assemble all of the sitreps and identify all the needs of the high water event and manage the materials and personnel for the entire emergency area from the reports and maps generated in Freeboard.

Improvement from the good ol' days

Modern technology greatly speeds the process and accuracy of reporting from the field. Levee inspectors can send GPS location and digital photos contained in a detailed inspection report with smart phones to the cloud in a few minutes from the field site, as compared to hours of travel and processing time in the good ol' days. Instead of handwritten or typed inspection reports being faxed or hand carried to area offices and command staff, reports from the cloud are generated in seconds.

Conclusions

Freeboard enables the Corps to speedily report problems from the field; manage the materials from the staging areas to the work site and deploy personnel swiftly to better protect us all. ◀



Civil Works Transformation

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

Why Transform the Civil Works Program?

The Civil Works program faces a myriad of challenges which are prompting swift transformation in our business model. To meet current and future challenges and address the water resources needs of our nation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has initiated an effort to transform its Civil Works program with the imperative to improve performance and responsiveness; increase customer satisfaction, public trust and confidence; improve readiness; and maintain a competitive edge.



Transformation will promote enhanced capabilities and greater involvement, ownership, concurrence and commitment among internal USACE team members, local sponsors and partners. Shared learning and enhanced understanding of mutual challenges can provide creative alternatives and sources of funding, and important, sustained feedback. It will set a clear direction for the CW program to meet the Nation's current and emerging water resources needs.

Transformation Target Areas

Transformation fosters a better and smarter way of working for the Nation. To deliver the best possible Civil Works products and services to the Nation, USACE needs to ...

- Modernize the project **planning process**.
- Enhance the **budget development process** through a systems-oriented watershed approach, collaboration and innovative financing.
- Evaluate the current and required portfolio of water resources projects through a smart **infrastructure strategy** to deliver solutions to water resources problems.
- Improve **methods of delivery** to produce and deliver critical products and services through water infrastructure and other water resources solutions.

A New and Modernized Planning Paradigm

- Streamline the project planning process to produce concise Chief's Reports faster and at lower cost.
- Reinforce linkage of planning with USACE functions and organizational elements vertically and horizontally.
- Build risk into assumptions and reduce or manage risk associated with decision options and levels of service.
- Upgrade planning expertise through continual training and updated guidance.
- Use more sophisticated tools and methods to prioritize water resources solutions.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – HEADQUARTERS

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www.usace.army.mil

PROCESS

A More Logical and Integrated Budget

- Develop programs and budgets to produce healthy watersheds in measurable terms through a Logic Development Model and sophisticated analytic and reporting tools.
- Integrate goals and priorities across national, regional, and local levels.
- Allocate resources and make tradeoffs to balance CW Business Line outcomes.
- Link performance to Business Lines and national priorities through a holistic systems view to integrated water resources management.
- Budget for a full project life-cycle.
- Include horizontal and vertical teams and external stakeholders to develop budget guidance.
- Seek alternative funding sources and innovative financing options.

A Long-Term Strategy for Infrastructure

- Set three clear decision points for making investment decisions:
 - new starts (planning)
 - new starts (construction)
 - recapitalizing or divesting
- Define and evaluate the value of “critical” infrastructure.
- Set a strategy to sustain, rehabilitate, divest, or repurpose USACE’s portfolio of water resources infrastructure.
- Manage assets through their full life cycle using a systems approach.
- Integrate and balance priorities across Civil Works Business Lines.
- Seek innovative financing.

Enhanced Methods of Delivery

- Use a logical process to identify and retain core competencies to ensure high technical quality.
- Streamline business processes and organizational structures.
- Link technical capabilities to desired levels of service and high standards.
- Ensure consistent approaches throughout USACE.
- Improve operational management of USACE water infrastructure.
- Assess how well methods of delivery meet strategic goals and national objectives.
- Enhance and maintain technical skills and competencies to meet current and future demands.
- Reduce risks.

The CW Transformation will produce demonstrable results that matter to USACE team members, water resources stakeholders, and the American public. It will ...

- Promote strategic partnerships and alliances.
- Demonstrate leadership and innovation in developing water policy.
- Deliver comprehensive and lasting solutions.
- Expect, represent and communicate high standards of technical excellence.
- Innovatively use and leverage fiscal resources.
- Lead in the development, application, and transfer of technologies.
- Effectively and innovatively operate water resources infrastructure across a broad portfolio of business practices and processes.
- Avoid needless redundancy and over-specialization.
- Make a positive difference for Americans and their communities.

For more information, see www.usace.army.mil, or contact Ada Benavides at ada.benavides@usace.army.mil.

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District participates with 2013 Government Procurement Opportunities Conference and Trade Fair

Story by Shirley J. Smith
 Photos by Kavanaugh Breazeale

Several Vicksburg District team members participated with the 2013 Government Procurement Opportunities Conference and Trade Fair. The conference, held May 8-9, at the Vicksburg Convention Center and Auditorium, was sponsored by the Mississippi Procurement Technical Assistance Program.

Carol S. Harris, program manager for Mississippi Procurement Technical Assistance Program, stated “Small businesses play a vital role in our nation’s defense and are the backbone of our national and local economies. Conferences of this nature aid government and commercial purchasers in locating suppliers and facilitate small businesses access to government and commercial contracts.”

Demetric Erwin, deputy for the District’s Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Office, stated, “The conference was designed to build relationships among Mississippi businesses, federal, state, and local.

Lynniese Cosey-Mayfield, chief, services and supply contracts branch of the Vicksburg Consolidated Contracting Office, gave a presentation on District Missions, types of contracted work at the District and FY 13 Contracting Opportunities with the Vicksburg and Memphis districts. Other panel presenters included Alice Doss - supervisory business opportunity specialist with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Mississippi District, Joyce Conner, business opportunity specialist with the U.S. Small Business

Administration, Mississippi District, and Michelle M. Stracener, Small Business specialist/procurement analyst with the John C. Stennis Space Center.

Cosey-Mayfield stated, “This conference provided many Mississippi small businesses the rare opportunity to meet and discuss upcoming competitive acquisitions with Vicksburg District contract specialists and contracting officers.”

Other topics covered during the two-day conference included Navigating the Federal Procurement Process, Doing Business with State and Local Governments-A Multi-Billion Dollars Industry, and Subcontracting Opportunities with Major Defense Contractors. ◀



Lynniese Cosey-Mayfield makes a presentation at the Government Procurement Conference.



Back row left to right are Demetric Erwin, Ellis Screws, Anitra Wilson, Jeri McGuffie, and Wendell Norman, regional chief of Contracting Division at Mississippi Valley Division, discussing the conference with vendors.

Regulatory branch oversees a dynasty

By Jeremy Stokes and Charles Allred
Photos by Mike Miller and Tim Mize

Are you a fan of reality television shows? If so, you have surely watched the hilarious, family oriented, God-fearing cast of A&E's number one hit reality show, Duck Dynasty. Phil Robertson's family, family patriarch also known as the Duck Commander, has built a multi-million dollar business of making and selling duck calls and everything else that's considered as waterfowl. Robertson has made a living doing what he loves, but the whistling wings of the waterfowl would not be as abundant if it was not for the availability of the valuable wetland habitat that ducks require to survive. We are blessed in this part of the country to have extremely diverse and abundant wetlands, which are some of the most productive ecosystems on the planet.

