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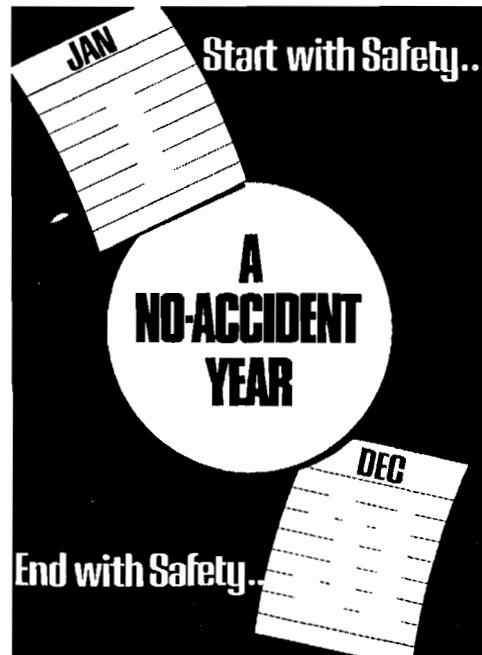
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All year, every year

Think Safety!



Safety is an integral part of everyday living. Whether we consciously think about it or not, it is part of our lives 24 hours a day. We are constantly making decisions that involve the safety and well-being of ourselves and our families. Do you always remember to fasten your seat belt when driving or riding in a car? In a split second, that decision could mean whether or not you will survive a serious accident. Do you remember to lock your doors and windows before you retire for the evening? It could mean the difference between an intruder breaking into your home, or deciding it is too much trouble and moving on to an "easier target." Do you know life-saving techniques such as CPR, Heimlich Maneuver for choking vic-

tims, first aid, etc? It could mean the difference between life and death for a friend or loved one.

As you can see from these examples, decisions regarding safety are made every minute, whether we think about it or not. Safety is a state of mind. Decisions we make can mean the difference between an accident and no accident. Accidents are not planned; safety is. The truth is, most accidents could be prevented because 90 percent of all accidents are caused by people! Even though it isn't easy to recognize an accident before it happens, things such as attitude, knowledge and judgement play an important role when the "unplanned" happens.

Safety in the workplace has become a major concern in the United States. Each year, more regulations are issued which protect the worker. The Occupational Safety and Health Act was signed into law on December 29, 1970. In this act, the Congress of the United States declared that every working man and

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Commander's Perspective



**MAJ John R. Jones
Deputy Commander**

First, let me say how pleased I am to be a member of the St. Louis District team. You have a great reputation - a reputation earned over many years of service to the people in this region. The issues we face today and in the future - flood protection and flood plain management, navigation of the region's major waterways, caring for an aging infrastructure, recreation, environmental stewardship, curration, ordnance explosive waste disposal, reshaping our business processes and caring for our employees in times of change - are challenging and exciting to say the least. All of this makes St. Louis District a happening place and a great organization to serve.

For the past 12 months, this District has instilled in me a deep appreciation for our Corps of Engineers and an even greater admiration of the people in this District. I have seen District employees from all disciplines rise to the occasion when duty called, giving freely, beyond that which one would normally expect and doing so with "essayons" spirit. We truly are competency in action.

I'd like to take a few moments to talk mission execution and performance. Mission execution must be job one. Every day there is a call to accomplish a new demanding task. We are challenged daily to be the best engineers, park rangers, deck hands, lock operators, secretaries, student employees and leaders that we can be. The Corps is restructuring and we find ourselves competing for ever more scarce resources and projects. In the long run, survival of the fittest, tempered by geography and politics may govern. We're blessed by geography and supported by dedicated local and state politicians who will stand us in good stead. While we cannot control geography and have limited influence over politics, we can absolutely control our own performance. We must simply be the best there is - bar none - at delivering quality services and products in a caring, professional and timely manner. "Good enough for government work" and "business as usual" are phrases we no longer can accept. Being impaled on the "status quo" and "we've always done it that way" are now killers. Remember, deeds not words are what count. So when we finish FY 95, let's see ourselves "at the top of the list" in performance and mission execution.

Lastly, in the process of executing we must maintain a healthy values based, people based corporate attitude and treat others as we would like to be treated. Ben Franklin once said: "A measure of a person's greatness is the person's goodness." It would be a serious mistake to consider a person great who did not possess goodness.

Essayons!



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Louis District

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News Briefs

Rend Lake:

Tree recycling

The annual Christmas tree recycling program has proven to be a great success, drawing local attention and support. Area residents were able to bring their used trees to the lake area to be used to improve fish habitat. Trees placed in the lake provide cover for spawning fish in the spring and for small fish to use to hide from predators. The trees are scheduled to be put into the lake sometime in February as weather permits.

Commercial fishing

The commercial fishing season at the lake will begin February 16th and continue until March 30th. During this time the commercial harvest of rough fish from the lake is permitted. This harvest is beneficial to the remaining game fish because their competitors are removed. Also the commercial harvest of rough fish allows the lake's resources to be more readily available for others.

Wappapello Lake:

Festival of Lights

The Second Annual Festival of Lights Auto Tour drew about 6,300 visitors, 2,100 more than last year. The event was held at the Redman Creek Campground (west) from December 15 to 23. Visitors were greeted by Santa and friends (courtesy of the Wappapello Lion's Club) and given sweet treats as they meandered through the campground to view the decorations.

Plans are already underway for next year's event.

No accidents

An aggressive safety policy does work. During FY 94, Wappapello Lake had no lost time from accidents. This is attributed to our initial employee indoctrination that emphasizes safety, weekly toolbox safety lectures, hazard abatement plan and our monthly safety meetings.

Mark Twain Lake:

Dangerous ice

Extremely cold temperatures can produce a layer of ice across much of the surface of Mark Twain Lake. Ice on hydropower reservoirs is very unstable for recreational use. The production of hydropower at Clarence Cannon Dam can cause the lake level below the surface ice to fall, creating a layer of air between the ice and underlying water. This produces a very weak ice surface area.

District headquarters:

Chairman Hempen

Our own Dr. Greg Hempen of the Engineering Division has been appointed to Missouri's new Seismic Safety Commission (MSSC) by Governor Mel Carnahan. The Missouri Senate confirmed the appointment on January 18. One of the commission's first actions was to elect Greg commission chairman.