Our first involvement with Rob-

ertson was about 20 years ago when he wanted to enhance an existing wetland for waterfowl habitat. At that time he had a minor violation consisting of the deposition of fill material into jurisdictional wetlands, which was resolved quickly and amicably. Fast forward to a few months ago when regulatory branch received a call from the Duck Commander explaining his desire for other wetland creation and enhancement projects on property in northeast Louisiana. The Duck Commander knew from past experiences that he needed to contact the Corps prior to beginning work. One of our major goals is to have applicants contact the regulatory branch prior to working in wetlands to avoid any potential enforcement actions.

Robertson has long been a proponent of wetland conservation, creation,

and enhancement. He had a parcel of property, a plan, and the means by which to accomplish that plan. Regulatory branch's statutory authority is Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. These programs are administered through the issuance of permits, allowing work to be conducted in areas deemed "Waters of the United States." The regulatory branch conducts and issues thousands of jurisdictional determinations and permits every year.

When we first visited the Duck Commander at his home south of West Monroe, Louisiana, to review the proposed wetland creation and enhancement project, we didn't know what to expect. However, the Robertsons' easy way of living and southern hospitality immediately made us feel right at home. After discussing the Duck Commander's plan, it soon became clear that this was going to be a win-win situation for all involved, including the wildlife.

The Duck Commander's plan involved the enhancement and/or creation of nearly 15 acres of wetlands in an attempt to provide valuable habitat for waterfowl, Neotropical migratory birds, and various aquatic invertebrates. Additionally, by making the proposed changes, these 15 acres will also serve as a flood water storage area and become a natural sediment load reduction and nutrient filtration and cycling component of the system. After reviewing the project, calculating and examining the

(Continued on page 20)



Pictured left to right are Jeremy Stokes, Tim Mize, Phil Robertson, and Charles Allred, Jr., conducting a wetland delineation, examining the soils, vegetation and hydrology at the site of Duck Dynasty.

Cross assumes Command of Vicksburg District

Story by Shirley J. Smith

Photo by Alfred Dulaney

Col. John W. Cross assumed command of the Vicksburg District in a ceremony held June 28 at District Headquarters building.

Col. Cross assumes responsibility of the 68,000-square-mile District from Col Jeffrey R. Eckstein, who will now be Commander at the Engineer Research and Development Center, Vicksburg.

Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody, Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, officiated at the ceremony. He stated that Col. Eckstein leaves a clearly positive and enduring legacy of contributions not only to the Vicksburg District but also to surrounding communities.

As outgoing commander, Col. Eckstein told the District team members, "I appreciate your support and I'm proud of all of you. I'm not leaving; I will be across the street at the Engineer Research and Development Center."

As incoming commander, Col. Cross stated, "Thanks for putting on a great showcase of the Vicksburg District. I'm proud to serve as Commander of this District; employees here have a great reputation. I'm truly humbled and look forward to serving you for the next three years. I also look forward to working with and serving all of our partners and continuing to carry on the work of our nation. It's good to be back in Mississippi."

Col. Cross, a native of Laurel, earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in geology from the University of Southern Mississippi. He earned a Master's Degree in business administration from the University of Central Texas, and a Master's Degree in strategic studies from the U. S. Army War College in 2010.

His military education includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Col. Cross began his career as an engineer platoon leader in Germany and later served as a company executive officer. After attending the Engineer Captain's advanced course he moved to Fort Polk, Louisiana, and deployed to



Col. Cross

Desert Storm serving as an assistant battalion operations officer. Following the war, he commanded an engineer company at Fort Polk and Fort Hood, Texas. He was selected for the Army's Training with Industry Program where he worked for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Denver, Colorado. His focus during this time included compliance with state and federal regulations and environmental restoration at Superfund sites and Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) in an eight-state area.

After working with the EPA in Denver, Col. Cross was assigned to the Fort Worth District with duty at Fort Hood, Texas. At Fort Hood, he worked on

various environmental contracts as well as military construction and FUD remediation in central Texas. As part of his tour with the Fort Worth District, he served as a project officer at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, supervising Military Construction for the Air Force.

Col. Cross attended the Army's Command and General Staff College and served again at Fort Hood as a battalion operations officer and executive officer. After a tour in Stuttgart, Germany, he was selected for command of the Brigade Special Troops Battalion in 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood. He deployed the battalion to Iraq in 2006 and operated north of Baghdad. After Command, he was selected to lead the engineer training team at the Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, where he trained battalions before they deployed to combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. After graduating from the War College in 2010, he was assigned to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he served as the XVIII Airborne Corps Engineer and deployed with the Corps to Iraq. In Iraq he served as the Deputy Engineer to United States Forces Iraq and was responsible for the final disposition of over 80 bases and attendant infrastructure housing 50,000 soldiers as well as the construction of facilities for the Department of State.

Col. Cross is married and he and his wife have two sons. ◀

District hosts annual Engineer's Day Awards ceremony in conjunction with Town Hall meeting and Army birthday celebration

Story by Shirley J. Smith

Photos by Alfred Dulaney and Kavanaugh Breazeale

The District's annual Engineer's Day Awards ceremony was held recently at District Headquarters along with a Town Hall meeting and a cake-cutting ceremony in honor of Army's 238th birthday.

The Vicksburg Leadership Development Program members facilitated the ceremony. Charlene Mosley rendered the Invocation; Colby Bankston led the audience in reciting the Pledge.

Col. Jeffrey R. Eckstein, Commander of the Vicksburg District, opened the Town Hall meeting by stating that this would be his last Town Hall here at the District.

Later, during his remarks Col. Eckstein stated, "The state of the District is good; the District has quality people that are mission focused. Everybody here do a good job. We are entering a phase of change in the Corps, especially this District. The landscape is changing, you must be open to it, if not you might miss something. For 238 years we've been serving the Nation and we don't want to jeopardize that."

Col. Eckstein's remarks were followed by the Annual Engineer's Day Awards Ceremony. Col. Eckstein presented awards to the following recipients:



Joseph Windham

Joseph Windham, hydraulics branch, Engineering and Construction Division – Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service Award



MR&T Channel Improvement Team

MR&T Channel Improvement Team

– Vicksburg District Team Award
 Freddie Pinkard, Deanna Prestwood, David Mooney, Jasper Lummus, Steve Coleman, Charles Stokes, Arletha Ross, Cory McNemar, Heather Sibley, Bobbilyn Guerrero, Don Ladd, Paul McNemar, Aaron Matthews, Warren Lister, John Hardy, Tim Riggs, Shannon Bussey, Daniel Sumerall, Jennifer Ryan, Cynthia Sims, Christy Love, Janalyn Dement, Ray Emerson, David Townsend, Steven Evans, Elijah Hunt, Karen Prosser, Danny McPhearson, and Ricky Pearce.



Motor Vessel Fred Lee Crew

Motor Vessel Fred Lee Crew - Wage Grade Team Award – Adam Scroggs, George Goodger, James Herrington, and Jason Vandeveld

Geotechnical Data Section Field Team

– The Team Safety Award - Chris Bontje, Cecil Crosby, Hattie Johnson, Brian Jordan, Rusty Penley, and Chris Woodard.



Geotechnical Data Section Field Team

Vicksburg District Dive Team - Team Safety Award – Jeff Turner, Tim Weaver, John Waters, Jason Vandeveld, Dan Carney, and John Vincent



Vicksburg District Dive Team

Jason Paschal, design branch, Engineering and Construction Division- Student of the Year (Headquarters) (not pictured)

PEOPLE



Jacob Huey with Stacy Sigman, resource manager for Lake Ouachita

Jacob Huey, Lake Ouachita Field Office – Student of the Year (Field Office)

Anne Woerner, regulatory branch, Operations Division – Commander’s Award for Outstanding Achievement in Equal Employment Opportunity

Ben Robinson, Programs and Project Management Division – Public Service Award

Alainna O’Bannon, Programs and Project Management Division – Volunteer Leadership Award

Christopher Woodard, Engineering and Construction Division – Wage Grade Leadership Award

Robert Stubbs, chief, dam & levee modeling section, Modeling, Mapping and Consequences Production Center – Engineer Award

Sarah Koeppel, regulatory branch, Operations Division – Scientist Award

Jack Smith, CAD/GIS section, Engineering and Construction Division – Professional Award

Jacqueline Smith, Grenada Lake Field Office, Operations Division – Vicksburg District Administrator Award

Jamie Richmond, Arkabutla Lake Field Office, Operations Division – Park Ranger of the Year Award

James Green, river operations branch, Operations Division – Paddle Wheel of the Year Award

Linda Barfield, management support branch, Operations Division – Vicksburg District Employee of the Year Award

At the conclusion of the Awards ceremony Col. Eckstein began the cake cutting with the least and most tenured team members, William Carpenter and Justin Giles. William Carpenter, Greenwood Area Office, has 45 years of service to the Corps; Justin came onboard with the District in May.

Before the cake was served, all stood for the singing of the Engineer Song followed by the singing of the Army song. ◀



Christopher Woodard



Robert Stubbs



Sarah Koeppel



Jack Smith



Anne Woerner



Ben Robinson



Alainna O’Bannon

Sardis Lake Co-op student wins the J. Gordon McMurray Award

Story by Shea Staten

Photo provided by Joshua Neisen

Joshua Neisen has been with the Corps since September 2009, when he began working under the Co-op Program at Lake Ouachita in Royal, Arkansas. During the summer of 2012, after receiving his Associate Degree from Northwest Mississippi Community College, Neisen was given the opportunity to transfer to Sardis Lake and continue his career development and education with the Corps through the Pathways program as he enrolled at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss).

On April 11, 2013, Joshua was awarded the J. Gordon McMurray Undergraduate Student Award at the University of Mississippi's annual Honors Day Convocation. The award is given once per year to the most outstanding undergraduate student in the park and recreation management discipline. The student is voted on by park and recreation instructors and must fulfill several qualifications which include a high grade point average, class-room leadership, involvement in extracurricular activities and demonstrates the desire to learn inside and outside of the classroom.

Joshua has been exceptionally active while managing his time with family, work, and school. He is an officer in the Park and Recreation Management Majors Association at Ole Miss, and hopes to become president of the organization in the fall. He is also a member of the Mississippi Recreation and Parks Association, and has been conducting independent research on the social, mental, physical, and financial benefits of having park and recreation programs and facilities in communities. He will be participating in National Geographic's BioBlitz this summer at the Barataria Preserve near downtown New Orleans. Participants help search for, count, map, and learn about the plants and animals living in this one particular location. ◀



Pictured with Jackie Smith, center are left to right, Kevin May, facility manager at Grenada Lake, and Andy Strickland.



Jamie Richmond



James Green



Linda Barfield



Joshua Neisen

ENGINEER'S DAY ACTIVITIES



Photos by Alfred Dulaney



CHANGE OF COMMAND

Photos by Alfred Dulaney



More than a century of dedicated service and knowledge leave District on same day

Story by Shirley J. Smith
 Photos by Alfred Dulaney,
 Kavanaugh Breazeale and
 courtesy of Arletha Ross



Rosemary Spears



John Burnworth



Arletha Ross

In today's world, change is inevitable...it's a way of life...good or bad. This holds true for the Vicksburg District, and especially for three of its team members, or former team members.

Many businesses and organizations are taking hits today; some due to downsizing, others to closures, some big, some small. The District took a big hit recently when three of its team members retired on the same day. The hit was a loss of more than a century of dedicated service and knowledge!

Although their careers took different paths at different times, Rosemary Spears, John Burnworth, and Arletha Ross, ended their federal career on the same day, July 3.

Spears began her career in August 1969 as a voucher examiner in the Office of the Comptroller, Finance and Accounting Branch. Spears' career has spanned more than 43 years with her being selected as Accounting Officer or Chief of finance and accounting branch of the Resource Management Office. As Chief of finance and accounting, her job duties included planning, directing, and coordinating the finance and accounting activities for the District. She also interpreted laws, regulations, manuals, decisions, and similar new and existing material concerning accounting functions. She also served as the Agency Program Coordinator for the government travel credit card program.

"When I began working for the Corps, the accounting system was a manual accounting system. You had to know the applicable

general ledgers and subsidiary ledgers to code accounting documents that were input on a posting machine. There were no computers; technology has changed that," she said. "Now, everything is done behind the scene, so to speak, computers do all the posting and reconciliations. Duties changed from actual hands-on to analyzing and interpreting data. Closing out the end of the fiscal year required weeks of work with almost everyone work-

ing overtime, now it takes only a few hours or less with basically two people working the close out," she added.

When asked what she considered the most important change she witnessed during her career, Spears stated, "When I began my career with the District, there were no other African American females permanently employed here at the District, only some African American female student aides, of course that is not the case anymore. Automation is another big change that I have witnessed. The forms of communication have drastically changed during my tenure, especially within the same office. We would walk from desk to desk to ask a question, now it is email or texting from a Blackberry."

Spears stated that her most memorable occasions with the Corps were, "When the Corps implemented the current Corps of Engineers Financial Management System, known as CEFMS. A group of us went to Huntsville, Alabama, for three weeks to become trainers, with the intent to train all other team members at the District, Division, and Headquarters workforce. We were teaching and learning all at the same time. And, to add to the frustration, some of our students were using computers for the first time. For some, the CEFMS acronym meant **Can't Even Find My Screen** due to the difficulties of learning the new system. I wrote a CEFMS cheer for the employees to keep them motivated during their frustration. The other memorable occasion is when I received my 30 years of service pin, it was presented to me by the first African American Commander of the Vicksburg District, Col Robert Crear, now retired Brig. Gen. Robert Crear."

Spears, a native of Vicksburg, is a graduate of Rosa A. Temple High School, and earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in business administration from Tennessee

State University. She is a former board member of Good Shepherd Community Services, serves as a Sunday school teacher and children's church teacher at Word of Faith Christian Center, and community service chairperson for the Association of Government Accountants.

She and her husband, Albert, are the parents of two children, Sean Spears and Kimberly Spears Carter, and have two grandchildren, Raphael Spears and Julius Spears.

John Burnworth, a structural engineer in the design branch, structures section of Engineering and Construction Division, began his career in July 1975 as a civil engineer in design branch, structures section, major structures unit, where he inspected completed structures for distress and deficiencies; and helped prepare design memorandums and reports. He was a technical manager for architect-engineer task orders and in-house design efforts. His duties included serving as technical manager for analyses, design, documentation, and preparation of plans and specifications for navigational structures including J. Bennett Johnson Waterway Locks and Dams Nos. 3, 4, and 5, the 404c floodwall of WBV-90, Western Closure Complex.