Greg has been involved with seismic design of Corps structures for most his federal career. Greg was part of the disaster assistance team that went to Loma Prieta, California, after the "World Series" quake in 1990, besides duties for other districts and agencies. He teaches an evening class in earthquake resistant design at Washing-

ton University. He has spoken to a variety of audiences from grade schools to professional training seminars.

The purpose of the MSSC is to develop a "comprehensive program to prepare the state for responding to a major earthquake" (RS 44.231). The commission has four functions: help educate the public in earthquake safety; advise the state in budgetary, programmatic and legislative matters concerning earthquakes; develop public and private goals for earthquake preparedness; and assist the emergency management office with mitigation issues for earthquake recovery. The MSSC will ultimately be composed of fifteen members from various specialty backgrounds and two legislative members.

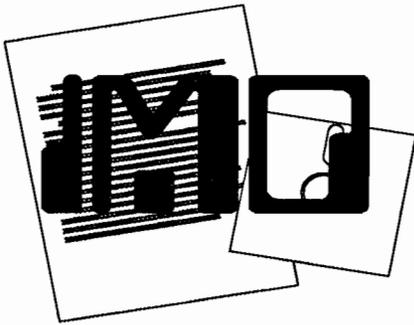
The initial directive for the MSSC is to perform a study for several review actions. The study will provide "recommendations for statutory changes and specific executive actions... and implement an earthquake hazards reduction program for... Missouri" (RS 44,237). This study should be completed in 1996.

Golf League

The St. Louis District Golf League is still seeking new members for the upcoming season. Remember, you have your choice of either the competitive or non-competitive portion of the league and can play when it is convenient for you.

As the only remaining athletic league available that is entirely comprised of District personnel (Active and retired), the golf league is an exceptional vehicle for both pleasure and business endeavors; exercise, fresh air and comradery are all essential elements that make the golf league an enjoyable experience.

(Continued on page 5)



Visual Information news

With the retirement of Jack Rhodes, Russ Elliott is now the sole remaining member of our Visual Information staff. As part of the District's space reduction project, the area which had been home to our Visual Information specialists and also used as the printing staging area

has been redesigned and is now the District's EEO Office. Russ Elliott has moved into the Visual Information Office, located adjacent to the Records Management Office which is just inside Room 4.100. Russ can still be reached at 331-8644.

Printing news

This information is pertinent to all St. Louis District elements (especially field offices) which are proponents of publications, brochures, guides, etc., which are INTENDED PRIMARILY FOR DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE THE CORPS.

NEW/REVISED PUBLICATIONS. A draft or mock-up version of the publication must be accompanied by a letter indicating the intended audience, plan of distribution, and estimated total cost to produce the publication. (CELMS-IM-P can assist in deter-

mining the cost.) The request must be sent to CELMS-IM-P. CELMS-IM-P will coordinate local approval with CELMS-PA. The request will then be forwarded through CELMV-IM and to HQUSACE for review/approval by the Publications Advisory Committee. HQUSACE approval is required prior to printing.

REPRINTS. Requests for approval to reprint will follow the submission procedures outlined for new publications except no draft or mock-up is required.

Obviously, the above requirements will increase the time required to produce the subject publications. Therefore, please plan accordingly. Questions concerning the above should be addressed to Ron Jones, CELMS-IM-P, 331-8645.

How is MY JOB classified?

by Terrie Hatfield, HR-P

Position classification is the determination of title, series and grade of a given set of duties and responsibilities (a position). The grade, of course, is of the most interest to employees because the grade dictates the salary of a position. How are these determinations made?

All positions in the federal service are classified in accordance with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (USOPM) Position Classification Standards. Each kind of work has its own classification standard. As required by law (Title 5 of the U.S. Code), these standards are mandatory - they must be used. All classification determinations must be made in accordance with the USOPM standards.

Complexity (difficulty) of the work and level of responsibility (which includes such elements as supervisory controls, extent of authority, scope of decisions) are the most important factors in determining the grade of a position. The duties and responsibilities must be officially assigned by the supervisor, there must be a requirement that these duties be performed and they must be performed on a regular and recurring basis for a significant amount of time (25 percent of the employee's total time) in order to be considered for classification purposes. Duties that are not officially assigned by the supervisor, duties that are not required by the position, or duties that are only performed on an occasional basis cannot be considered for evaluation.

Each set of duties and responsibilities is placed into a numerical series (for example GS-810, GS-193, GS-025) which is determined by the kind of work (civil engineering, archaeology, park ranger). The position classifier then evaluates the complexity and level of responsibility of the position by researching the appropriate classification standard and evaluating major duties and responsibilities of the position against grade level criteria in that standard. A grade is assigned to the position based on these criteria. The authorized title of the position is also directed by the classification standard.

A very important aspect of position classification is that the position is classified, not the person. Whether the job is performed in an average or superior manner, the
(continued on next page)



Responsibilities as an operator of a government vehicle

Government-owned vehicles should be used for official business only, as required by law. As the operator, you are responsible for its proper use, service and protection. Accidents and/or thefts involving a vehicle should be reported immediately. As an operator, you should be familiar

with the following do's and don'ts."

DO

- * Carry a valid operator's permit for the type of vehicle operated.
- * Operate the vehicle in a courteous, safe and prudent manner.
- * Obey all traffic laws, including paying parking fees. A traffic or parking violation is the personal liability of the operator.
- * Store the vehicle in a secure parking facility when possible.
- * Safeguard the vehicle, the U.S. government credit card and the keys against theft or misuse.
- * Report lost, damaged or stolen credit cards and/or license plates.
- * Report the theft of the vehicle or its contents immediately.
- * Fasten seat belts. All drivers and passengers will have seat belts fastened when vehicle is in motion.
- * Adjust head restraints so that your head centers on the restraint.
- * Set the parking brake when

you leave the vehicle.

- * Use both the rearview and sideview mirrors and the turn signal before moving from one traffic lane to another.
- * Use the emergency flasher lights when your vehicle becomes disabled or when you stop for an emergency on the side of the highway or any other public road.
- * Drive defensively. The most important safety factor in auto transportation is you, the driver.

DO NOT

- * Use the vehicle for private business, personal errands or recreation.
- * Transport members of your family, personal friends or non-government employees in the vehicle without specific permission.
- * Use the vehicle for transportation to or from work or park it at your residence.