He states that modern technology greatly enhanced the way in which he performed his job due to the increased efficiency in analyzing concrete and steel members in various structures allowing more design analyses to be performed in a shorter time period. He said that advanced technology allowed him and his co-workers to draft their own drawings rather than needing several draftsmen to assist.

During his 37-year career, he noticed the increase in computer usage for design and analysis of concrete and steel structures and the use of the computer aided design and drafting (CADD) to increase productivity, which improved productivity during a shrinking workforce and funding.

"When I began working for the Corps I had access to a teletypewriter with paper tape punch connected to a main frame IBM computer. Drawings were done by hand using pencil and ink; copies were made using photography," Burnworth said. "Since then, the IBM computer was replaced with personal computers containing the 8086, 82086, 83086, 84086, the Pentium I, and Pentium II processors. CADD (MicroStation) was introduced in the mid-80's utilizing a standalone VAX computer with work stations containing a digitizing tablet and dual monitors; those were upgraded to PC-based MicroStation today. Our designs went from pencil and paper to computer programs that more accurately analyzed the behavior of the structures."

Burnworth states that although he was born in Williston, North Dakota, he doesn't really have a hometown due to his family moving around a lot because of his father's employment. He also states that he attended 12 different schools during kindergarten, elementary, and high school. However, he is a graduate of Pearl-McLaren High School in Pearl. He earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in civil engineering from the University of Mississippi, and a Master's Degree in civil engineering from Mississippi State University.

He is a former treasurer for the Vicksburg Soccer Organization.

He and his wife, the former Janis Lynne Ballou of Belzoni, are the parents of a son, Barrett Ballou Burnworth, and they have a granddaughter, Grace Margaret Burnworth.

Arletha Ross, a senior program analyst in the river engineering section, hydraulics branch of Engineering and Construction Division, began her Corps career in 1979 in design branch of Engineering Division.

As a senior program analyst she was responsible for formulating, developing, and executing the 15 to 25 million dollar budget for the channel improvement revetment construction program. Her duties also included coordinating, reviewing, analyzing, and revising justifications data used in defense of the civil works budget. During Ross' career some of her projects included the Mississippi River levees, Delta Headwaters (formerly Demonstration Erosion Control), Tensas Basin, Ouachita-Black Rivers, Yazoo Basin, and southeast and southwest Arkansas.

The most significant changes Ross witnessed during her Corps career is the advanced technology. "It appears that we cannot adequately perform our jobs without computers, cell phones and blackberries, which have resulted in less face-to-face interaction among co-workers," she said.

Her most memorable occasion she witnessed during her career was her first visit to the work site of the Mat Sinking Unit. She had the opportunity to observe the process involved in laying articulated concrete mat squares on the banks of the Mississippi River to prevent erosion and protect submerged river banks.

She is past president of the Association of Government Accountants and currently serves as membership chairperson. She also serves as treasurer of the Warren County Sunday School Convention No. 1, and is a Sunday school teacher at Clover Valley Baptist Church.

A Clinton native, she is a graduate of Clinton High School, attended Utica Jr. College, and earned her Bach-

(Continued on page 20)

Corps' annual picnic serves up much family fun and activities

Story by Robert L. Miller

Photo by Alfred Dulaney

If you had a choice of spending a day in a cubicle or a day in the great outdoors, which would you choose?

How does one get such a choice? District employees were faced with this decision in early June – come to work or head to Clear Creek recreational area in Bovina for the District's annual Engineer Day picnic activities.

What a beautiful, warm summer day for such an outing. Numerous coworkers enjoyed the golf course, pavilion, shaded picnic tables and small fishing pond.

Upon entering the picnic area, I was immediately impressed with the number of people in attendance. Two volleyball games were underway; children and adults were cheering for their favorite teams. Throughout the day various games entertained children and young adults.

I also saw the largest grill that I have ever witnessed. The cooking surface was about three feet by

eight feet. Colby Bankston, Engineering and Construction Division, described the cooking surface as three-foot by eight-foot grill. He said, "It took about a week to build."

The grilling came in handy this year since there were no food vendors. The event became very similar to a big tailgate party.

Attractions and activities included a bike and car show, the dunking booth, volleyball, a run-walk race, golf tournament, bingo, face painting, obstacle course, water slides, and a water safety booth featuring water safety messages and gear. Of course, participants could always just sit and visit if they wanted a slower paced day.

This picnic, a Corps sponsored event, is cosponsored by the District's Employee Recreation Organization (ERO). The ERO is a chartered, Corps-sponsored organization that assists with recreational activities for employees. This picnic, relaxing and fun as usual, was held in observance of the Corps' 238th anniversary. ◀



(Regulatory Branch oversees, concluded from page 11)

benefits this project would add to the environment, regulatory branch issued the Duck Commander a permit allowing him to begin construction.

The initial phase of the project is scheduled for completion by late summer. However, the Duck Commander must wait until winter to

complete the final phase of the project because it involves reforestation of the project area.

(If you watch this television show, pay close attention during the upcoming season 3 of Duck Dynasty and you may see this project mentioned.) ◀

(More than a century, concluded from page 19)

elors of Science Degree in business from Jackson State University. She took advantage of the many training opportunities provided by the Corps during her career.

She is married to Albert Ross and they are the parents of three children.

These three team members have a combined 114 years of federal service, much experience and expertise "gone out the door." Their career span began with the teletypewriter with paper tape punch and ends with cutting edge technology. They have seen the District's headquarters relocate several times, from the Pepples Newman Building, the Neil Building, former post office building, Walnut ("Shaky") Towers, and the former Battlefield Mall, to its current location on Clay Street.

Good luck and happy retirement to them, and to all of our retiring/retired team members. ◀



Jeremy Stokes and Tim Mize take a close look and test the soil at the Duck Dynasty site.

Search and Rescue Training

Story and photos by Marty Reynolds

It is easy to get lost if you are not familiar with the area as two young men learned when they wandered away from their campsite on May 18.

This time it was just a drill to hone the skills of the Pike County Search and Rescue Team (SAR). Using the Laurel Creek Recreation Area on Lake Greeson, the team was tasked with searching the 200-acre peninsula that juts into the lake and is bordered on the east with a fire trail.

Pike County Deputy Sheriff George Donaldson positioned the two lost victims in an undisclosed location. The young men were given radios and water and instructed to remain in the area until rescuers found them. Subtle clues such as bicycle tire tracks and candy wrappers were found by members of the search and rescue team, which led to the successful discovery of the young men. The actual search only took a couple of hours, but the entire training exercise lasted several hours.

Training topics included: first notice, call out, communication (radio frequencies), preplanning, search planning, search urgency, types of searches, clues, and search management. Lake Greeson employees, Brent Strawn, Ron Packer, David Bradford, and Marty Reynolds participated in the training.



Pictured are participants with the Search and Rescue training.

Pike County's SAR coordinator, Larry Porter, expressed his gratitude to the Corps for the use of the recreational area and would like to use other Lake Greeson recreational areas in future training scenarios.

The Pike County SAR team members are all volunteers who respond whenever duty calls. They participate in land and water SAR missions and are a valuable asset to the local community and Lake Greeson.

This was just a drill, so if the call comes, the Pike County SAR team will be ready. ◀

National Safe Boating Week observed at Corps lakes

Story by Shirley J. Smith

National Safe Boating Week was May 18-24 at all Corps lakes. This coincided with the National Safe Boating Week Campaign, a national observance initiated by the National Safe Boating Council. The web address for the "Wear It! Campaign" is <http://www.safeboatingcampaign.com>.

Across the country, federal agencies with access to water hosted events with an emphasis on safe boating and rescue techniques teaching visitors how to stay safe while recreating in or near water. Boaters can check with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for the latest nautical charts at www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov.

Lake personnel within the Vicksburg District supported this National Safe Boating Week campaign through efforts such as water safety rescue bag demonstrations and water safety programs; water safety public service announcements were broadcast in English and Spanish on radio stations and live radio interviews; park rangers inspected and provided necessary maintenance to life jacket loaner

stations, and facebook pages were updated with daily reminders of water safety tips during National Safe Boating Week through Memorial Day weekend.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the largest provider of water-based outdoor recreation in the nation and a leader in boat safety. The Corps urges recreational boaters to think "safety first" while enjoying water-based activities throughout the summer to lower risks of accidental deaths.

The following links provide water safety tips:

<http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/WaterSafety.aspx> - Vicksburg District site

<http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/safetytips.htm> - Corps Headquarters site

<http://www.bobber.info> - Bobber the Water Safety Dog site

Some benefits of Corps projects cannot be measured

...like beautiful Lake Ouachita, providing lifetime memories

Story and photo by Rick Dwyer

“Last summer I camped at Tompkins Bend Campground at beautiful Lake Ouachita. I was thrilled to sit around the campfire, holding my great grandbaby, rocking in a chair! The great grandbaby represents a fourth generation of my family who has camped at the lake.”

These were comments that a gentleman made to me after a meeting. As I spoke with him, it occurred to me that we often discuss project purposes: flood control, hydropower, recreation, fish and wildlife management, etc. However, when you talk to people who visit our lakes, it becomes abundantly clear that we should never lose sight of the fact that another purpose of our lakes is to provide memories....beautiful memories.

During my 32 years with the Corps, I have spoken with campers who have never forgotten camping on an island and seeing more stars than they had ever seen in their life! They remember the first fish their son or daughter caught on the lake or the first time they got caught in a storm out on the water. They remember watching fireworks displays from their boats, or they remember the park ranger walking around the campsites with a snake wrapped around his/her neck, teaching kids about animals in the natural state. My in-laws, in their 80's now, remember camping at Brady Mountain before there were designated campsites, back in the mid-1960s. There were so many campers out there - they say - that if you forgot your tent poles, you could just tie onto other people's tents or cars. They say those were the good times camping on the lake.

One of my fondest memories with my two sons occurred on a Corps project, Bull Shoals, in north Arkansas. One year, for a Christmas present, my youngest brother gave my father, my sons and I, a half-day fishing trip with a guide on Bull Shoals. Two of us could fish in a boat with a guide, so my youngest son, 9 at the time, fished

with me, my oldest son, 13 at the time, fished with his grandfather. Our guide pulled up near a point that jutted out into the lake, and informed us of the best direction to cast. On my son's first cast, he caught an 18" smallmouth. It was barely out of the limit to keep on Bull Shoals at the time, so it was released. His next cast, he landed a 4 lb.

largemouth! At that, the guide told him that if he was going to keep that up all day, we'd probably have to throw him into the lake! My son grinned from port to starboard at that.

Meanwhile, in the other boat in the next cove over, my oldest son caught two bass on one lure on one of his first casts, a memory he and his grandfather talk about to this day.

Two years ago, my 13-year-old daughter and I were fishing from the new elevated walkway/pier on Lake Ouachita, part of a trail planned and constructed by Rick Stokes, retired resource manager of Lake Ouachita. We fished for bream for hours with crickets. (She will put worms on a hook, but I have to put crickets on the hook – however, I don't mind a bit!) We fished and talked about everything for hours. Like Trace Adkins' song says, “She thinks we were just fishing.” However, I will not soon forget that day, especially as she is now 15, going on 19!

The bottom line (BLUF as we say) is this: When we discuss budget cuts, continuing resolutions, sequestration, possible future closures of recreational areas, and other impacts on our lake projects (as the current climate unfortunately dictates), we should remain focused on the fact that we are providing memories for generations of good people who entrust us with their recreational areas.

These memories don't show up on current year programs, cannot be tracked on spreadsheets and are not red or green at the end of the month. The memories that our lakes and other recreational areas provide are real memories for real folks that last forever. ◀



One of the best kept secrets

Story by Alice Bufkin
Photos by Alfred Dulaney

Take a drive about 24 miles northeast of Shreveport and you'll find one of Louisiana's best kept secrets. There are approximately 34,000 acres of incredible scenery that offer a wide array of recreational and educational opportunities for the public to enjoy.

These mostly bottomland hardwood and wetland habitat lands are known as the Bayou Bodcau Dam and Reservoir area, a part of the Louisiana Field Office and located in Bossier Parish. This multiple-use area provides flood control, natural resource management, environmental stewardship, and recreational projects.

The area has a rich historical background that dates as far back as 5,000 to 6,000 years ago when the Caddo Indians inhabited the area. In the mid-1940's, the federal government began purchasing land for construction of Bodcau Dam and Reservoir.

The "Durden House," a log dog-trot style house named for Newsome Andrew and Elizabeth Rebecca Young Durden, remained on the land. Durden family members had inhabited the house since 1852 and rebuilt it in 1925 after it was destroyed by a fire in the 1920's. Ben Durden did not want to give up his house and five acres of land and refused to move. Since construction of the dam had begun, a judgment was granted for the government to buy the land and give Mr. Durden a lifetime, free lease. In 1999, renovation of the house began as a cooperative effort between the Corps and the Northwest Louisiana Wildlife and Aquatic

Association. It is now used as an environmental educational center.

If you enjoy picnicking, fishing, camping, hunting, and boating, you should visit there for a day, or for several days. There are over 50 miles of marked trails to accommodate horseback riding, mountain bike riding, all-terrain vehicle, hiking, wildlife viewing, and nature study.

The Tom Merrill Recreation Area Campground offers 20 full-service camping sites along with a restroom and potable water. Primitive camping at no charge is available in designated areas of undeveloped land, which includes one horse camp.

There is excellent fishing to be enjoyed at several sites. Beautiful 520-acre Ivan Lake, which is leased to and managed by the Bossier Parish Police Jury, and the lengthy Bayou Bodcau provides the visitors opportunities to catch their limits of various species of fish.

Bayou Bodcau Wildlife Management Area is leased to and managed by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). All Federal, state and local laws and regulations governing hunting and fishing apply. A rifle and pistol shooting range operated by the LDWF is open to the public.

This recreational area might not actually be the "best kept secret." Last year, over 240,000 visitors enjoyed picnicking, fishing, camping, hunting, educational activities, and the trails at Bayou Bodcau Dam and Reservoir. ◀



The "Durden House"



Bayou Bodcau Dam and Reservoir

Corps Arkansas lakes pristine, inviting, and have much to offer

Story by Shirley J. Smith

Photos by Alfred Dulaney

Communicating with others through phone calls or e-mail does not compare to actually meeting those persons. It is the same with hearing or reading about tourist destinations. Also, hearing about or writing about a project doesn't compare to actually seeing the project and its progress, how it works, and its purpose.