Job classification (cont.)

title, series and grade are based on the duties and responsibilities officially assigned to the position and performed on a regular and recurring basis by the employee. Special characteristics or personal qualities of the incumbent of the position are not to be considered for series, title or grade determination.

What doesn't count in classifying a position:

Volume of work: Quantity is not a classification factor. However, the supervisor must be attentive to workload distribution and may consider some realignment of work if he or she determines that the workload of the organization is out of balance.

Financial need of the employee or unusual qualifications of the employee: Classification is based on duties required by the position and

may not consider the person in that position.

Outstanding performance by the employee: Again, it is the position, not the person, which is evaluated. Performance awards are used to reward outstanding performance by an employee. Outstanding performance is not a consideration in classifying the position.

Unusual or outstanding qualifications of the employee: Unless those outstanding qualifications are required to perform the duties of the position, this cannot be considered for classification purposes.

Comparison to other positions: Each position is evaluated on its own merit, not by comparison to a position down the hall or in another District.

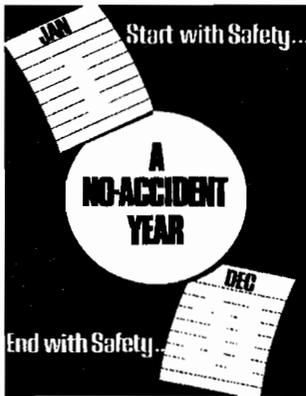
If you have questions concerning the classification of your position, please contact your immediate supervisor. The classification staff

in the Human Resources Office is available to assist your supervisor in explaining classification determinations.

Golf (cont.)

The league will sponsor its annual Spring Tournament in April. EVERYONE in the District is invited to participate in the tournament. The format is two-person scramble with teams being chosen and assigned to flights using league or estimated handicaps. It is a great event that kicks off the golf season in the District. The date and site for this year's tournament has not yet been selected. Watch for that information in the March issue of the ESPRIT.

If you have any questions about the league or the Spring Tournament, talk to any golf league member or contact Jeff Maynard, IM-I, at 331-8671 or E-mail MaynardJ.



woman in the nation was to be assured safe and healthful working conditions. This act is regarded by many as landmark legislation, since it goes beyond the present workplace and considers the working environment of the future as related to health hazards.

We've come a long way since the days when the Industrial Revolution began. Before the 19th century, most families in the United States lived and worked on farms. Some industries such as printing, shipbuilding, quarrying and cabinetmaking had developed. However, the textile industry was the true beginning of the factory system in America. As industry continued to grow, the toll on workers began to show. During the last half of the 19th century, factories were expanding their product lines and producing at previously unimagined rates. However, they were often inferior in terms of human values, health and safety.

Back then, deaths and injuries were accepted as being part of "industrial progress." Adults were not the only casualties. The 1900 census showed 1,750,178 working children between the ages of 10 and 15 were employed in such areas as mines, quarries, tobacco factories, sawmills, bakeries and laundries. During this period, the laws were still reflecting the past, when the worker was an independent craftsman or member of family-owned shops. Back in these "good old

days," safety was not a concern. Barefooted children toiled in the mills and factories. Employers were not held liable for injuries for a variety of reasons. The ugly results of industrial accidents and poor occupational health conditions became more and more obvious. Workers began to voice their protests.

Laws were established protecting the worker. States began instituting workers compensation acts. Insurance companies began relating the cost of premiums for workers' compensation insurance to the cost of accidents. Management began to understand the close relationship between successful production and safe production.

The year 1912 was a historic year for accident prevention. The National Safety Council was formed. The primary purpose of the Council was to provide an avenue of communication, an exchange of views and solutions to common problems in accident prevention.

Since 1912, the death rate for persons of normal working age declined 59 percent. Medical progress accounts for some of this gain, but a large part is the product of professional safety work. Employers are realizing the value of off-the-job safety in their overall safety programs as well. Wellness programs are popping up all over the country. Companies are realizing their operating costs and production schedules are affected almost as much when employees are injured away from work as when they're injured on the job.

Because of this, employees of the 90s are reaping the benefits of being healthier and more protected than ever before. While a variety of new problems have evolved because of a variety of job stresses, more help is available than ever before. New laws are continually being enacted to protect American workers and their families.

All the laws in the world won't help if we don't keep a positive "safe" attitude. Laws can require the automobile manufacturer to install seat belts in their vehicles, and laws can give stiff fines to those who don't use these seat belts, but all these laws won't keep us safe if we as individuals don't do our part by actually taking the time to buckle up. This is only one example. We also need to remember that our children learn from our example. By practicing safety, we teach others around us.

No task is ever so important that it should not be performed safely, even if it takes a little longer.

Safe winter driving tips

That beautiful white blanket of snow may be great for winter sports such as skiing, sledding, etc. But for those who have to get out and drive in it, it can be a whole other story. Here are a few tips for getting to your destination safely....

Allow extra time to get to where you're going. Make sure your tires, battery and fluid levels are in good shape. Have an emergency kit in your trunk in case you get stranded (blanket, flares, flashlight, shovel, jumper cables, etc.).

As you go, keep your wheels turning. You'll steer, corner and stop better. Don't lock your wheels.

Keep a safe distance behind the car in front of you - at least two car lengths for every 10 mph.

Plan ahead - look out for sudden slowing of traffic.

Don't brake in the middle of a curve; brake only when traveling in a straight line.

Squeeze brake - apply gently, then release just before brake locks; repeat, with short pauses in be-



tween. Note: Apply brakes with steady pressure on cars with anti-lock brake systems. The anti-lock system will keep the brakes from locking. The pressure/release method nullifies the anti-lock system on these cars.

Slippery hills can be a challenge even for the most experienced driver. When ascending a hill, don't slow down; build momentum to help you climb. When descending, use low gear, not brakes. If you lose control, try to head for the nearest snow bank.

Watch out for ice patches, especially at intersections, underpasses, shady spots and bridges.

If you get stuck, don't panic. Try to "rock and roll" your way out. Avoid spinning wheels - you'll dig in deeper and turn snow to ice. Shovel out snow in front and behind each wheel (with shovel you packed in your trunk emergency kit). Front wheels should point straight ahead. If that still doesn't work, use sand, road salt, or traction mats just in front of spinning wheels (and behind them, if you're rocking). You can have your passengers get in the back seat of the car for extra traction. Once you get out, don't stop. Keep up your momentum with a light foot on the gas.