The Corps' recreational areas in Arkansas hold breathtaking vista, pristine lakes and abundant outdoor opportunities. The recreational aspect is only a small piece of their multiple missions.

A recent trip to the Arkansas lakes let me connect projects, faces, names and voices; it afforded me the opportunity to learn more about each project and gave me a greater appreciation for the work that takes place behind the scenes. If you never camped at a Corps campground in Arkansas, or visited the lakes, taking in all of the breathtaking views of their pristine state, a trip to them is definitely worth the time it takes to drive there.

At Lake Ouachita, DeGray Lake and Lake Greeson, the professionalism and expertise of the staff are exceptional. Their pride in each project is evident.

Lake Ouachita

My first stop was at Lake Ouachita. Brian Westfall, a natural resource specialist at the Lake Ouachita Project Management Office, served as tour guide. Westfall, a native of Arkansas, has a wealth of knowledge of those lakes and facilities, which greatly enhanced the agenda for the trip as well as my knowledge of all that the Arkansas lakes personnel does for the Corps.

The newly built Lake Ouachita Project Management Office, having opened in 2012, affords a breathtaking view of the lake, and Blakely Mountain Dam can be seen from the conference room. Lake Ouachita, the largest of the Corps lakes in Arkansas, located entirely within Arkansas, is well known for its scenic beauty. The Ouachita National Forest surrounds this 40-mile long lake, and its 970-mile shoreline.

The lake provides visitors with underwater vistas of rocks and trees through its crystal clear water. It beckons outdoor enthusiasts to swim in the lake; drop a line in the

water for the waiting fish; float across the pristine water in a houseboat, sailboat or wave runner or grab a mask and tank for a fresh water diving adventure. Lake Ouachita also boasts an unusual feature created by the Corps, the Geo-Float Trail, which is a marked route that boaters can follow guided by a brochure that describes prominent geologic features to be seen on the lake. Lake Ouachita holds 40,000 acres of water, and encompasses about 200 islands.



Brian Westfall and Shirley Smith at tour site at beautiful Lake Ouachita.

Recreation isn't the only authorized purpose for the lake. Built as a flood control and hydropower project, its roles expanded to include water supply as well as fish and wildlife management.

The office of Brenda Meeks, project manager for the Arkansas lakes and power plant, is housed at this beautiful site. Meeks began her career as a co-op student while attending Arkansas Technical University. She was later selected as an outdoor recreation planner, lake manager for Lake Greeson and Lake Ouachita. Now, in her present position, when asked what her day is like at the lakes, Meeks stated, "We manage the natural resources and Corps resources at these lakes and power plants for the benefit of the public and the nation. The job itself is so rewarding because we are able to provide public service to people who love the outdoors and environment. The power plants provide power to thousands of customers here in Arkansas."

LAKES AND RECREATION



Beautiful Lake Ouachita Project Management Office



Westfall leads the way down the Lake Ouachita Vista Trail.

The power is generated by us (the Corps) and marketed by the Department of Energy.”

Westfall, all-around type guy and great tour guide, stated that Ouachita is an Indian word-meaning plentiful hunting ground. He can take you all around the lakes and tell you all about the recreational areas, campsites, boat ramps and boat docks, the wildlife as well as the different species. He provides insight on the history of the area, surrounding businesses, as well as lake personnel.

Pamela Herrin, a natural resource specialist, manages the project’s real estate. She ensures that the lake facilities meet standard codes, electrical codes, health codes, and safety regulations. The lake concessionaires submit work requests to the Real Estate Division at district headquarters and Real Estate forwards the requests to her.

“Spring and summer months keep us very busy because visitors are interested in house boat docks, cabins, and RV parking,” Herrin stated. Although most of her time is spent working with concessionaires, she also works as a wildlife biologist, “I’ve worked with wildlife for most of my life - saving baby rabbits, squirrels, and even raccoons. I’m nursing a baby fawn at my house now,” she said.

Earlier that morning, a young bear was spotted in the Tompkins Bend Recreation Area. Herrin explained that it was probably a male bear that has been kicked out, and is looking for a home. “The mother kicks out male bears at the age of 1 year old, and female bears are kicked out at 2 years old,” she said.

Westfall continued with his discussion of the lakes by adding that people from all over the world come here to see these beautiful lakes and enjoy their recreational opportunities.

Gary Lammers, a supervisory park ranger at the Lake

Greeson, states that his days are spent addressing small problems that arise. His work concentrates on the recreational areas, especially during summer months. He also ensures maintenance of lake facilities.

Recreational areas and campgrounds are plentiful at Lake Ouachita, including Big Fir, Brady Mountain, Denby Point, Spillway, Tompkins Bend, and Joplin, just a few of the many well maintained Corps campground sites.



Walnut Creek running into Lake Ouachita.

Lake Greeson

Lake Greeson, the oldest and smallest Corps lake in Arkansas, has the only all-concrete dam located within the Vicksburg District. Built in 1950, the lake is located on the Little Missouri River in the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains near Murfreesboro, Arkansas. The crystal clear lake attracts outdoor enthusiasts who love water sports such as boating, fishing, scuba diving, canoeing, kayaking, as well

(Continued on page 26)

LAKES AND RECREATION

(Corps Arkansas lakes, continued from page 25)

as land activities such as camping, hiking, and rock climbing. The many coves and inlets around the lake provide excellent fishing; its bare rock outcroppings contrast with the tall pines stretched along the shores, providing panoramic settings for hikers and nature lovers.

Narrows Dam impounds the waters of the Little Missouri River to form the 7,000-acre Lake Greeson. Visitors can enjoy walking, nature, and cycle trails along the 45-mile area surrounding the lake.



Chimney Rock at Lake Greeson

Eric Jenkins, resource manager at Lake Greeson, was previously facility manager at Narrows Dam. At Lake Greeson he oversees overall management of the project including flood control, recreation, environmental stewardship, and visitor assistance. With safety always being his top priority, he said that April through September are his busiest months, adding that June, July, and August, when school is not in session, are very busy months, when youth are having fun on bikes and swimming. Jenkins explained that is why park rangers present a lot of water safety training programs.

The project is busy with visitors from late spring through early fall, but the staff is kept busy during the winter with maintenance to prepare for the next summer's visitors. He added that flood damage reduction is a year-round job too.

Lake Greeson, deep and clear, affords a great sailing experience, and embodies 7,000 acres of water. The campground areas feature amenities such as picnic areas, swim beaches, playgrounds, and boat ramps along with the

standard shower facilities, modern restrooms, electrical and water hook up. Class A campgrounds include Laurel Creek, Parker Creek, Kirby Landing, and Cowhide Cove, among several others.

DeGray Lake

At DeGray Lake, where there were several sightings of snakes and a few wild turkeys, Canada Geese are abundant. The history of the area can be traced to when the Caddo Indians inhabited the area.

"In 1541 Hernando DeSoto visited Caddo Lake, or Caddo Gap. This was as far west as his Spanish expedition extended," Westfall said. It is also said that Jesse James robbed the tow bridge attendant at Caddo Gap.

DeGray Lake, named after a French fur trader, DeGraff, who settled in the region, is located adjacent to the National Scenic 7 Byway, north of Arkadelphia. DeGray Lake also is widely known for its recreational opportunities. However, DeGray Lake's Dam and power plant has the distinction of being one of the first pump-back capable impoundments in Corps history, making it one of the most energy producing projects in the South. The re-regulation pool, also known as the lower lake, is impounded by a concrete low-head dam built across the Caddo River. During low water levels, the water in the lower lake is pumped into the main lake to be used to generate hydropower.

The 400-acre impoundment or lower lake also serves as an ideal waterfowl refuge and fishing destination. The in-



Re-regulation Dam at DeGray Lake

(Corps Arkansas lakes, continued on page 27)

LAKES AND RECREATION

(Corps Arkansas lakes, concluded from page 26)

novative DeGray Lake hydropower pump-back system is a great example of economic and environmental synergy.

DeGray Lake and Dam was authorized by Congress in the River and Harbor Act of 1950. Construction on the dam began in 1962 and completed in 1972. DeGray Dam impounds the waters of the Caddo River to form a flood control lake that covers 13,400 acres and a shoreline of 207 miles.



DeGray Dam

The eventual damming of the Caddo River forced many people to move elsewhere in the area. Brick and concrete structures from former homesteads still stand on the bottom of the lake. Several artifacts that were found near the dam site were taken to nearby Henderson State University.

Jeffrey Lockwood, a natural resource specialist at DeGray Lake, is responsible for food plots maintenance for wildlife, crappie condo maintenance, and marking timber for timber sales. Lockwood proudly states that the wild turkey and white tail deer benefit from the food plots. Like most project employees, each day brings something different, and his schedule is always subject to change. However, he noted that safety is always at the top of the list of concerns, especially during the summer months.

Along the way Westfall mentioned controlled burning of unwanted briars and shrubbery around the lake that choke the hardwood and pine trees. "The briars choke the trees so controlled burning is necessary. We burn 2-5 thousand acres per year. The burning is constantly monitored and is usually done before 5:00 p.m., and is monitored throughout the night," he stated.

DeGray is popular for its fishing, camping, swimming, water-skiing and other water-related sports. It encompasses

13,400 acres and has about 15 boat-launching ramps on its shores. The lake is home to Arkansas' only resort state park, DeGray Lake Resort State Park, featuring a 96-room lodge, conference center, golf course, swimming pool, tennis court, and other luxuries.

So, although the Arkansas lakes really do have a lot to offer and are widely known for their recreational opportunities, they are lesser known for the authorized purposes that make our lives safer, sustainable and more pleasant. An added amenity at the lakes is the expertise and dedication of their staff to willingly provide invaluable information, as well as maintaining pristine facilities, which magnify the meaning of service to the Corps and value to the nation. ◀



DeGray Lake Visitor Center



DeSoto/Caddo Indian monument at Caddo Cap

Park rangers' duties include making presentations and teaching

Story by Amy Shultz

Photos courtesy of Lake Ouachita Staff

It's that time of year again...the standardized tests are done, teachers are tired, and students are ready for summer! What does that mean for the staff at Lake Ouachita??? As the school year winds down, the work load builds up.

The staff at Lake Ouachita becomes busy presenting programs and hosting school field trips. The end of the school year presents wonderful opportunities for the Lake Ouachita staff to spread the water safety message. On a Saturday in late April, Lake Ouachita park rangers Byron Erickson and Rusty Standerfer staffed a water safety booth at Park Palooza. This community event is held each year on the Arlington Lawn in the Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas. It gives visitors a chance to explore the educational and recreational opportunities available in national parks and other public lands. Rangers Erickson and Standerfer were busy talking to 635 visitors at the water safety booth and ranger patrol boat on static display. They explained the importance of wearing lifejackets when enjoying the lake.

Park rangers Josh Gormley, Greg Clemons, Wayne Crawford, and Amy Shultz entertained fifth grade students from Lakeside School. The pre-teens celebrated Earth Day at Avery Park on Lake Ouachita. The four rangers delivered presentations on nature hikes, fisheries, birds of prey, snakes, and water safety to the 250 students and approximately 20 teachers and parents. The students enjoyed "round robin" style presentations from 9:00 a.m. until noon, which was followed by a water safety program and lunch at the Avery pavilion. A student intern, Tiffany Kriigel, assisted with the event, and served as event photographer.

On April 25th, Lake Ouachita personnel were extra busy presenting programs at two schools. Park ranger Greg Clemons, presented a backyard critters program to 71 students at Fountain Lake School Kindergarten, and Amy Shultz presented snake programs to 180 kindergarten through third grade students at Gardner School. The water safety training including games and student participation wrapped up each presentation.



Park ranger Greg Clemons teaches water safety during a field trip at Lakeside School.

The next day park rangers Pam Herrin and Greg Clemons, presented water safety programs to 30 students during Farm Safety Days at Lake Hamilton Intermediate School. Natural resource specialists, Brian Westfall and Luke Benjamin, presented snake programs during this event to 330 fourth grade students.

All of the above events and programs occurred within a one week span during April. Park rangers presented programs throughout the month of May, and over 4,000 students attended programs hosted by Lake Ouachita during these months. The Lake Ouachita staff remains busy presenting conservation, natural resource, and water safety programs preparing students awaiting summer vacation and the chance to play outside and enjoy the topics they are learning about!



Park ranger Amy Shultz discusses snakes with Lakeside School students during a field trip. Above, she shows a speckled king snake to students.

(Park rangers' duties, continued on page 29)

Arkabutla Lake's park rangers make presentations at Career Fair at Shadow Oaks Elementary School

Story by Jamie Richmond, Brandi Harms, and Kandy Alldread
Photo courtesy of Shadow Oaks Elementary

On Friday, May 3, Arkabutla Lake park rangers Jamie Richmond, Brandi Harms, and Kandy Alldread entertained and educated kindergarten through second grade students of Shadow Oaks Elementary during a career fair.



The rangers explained their jobs, and a group to never miss an opportunity to promote water safety, included a few key water safety messages as they talked to the students. Inclement weather moved the outdoor event and natural environment for the rangers to a classroom setting. However, this did not discourage the ranger trio as they conducted 30 presentations, moving from classroom to classroom, reaching approximately 1,500 students.

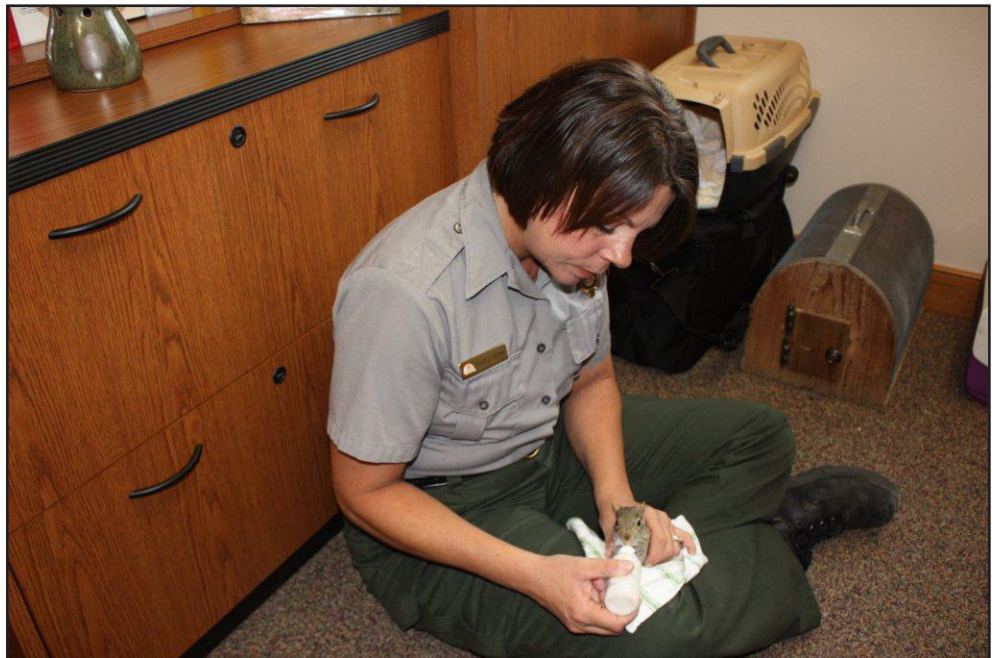
The experienced trio explained to the students what park rangers do in *Making presentations to the students are park rangers left to right, Kandy Alldread, Brandi Harms, and Jamie Richmond.*