FROZEN EMERGENCY BRAKE? Try to rock it free using reverse. Next time, just leave the car in park.

FROZEN DOOR LOCK? Try warming the key with a match. Next time, put a piece of tape over the door lock.

FROZEN WINDSHIELD WIPERS? Carefully free them. When you stop the car, turn them off to protect their motor.

To keep your fuel line from freezing, keep your tank at least half full.

Most important, remember to buckle up!!

Examples of dumb driving

Recently, a group of new graduates (mostly police and highway-patrol officers) of the Northwestern University Traffic Institute were asked what was the dumbest thing they had ever seen a driver do. Below are several of their comments.

- * Men who shave with their portable electric razors; women who put on makeup and try to drive at the same time. One officer even saw a man talk on the phone while shaving and trying to drive at the same time!

- * People who read magazines and newspapers and try to drive at the same time.

- * Those same newspaper-reading people who actually try to steer with their knees.

- * People who follow too closely.

- * Kids who ride with their feet hanging out the window.

- * People who eat, drink or smoke while driving.

- * People who slow down, or sometimes stop, when entering an expressway from a ramp; people who drive very slowly in the left lane of an expressway; people who change drivers (!!) while the car is moving; people who do not yield to school buses or emergency vehicles.

- * Parents who let kids stand on the car floor or on the front seat.

- * People who chase emergency vehicles and follow them right through red lights.

- * Parents who hold infants in their arms; kids who ride in the back of pickup trucks.

- * Drunk drivers.

- * People who never signal before making turns or changing lanes.

- * Inattentive drivers.

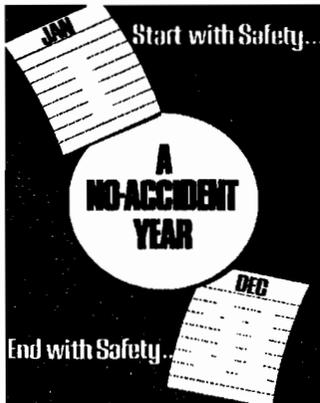
Take safety with you to the slopes

It's that time of the year... Drove of enthusiastic ski buffs head to ski slopes around the country. With them come a new breed of skiers, those who crave more speed and action on the slopes on ultrasteep terrains.

Known as "extreme ski," the high-altitude hills appear almost vertical from the top. They leave the skier breathless at the bottom. This advanced winter sport also caters to the natural environment. The latest ski resorts, such as those in Colorado and Montana, preserve the mountains and trees so that skiers can enjoy the rugged, Europe-like terrain. This "telemark" technique is a new free-heel type of downhill cross-country skiing on rugged terrain. This requires more athletic ability because the boot heel is not attached to the ski. In normal Alpine skiing, the hard plastic boot is locked down. Telemark skis are also slightly shorter than cross-country skis.

Obviously this is not a sport for the beginner. Even for the experienced skier, precautions are necessary. As in any other rough sport, common sense is the best way to avoid injuries. Start off easy and build up your skill level before you try the most difficult terrain. Although risk is always involved in snow skiing, you can control your speed with turns. The more you turn, the slower you go. Always remember to use your head when it comes to safety.





Fire safety

How fires start

Fire is a chemical reaction involving rapid oxidation or burning of a fuel. It needs four elements to occur:

1. Fuel. This can be any combustible material such as solid, liquid or gas. Most solids and liquids become a vapor or gas before they will burn.

2. Oxygen. The air we breathe is about 21 percent oxygen. Fire only needs an atmosphere with at least 16 percent oxygen.

3. Heat. Heat is the energy necessary to increase the temperature of the fuel to a point where sufficient vapors are given off for ignition to occur.

4. Chemical reaction. A chain reaction can occur when the other three elements are present in the proper conditions and proportions. Fire occurs when this rapid oxidation, or burning takes place.

Take any one of these factors away and the fire cannot occur or will be extinguished if it was already burning.

How to prevent fires

Class A - Ordinary combustibles:
* Keep storage and working areas free of trash.

* Place oily rags in covered containers.

Class B - Flammable liquids or gases:

* Don't refuel gasoline powered equipment in a confined space, especially in the presence of an open flame such as a furnace or water heater.

* Don't refuel gasoline powered equipment while it's hot.

* Keep flammable liquids stored in tightly closed, self-closing, spill-proof containers. Pour from storage drums only what you'll need.

* Store flammable liquids away from spark-producing sources.

* Use flammable liquids only in well ventilated areas.

Class C - Electrical equipment:

* Look for old wiring, worn insulation and broken electrical fit-

tings. Report any hazardous condition to your supervisor or get expert help to repair.

* Don't overload wall outlets.

Two outlets should have no more than two plugs.

* Investigate any appliance or electrical equipment that smells strange. Unusual odors can be the first sign of fire.

* Don't misuse fuses. Never install a fuse rated higher than specified for the circuit.

* Utility lights should always have some type of wire guard over them. Heat from an uncovered light bulb can easily ignite ordinary combustibles.

* Prevent motors from overheating by keeping them clean and in good working order. A spark from a rough-running motor can ignite the oil and dust in it.

How fires are classified

Class A - Ordinary combustibles or fibrous material, such as wood, paper, cloth, rubber and some plastics.

Class B - Flammable liquids or gases such as gasoline, kerosene, paint, paint thinners and propane.

Class C - Energized electrical equipment such as appliances, switches, panel boxes and power tools.

Class D - Certain combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, potassium and sodium. These metals burn at high temperatures and give off sufficient oxygen to support combustion. They may react violently with water or other chemicals and must be handled with care.

Fire extinguishers

All ratings are shown on the extinguisher faceplate. Some extinguishers are marked with multiple ratings such as AB, BC and ABC. These extinguishers are capable of putting out more than one class of fire.

Class A and B extinguishers carry a numerical rating that indicates how large a fire an experienced person can safely put out with that extinguisher. For example a 2-A:10-BC rated dry chemical fire extinguisher can put out a fire half the size of a 4-A:20-BC rated one.

Class C extinguishers have only a letter rating to indicate that the extinguishing agent will not conduct electrical current. Class C extinguishers must also carry a Class A or B rating.

Class D extinguishers carry only a letter rating indicating their effectiveness on certain amounts of specific metals.