their day to day work. They reminded the students the importance of learning how to swim, always have an adult swimmer with you, swim with a buddy, and the importance of life jacket wear. The rangers also talked to the students about what they enjoy the most about their jobs, enjoying the outdoors and helping others.

Even though the weather did not cooperate, rangers Richmond, Harms, and Alldread had a great time sharing their experiences of being a Corps park ranger with Shadow Oaks Elementary students. It is interesting to note that Shadow Oaks Elementary is located in Horn Lake, DeSoto County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state. Shadow Oaks serves kindergarten through second grade and has an approximate enrollment of 1,500 students. ◀

(Park rangers' duties, concluded from page 28)

To a ranger, there is nothing better than seeing the smile on a student's face as he/she touches a baby squirrel or a snake for the first time, or learning how to tell the difference between a terrapin and a box turtle or tortoise. It is equally rewarding to see the excitement in their eyes as they participate in a water safety activity and learn how to properly wear a lifejacket. It makes all the hard work that goes into planning, researching, and presenting programs worth it, and is truly one of the most enjoyable and rewarding aspects of being a park ranger! ◀



Park ranger Pam Herrin feeds an abandoned baby squirrel, which was a big hit with the students during the backyard critter program.

Grenada Lake's link to the Civil War

Stories and photos by Artie Hoff

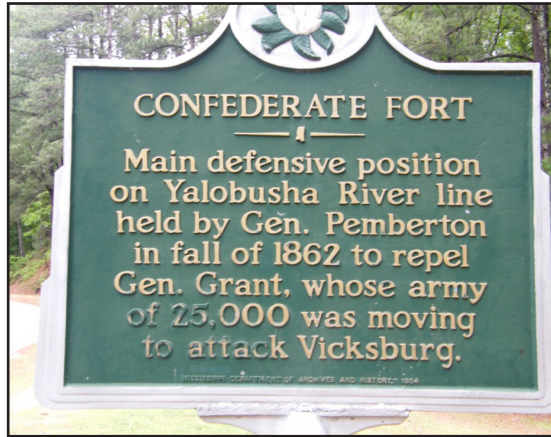
After the Confederate Army was defeated in the Battle of Corinth, Mississippi, which took place on October 3 – 4, 1862, all eyes turned towards Vicksburg. President Abraham Lincoln said Vicksburg was the key to the south, but Union General U. S. Grant soon found that the Vicksburg nut was a tough one to crack.

Through the fall of 1862 and the spring of 1863 Grant and his subordinates tried dozens of plans, large and small, to get close to the Confederate river bastion of Vicksburg. Grant and his 25,000 Union Army first tried to move southwest into the heart of the state along the Mississippi Central Railroad which ran from Grainger, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi. The Confederate Forces, now under the command of Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton, withdrew and formed a new defensive line known as the Yalobusha Line which ran along the Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad. This defensive line ran from Greenwood, Mississippi on the west to Columbus, Mississippi on the east. The city of Grenada was located at the junction of the Mississippi Central Railroad and the Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad and served as the center of the Yalobusha Line. During the winter of 1862, more than 22,000 Confederate Troops were stationed in and around Grenada, and this important rail center and supply depot was quickly being turned into a Confederate stronghold.

Numerous skirmishes between Union and Confederate forces took place as Grant's forces moved their way south along the Mississippi Central Railroad,



The restored Confederate Fort located at Grenada Lake is one of eight forts constructed by confederates in the winter of 1862.



A historical marker identifies one of two civil war forts located at Grenada Lake.

including the first Confederate Victory in the Western Campaign at the Battle of Coffeeville which occurred on December 5, 1862. Coffeeville is located within a dozen miles of Grenada, and the stage was set for a major battle. In November, 1862, General Grant had established his headquarters and a munitions and supply depot in Holly Springs, Mississippi, and had recently moved his headquarters 30 miles further south to Oxford, Mississippi.

On December 17, 1862, General Earl Van Dorn, a Confederate officer famed for daring raids of both military and domestic natures, slipped out of Grenada with a 3,500 cavalry force by way of the Grenada Graysport Road. On December 20, 1862, Van Dorn led his cavalry force into Holly Springs, surprising the slumbering Federal forces. Although few died, 1500 Union soldiers were captured and quickly paroled. The destruction of supplies was massive. Fires lit the skies and smoke clogged the air. Thousands of bales of cotton, intended for sale to finance Grant's army were destroyed; railroad car after railroad car packed with bacon was torched. Estimates at the time set the damages at over a million dollars for the loss of medical supplies alone. Van Dorn's raid on Grant's supplies at Holly Springs ended his attempt to capture Vicksburg by way of the Mississippi Central Railroad, and almost certainly the chance of a major battle at Grenada. ◀



Women also participate in the re-enactments and interpret the important role women played in the civil war.

Sardis Lake hosts Youth Fishing Rodeo

Story by Shea Staten
Photos by Josh Neisen and Houston Hartley



Youth participants show off their catfish catch after the rodeo.

This year marked the 25th anniversary of the Youth Fishing Rodeo at Sardis Lake. A lot of preparation is required to make this rodeo successful. Teamwork among Corps personnel, Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks personnel, RBS contractors, and several community volunteers and sponsors is essential to the successful coordination of the event. Although several changes and obstacles have

occurred during this 25-year period, a sense of community pride and teamwork has remained constant. It is this teamwork that has made the Youth Fishing Rodeo so reputable throughout Sardis Lake's surrounding communities over the years, with past participants now bringing their children to share in this experience. You know a program is a success when it is passed to the next generation.

The young participants caught plenty of fish, and some caught their first fish ever at this year's rodeo! When the fishing was over, everyone enjoyed a lunch together and talked about the fish caught and the big ones that got away. ◀

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Sardis Lake (662) 563-4531
Arkabutla Lake (662) 562-6261
Enid Lake (662) 563-4571
Grenada Lake (662) 226-5911
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JBJ Waterway (318) 322-6391

Ouachita-Black Rivers (318) 322-6391
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MVD History Office (601) 634-7023
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Corps impacts to your property
Employment Questions (601) 631-5858
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Other Vicksburg Engineer/Federal Organizations

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Vicksburg National Military Park
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Engineer Research and Development Center
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