Extinguisher use

P.....Pull the pin
A.....Aim extinguisher nozzle at the base of the flames.

S.....Squeeze the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright.
S.....Sweep the extinguisher from side to side.

REMEMBER TO LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY IF:

Your path of escape is threatened.
Your extinguisher runs out of agent.
The extinguisher proves to be ineffective.

Riverlands reaches out with community relations programs

Youth Leadership Program

The Riverlands Area Office has joined with the Leadership Council of St. Louis to host the Youth Leadership St. Louis Program. This is a seven month leadership development program for high school juniors from 18 different schools in the St. Louis Metropolitan area. The class is diverse with students representing White, African-American, Asian and Hispanic backgrounds. In the program, students will study community issues including homelessness, poverty, the environment, the economy, racism, the media and health care, to name a few. Students will also spend time on skill building sessions such as leadership, conflict resolution, communications, etc. The program will culminate with a community action project.

At the Melvin Price Locks and Dam and the Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, the students will meet with rangers and discuss the river and navigation system (particularly the impact the river has on our economy and the environmental status of the river and wetlands). This program allows the Corps of Engineers to train and inform future community leaders in the region, providing them with information and inspiration.

Careers About Town

The Riverlands Interpretive Services and Outreach Program has made another stride forward in providing environmental education and career development to the St. Louis educational community by partnering with the St. Louis Public Schools in the "Careers About Town" program.

Careers About Town is held at business and agency sites throughout the St. Louis area to provide seventh grade students a taste of life in real work situations. At the site the students learn about the tasks, tools, traits and educational requirements of jobs.

The program, sponsored by the Career Education Office of the St. Louis Public Schools, provides many opportunities for the Corps of Engineers to participate in outreach programs for students. Currently, the Riverlands Area Office participates in the "Careers on Wheels" program, the "Career Awareness Fair" and the St. Louis Partnership Program, reaching more than 8,000 students in the past year.

Environmental Roundtable

The Riverlands Area Office has recently joined the St. Louis Envi-

ronmental Roundtable and will participate in its upcoming Environmental Summit at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

The Environmental Roundtable was formed through the Center for Science and Technology at UMSL to increase interaction between local environmental and conservation groups and the people within them. The group works on environmental and conservation issues as these issues fit the interests of each group while supporting the individual integrity, character and identity of each member group or organization.

The goal of the Environmental Summit is to produce at 1-3 year strategic plan for improving collaboration and effectiveness of St. Louis area environmental/conservation organizations. More than 60 environmental organizations will be represented at the summit.

Error in ESPRIT

ESPRIT appologizes for listing Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday celebration as being January 16, 1994, in the headline on the first page of the January issue. We all had the '94 mind set still in place when the headline was written. No one noticed the mistake in time.



Voluntary contributions can boost retirement savings

Voluntary contributions are optional payments to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund in addition to regular retirement deductions from your salary. Voluntary contributions may be used to increase the amount of annuity at retirement or as a savings or investment option.

Who may make voluntary contributions

Only employees covered under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) (including CSRS Offset) are eligible to make voluntary contributions. Employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) are not eligible to make voluntary contributions.

To make voluntary contributions, you must not owe a deposit for nondeduction civilian service or a redeposit for refunded retirement deductions. If you ever received a refund of voluntary contributions, no further voluntary contributions are allowed unless you are reemployed after a separation of more than three calendar days and are again employed in a position subject to the CSRS after the refund was paid. An employee who had a voluntary contribution account before transferring to FERS may not continue to make contributions to the account.

How voluntary contributions are made

Payments of voluntary contributions to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) must be made in multiples of \$25 (e.g. \$50, \$75, \$100). Total contributions may not exceed 10 percent of the aggregate basic pay you have received as of the date any contribution is made. Basic pay is the pay you receive for creditable civilian service covered by deductions or deposits. You may not circumvent the 10 percent limit by making contributions

based on anticipated future earnings.

Voluntary contribution payments are made directly to OPM. Payments cannot be made by payroll deductions.

(Note: You must pay all deposits or redeposits for nondeduction service or refunded service prior to making voluntary contributions. You should not send money with the application. OPM does not accept contributions until it approves the application.)

Interest

The variable interest rate for 1994 was 6.25 percent. The interest credited to each voluntary contributions account is compounded annually on Dec. 31. Voluntary contributions begin to earn interest on the date deposited by OPM.

If you take a refund of voluntary contributions, interest accrues to the date OPM authorizes the refund payment.

If you separate and take a refund of voluntary contributions, interest is computed to the date of separation.

If you separate from federal service with entitlement to a deferred annuity and do not request a refund of voluntary contributions, interest continues to accrue on the account to the beginning date of annuity or death, whichever is earlier.

If you separate from federal service to retire on an immediate annuity, interest accrues to the date of separation for retirement. This rule applies regardless of whether you elect to receive a refund or to purchase an additional annuity. Interest is not earned on voluntary contributions made in excess of the 10 percent limit.

Effect of annuity

You may elect to receive a lifetime annuity purchased with vol-

untary contributions in addition to regular retirement annuity.

Any additional annuity purchased by voluntary contributions continues to be paid as long as you remain retired. (Once the annuity begins, the additional annuity purchased by voluntary contributions is not increased by any cost of living adjustments.)

Refund of voluntary contributions

You may withdraw all voluntary contributions with interest at any time before receiving additional annuity payment based on those contributions.

Taxation of voluntary contributions

If you take a refund of voluntary contributions, any accrued interest is taxable in the tax year in which the refund is received. Only the interest portion of the refund is taxable.

If you receive a refund of voluntary contributions before you attain age 59 and a half, the interest portion of the refund is generally subject to an additional 10 percent early distribution tax.

Purchasing additional annuity

The voluntary contributions account is automatically converted to an additional annuity at retirement unless you request a refund of the voluntary contributions by filing SF-2802, Application for Refund of Retirement Deductions, with OPM before final adjudication of the basic annuity.

Additional information can be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

(This article was reprinted with the consent of the Rock Island District *Tower Times*.)



Project Management Course

Hopefully, by the time you read this you will be aware of the Project Management course that will be conducted in February. This is the same Prospect (PM 355) course that has been taught through Huntsville since 1989. Both certificates and CEUs will be given. There still may be spaces available.

Two sessions, back to back, will be presented during the week of February 13. Session I will start at 8 a.m. on Monday and end on Wednesday at about 11:15 a.m. The second, repeat session will start on Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. and convene through February 17 ending at about 3:30 p.m.

This is an occasion for many employees and managers, who didn't have the chance originally, to obtain valuable training very economically.

In addition to the insights on Project Management itself, the sessions present the importance of team building... that is, seeing the functional interdependence we have within the District that is so vital in accomplishing our mission.

A brief demonstration of "Open Plan" software for Project Management is also planned. The PM course and software demonstration will help students better understand the CEFMS system applicability when it (CEFMS) comes to St. Louis District in 1997.

If interested and appropriate, check with your supervisor. Then check with HR-T, Pat Dibello, on space availability. The next-to-last step is submitting your DD1556 Training Request to HR-T. The last step is to come to the Embassy Suites (Laclede's Landing) where it happens.

Civilian health insurance improves

The Office of Personnel Management issued regulations that immediately change and improve the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.

For example, annuitants can now alter their health benefits coverage over the phone during Open Season.

"The new system will allow annuitants to make changes quickly, and that is a step toward making the government work more efficiently through automation," said OPM director Jim King.

The new rules also allow legally separated employees and annuitants covered as family members under a spouse's enrollment coverage to enroll in self-only coverage.

During Desert Storm many civil service employees lost their health benefits enrollment when they were called to active duty by their reserve units. Under the new rules, these individuals will have the option of reinstating their civilian health benefits if they retire from their civilian position while on active duty.

A retiree whose annuity has been waived or suspended for any period of three months or more will now have the option of paying Federal Employees Health Benefits Program premiums directly to their retirement system or the Office of Workers Compensation Programs.

Finally, agencies must counsel employees whose pay is insufficient to cover premium payments of their options about continuing or ending their health benefits coverage.

Changes appeared in the Nov. 2 Federal Register.



Patron saints of lovers:

Valentine's Day, which today is memorialized in thousands of cards both funny, sweet and sentimental, started out as a religious holiday in honor of St. Valentine, or one of the St. Valentines anyway.

In fact, February 14 is the day when the martyrdoms of three different saints named Valentine are celebrated. Although it isn't very romantic, one of the Valentines was a physician beheaded in 269, according to *Saints Preserve Us!* by Sean Kelly and Rosemary Rogers (Random House 1993).

In eight churches around the

world, the complete body of one of the three St. Valentines is claimed to be entombed and venerated. And in one church, the head of one of the three Valentines is said to be preserved and venerated. That adds up to nine Valentines, but who's counting.

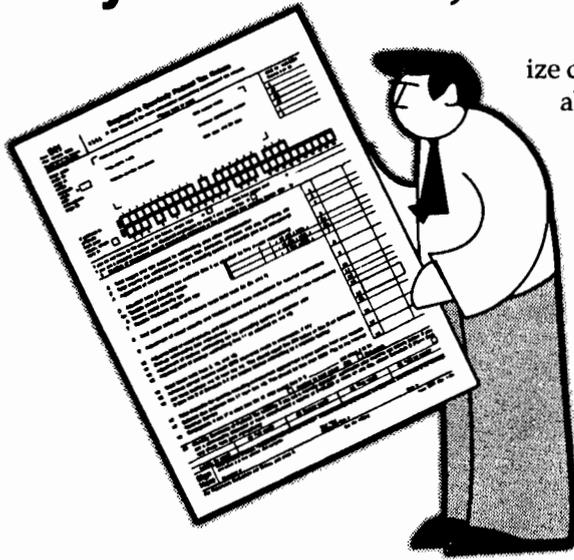
Just why this day came to be associated with courtship is unknown, but Kelly and Rogers suggest it may be because medieval people believed birds chose their mates on this day. Of course, that belief may have somehow stemmed from the mid-February pagan fertility feast of Lupercalia.

(Continued on page 15)



It's tax time again

Choosing correct tax form may save time, money



size deductions and your taxable income is less than \$50,000, you may be able to file one of the shorter tax forms, said IRS officials. Forms 1040EZ and 1040A, "U.S. Individual Income Tax Return," are shorter than Form 1040, offer less opportunity for errors and are easier for the IRS to process, explained officials.

On the other hand, you may be able to save money by itemiz-

ing your deductions on the longer Form 1040.

You may receive the same type of form from the IRS that you filed last year, for example, the 1040EZ.

Choosing the correct federal income tax form when filing may save you time and money, said Internal Revenue Service officials.

For example, if you don't item-

However, IRS officials cautioned, check your tax situation before filing. You may no longer meet the specific requirements for the previous form and must use one of the others.

Just a few of the many things that may change the type of Form 1040 you file include child care expenses, marriage or divorce, stock dividends, interest income and pay raises. Also keep in mind, said IRS officials, if you request a filing extension, you may not use Form 1040EZ.

Check your tax package to determine which form you should use. IRS Publication 910, *Guide to Free Tax Services*, lists all the free tax forms and publications available. IRS Publication 17, *Your Federal Income Tax*, explains the three forms. For a free copy of these publications and others, call toll-free 1-800-829-3676 or write to: IRS, Forms Distribution Center, PO Box 25866, Richmond, VA 23289.

Call IRS for refund information

If you filed your federal tax return and are expecting a refund, give the Internal Revenue Service six weeks before you call to check on its status.

Six weeks applies if you file a paper copy tax return, said IRS officials. The processing time from receipt of an electronic tax return to issuance of a refund check is about three weeks.

Call IRS' Automated Refund System at toll-free 1-800-829-4477 if you haven't received your check at the end of six weeks for a paper return and three weeks for an electronically filed one.

The system operates Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. EST, for touch-tone telephones. Call during normal working hours, Monday through Friday, if you use a rotary telephone. IRS officials said hours may vary depending on where you live.

The information required when you call the system includes your Social Security number, filing status and the whole dollar amount of the refund you expect.

IRS officials said the best day to call the system, which is updated with new tax refund information weekly, is usually Wednesdays.

1994 tax highlights

A number of tax changes took effect in 1994 that may affect your federal tax filing. These include major changes to the Earned Income Tax Credit, Social Security and equivalent Tier 1 railroad retirement benefits that may be taxed at a higher rate and moving expenses.

Other areas affected include charitable contributions, travel expenses, standard mileage rate and business expenses.

IRS Publication 553, *Highlights of 1994 Tax Changes*, provides updated information and how it may affect you.



IRS PRO

Have problems with the Internal Revenue Service you haven't been able to take care of through normal channels?

That's why the IRS Problem Resolution Office was set up, said IRS officials, to help taxpayers with tax problems that just won't go away.

There are some types of problems that the office can't handle, like Freedom of Information Act requests and criminal investigations, as well as appeals of technical determinations in audits. However, said IRS officials, the Problem Resolution offices can suspend agency actions under certain circumstances, look into your refund status and deal with problems that exist between you and an IRS employee. IRS Publication 1546, *How to Use the Problem Resolution Program of the IRS*, explains the program.

Tax return copies

Need a copy of last year's federal tax return, but can't find it? Don't worry. You can get a complete copy or just specific pages of your past federal tax returns. Complete a copy of IRS Form 4506, "Request for Copy of Tax Form," attach a check or money order for \$14 per return and mail to the IRS. You may want to check with the IRS because some parts of the return are free-of-charge. Call toll-free 1-800-829-1040 with specific questions or 1-800-829-3676 for a copy of the form.



A few easy steps to error-free tax returns

Take a little extra time to check your federal tax return before you file it, Internal Revenue Service officials said. These few extra minutes may help you find mistakes that could cost you money and time.

For example, missing attachments or no signature could find the tax package back in your mailbox, returned from IRS because it could not process the return. Mistakes could cost you more money in fines and penalties if you owe IRS money, or they could slow your check if you have a refund coming.

IRS officials said your chances of filing an error-free federal tax return improve if you follow some simple guidelines. These include:

- * Make sure your correct name and Social Security number are on each form and schedule.
- * Make sure the name and Social Security number for each of your dependents' age 1 and older appears on the tax return.
- * Double-check your math.
- * Double-check that you entered correct figures on each line and properly marked each box.
- * Make sure you claim the correct standard deductions.
- * Double-check that you used the right tax from the tax tables.

* Make sure you sign and date the tax return.

* If you file a joint return, make sure both you and your spouse sign and date it.

* If you are claiming any credits, such as for earned income or child care, make sure you have filled out the required forms for those credits.

* Spell out "Internal Revenue Service" on the check or money order, if you owe any taxes.

* Make sure you keep a copy of each form and attachment you mail to IRS.

* Double-check that you attached all Form W-2s, schedules and forms, and check, if required, in the proper order to the tax return.

Make sure you have put enough postage on the tax return, IRS officials caution. Attachments and supporting forms can require additional postage. IRS will return a postage-due envelope to you! Your tax form will be considered late if postmarked after the April 17 deadline, even if you originally mailed it before the deadline.

If you have specific tax questions, check with the local tax office, or call IRS toll-free at 1-800-829-1040.

Free forms, publications

The Internal Revenue Service publishes over 100 different brochures, each on a separate tax topic. Also, IRS offers forms to cover every tax action that you can think of.

IRS Publication 910, *Guide to Free Tax Services*, lists all available publications and forms, as well as tax assistance programs and where to go for help. For a free copy of

the IRS's most popular publication, call toll-free 1-800-829-3676 or write to: IRS, Forms Distribution Center, P.O. Box 25866, Richmond, Virginia 23289.

Some forms are available through the local IRS office in the building. Their forms office is located on the first floor south of the main elevators.



To your health

Stamina, the most important factor



It counts more than brute strength. It scores higher than pure energy. Stamina is the staying power that keeps you going throughout the day, throughout the job.

Some people were born with it, most people were not, and if you're a person who likes people, you

have a head start. Extroverts draw energy from their encounters with other people.

Experts writing in *Fortune* say the secrets to increasing stamina are diet, stomach crunches and attitude.

Diet: One that is two-thirds complex carbohydrates, including grains, fruits and vegetables is recommended. But for energy in the afternoon, the best stamina lunch is three to five ounces of protein, combined with a little carbohydrate.

What about coffee? Researchers at Massachusetts Institute of Technology say it works well for clearing the mind. If it keeps you awake at night, don't drink it in the evening.

Exercise: If you want increased stamina, you will need more exercise. Sports physiologist James Loehr gives highest priority to

stomach crunches. The abdominal muscles support the body's inner structure including your posture and respiratory system, says Loehr. They help you hold your head high and stride with confidence. Next in importance is interval training such as running or bicycling at various speeds.

Loehr notes that a tennis star lasts only a few years, but in our work, we have to continue for 30 or 40 years. So being in shape is even more important for the working person.

Attitude: People with high stamina are generally optimists. They don't surrender to self-doubt. Nothing energizes an individual more than clear goals and a grand purpose. Nothing demoralizes more than confusion and lack of confidence.

Boosting metabolic rate:

The key to permanent weight loss

New medical research shows that gaining weight is not an inevitable part of getting older. Your genes do not dictate that you will slowly begin to gain weight during middle age.

Rather, your metabolic rate is determined mainly by your body's ratio of fat and muscle. This is a ratio you can change.

Studies done by the University of Colorado and at Vanderbilt University show that metabolism (the rate at which the body burns calories for energy) can definitely be increased. The result: Permanent weight loss, a more slender body.

How do you teach your body to burn more calories? You put more

physical activity into your life. If you burn 20 fewer calories per day, you gain two pounds per year, or 20 pounds in 10 years. (Walk five minutes, and you burn up 20 calories.)

Dr. George Blackburn, director of the Center for the Study of Nutrition and Medicine at Boston's New England Deaconess Hospital, suggests that you inconvenience yourself. Walk whenever you can. Use the stairs instead of the elevator, stand instead of sitting. Figet and pace. Dr. Blackburn works toward standing and/or being active for a total of six hours each day.

Research also shows that, after the high-energy burn you get from

exercising, your metabolic rate falls back to its previous level within 24 hours. Exercise is not a short-term cure, but works over the long term.

Diet may be less important than physical activity, but one basic truth applies: Take in more calories than you burn at your present metabolic rate, and you will gain weight.

A high-fat daily muffin, say experts writing in *Forbes*, adds 5 1/2 pounds a year to your frame (55 pounds in 10 years).

Tiny excesses lead to overweight, but burning just a little more energy each day will result in weighing fewer pounds next year.



Retiree Review

By the Retiree Correspondent

Twenty-one retirees braved the elements to attend the January 19 luncheon. The weather looked very unfavorable, but everyone present made it safely.

We had one visitor, Jane Johson who was a guest of Steve Williams. We hope to see you again, Jane. Steve was our Senior Retiree, retiring in 1973.

We did not have a District representative present. We did hear there is quite a shuffling of personnel in the District. We hope to have a representative present in February, as we are still quite interested in the District.

Our condolences are extended to the families of Fred O. Henn, who passed away within the last month, and Lloyd Rhymes, who passed away in November in Mountain Home, Arkansas. Kate Stiles had talked to Lloyd's daughter, who reported his death to her. Lloyd was 92 and had been in a nursing home for some time. His wife, Blanche, is in a nursing home in Mountain Home suffering from alzheimers disease.

Helen Kavanaugh became a great-grandmother on December 28 - a great-grandson, Anthony Joseph. A.J. for short. Congratulations, Helen. She is quite a proud grandmother and great-grandmother. I've seen

Judy and her daughter grow up. Doesn't seem possible that little Judy is a grandmother!

Elmer Huizenga was present - solo. But it seems Estelle is recovering nicely - walking with only a cane now. The doctor says she will be dancing and playing golf in the foreseeable future.

Jane Denzel was present with her ever lovin' hubby, Charlie. Glad to have you, Jane. See you often, we hope.

Roger and Linda Cuddeback were also present. Hope it again becomes a habit. We miss you when you're not there.

We hope many of the recent retirees will join us. You don't know what your missing. Come out and see. Don't let the weather keep you away.

Lee Breece, Kate Stiles and Paul Trauth were the lucky ones in the Pot-O-Gold. Come on, join the fun. The more the merrier.

Elmer Huizenga and Pete Puricelli were our story tellers this month. No one could top Elmer's, so no one else tried.

Come out and join us for our February Luncheon on the third Thursday, February 16, the Salad Bowl, about 11 o'clock, for all these good things: food, friendship and chit chat. See you then.

Watch that rented celluar phone

Many car rental and hotel counters are offering to rent customers a portable cellular phone. It's a convenience that can turn into a big liability if the phone is lost or stolen. The phone rented at Hertz or the Ritz Carlton, for example, can cost \$500 to \$800 to replace. Prices are in the contract, but many travelers don't realize they are responsible for the full replacement value.

Low-fat diet saves money

Eating a low-fat diet is good for your heart, but it's also good for your pocketbook. A recent study by the Department of Nutrition at Pennsylvania State University shows that eating more vegetables, fruit and cereal and pasta (and less meat) will save \$3 per day for a family of four. That's a saving of \$1,095 per year.

Love (cont.)

If you don't like these Valentine origins, you might rather think of the less-known Saint Dwyn, the patroness of lovers (and sick animals).

Dwyn was a Welsh maiden of the fifth century who was inclined to romance. She was smitten with a young man named Maelon. Alas, they had a fight, and he must have demanded his letter jacket back because Dwyn was heartbroken and asked of heaven why this should happen to her. She wanted help.

In answer to her plea, an angel appeared and bid her drink a potion. Unfortunately, this potion did nothing for Maelon's affections, but it did turn him

into stone. This was not the result Dwyn hoped for, so she asked for and was granted three wishes.

First, Dwyn asked that Maelon be restored to life. Second, she asked that all true lovers who invoke her name be united with their love or, failing that, get over it quickly. Third, she wished that the desire to marry be taken from her and that she would never marry.

All those wishes were granted. She became a nun and the abbess of a convent at Llanddwyn in Wales. There a miraculous spring is said to cure sick animals and help people tell the future.



Nearly All 21,000 Defenders Die Trying

Strategic Rock Falls Hard

It was a barren volcanic island.

During a time of peace, there would be nothing on the island that anyone could logically want.

But war makes its own logic, and American planners coveted the island of Iwo Jima. The reason was its location. Iwo Jima was 660 miles from Tokyo. B-29 bombers flying from the Mariana Islands had to detour around the island with its two airfields, adding miles to the already long missions. The island's defenders warned authorities in Japan of the B-29 raids on the Japanese main islands. Further, if the island was in American hands, many bombers crippled by enemy action or mechanical failures would have a place to land. Finally, the island's airfields would allow American fighters to escort the massive bombers on their missions over Japan.



These reasons conspired to force one of the bloodiest battles of World War II for an island 5½ miles long and 2½ wide.

Authorities planned the assault for Feb. 19, 1945, but softening up of the island's defenses began in November 1944. U.S. Navy ships shelled Iwo, and Army Air Force bombers unloaded on the island for 74 straight days.

It wasn't enough. The 21,000 Japanese defenders had dug in deep. They constructed more than 600 pillboxes and gun positions and connected them with a labyrinth of caves.

Elements of the 4th and 5th Marine Corps divisions scrambled over the volcanic sands. Tanks and wheeled vehicles couldn't find traction on the beaches, but the initial landings met with little resistance. Then, with seven U.S. battalions on the beach, the Japanese unleashed deadly fire. By nightfall Feb. 19, there were 566 Marines dead and 1,854

wounded.

The 550-foot-high Mount Suribachi dominated the island. Plans called for the 28th Marine Regiment to take it. For three days the Marines battled up the slope, taking out enemy positions with hand grenades, flamethrowers and demolition charges. At 10 a.m. Feb. 23 the Marines reached the top and planted a small American flag. Later that day, other Marines took a larger flag to the summit; five Marines and a Navy corpsman raised it on a piece of Japanese pipe. Associated Press' Joe Rosenthal photographed that flag raising, one of the most famous images from World War II.

But the flag raising was not the end of the battle. It wasn't until March 9 that Marines finally broke through the main Japanese line of defense, and it was March 16 before the Marines declared the island secure. Nearly all the 21,000 Japanese defenders were killed.

A total of 6,821 Americans died securing the barren rock.

Their sacrifices were not in vain. Even before the battle was over, a crippled B-29 made an emergency landing on the island. Through the end of the war 2,400

bombers, with more than 24,000 men, made emergency landings on Iwo

Jima.

In the cruel

arithmetic of

war, Iwo Jima

proved its worth.

Fleet Admiral

Chester W. Nimitz said it best: On Iwo Jima, "Uncommon valor was a common virtue."

