

ST. LOUIS ARMY ENGINEER DIST
ESPRI

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GATEWAY TO EXCELLENCE

November 1999

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EcoMeet: A legacy in the making

By Pam Doty, Park Ranger

EcoMeet: A legacy in the making or at least it seems that way at one of the District's projects. The EcoMeet is an interpretive outreach competition that the Corps of Engineers started back in the 1970's. Lake Shelbyville held its first EcoMeet in 1977 and it is still going strong to this day.



Students identify wetland plants during an EcoMeet at the lake.

The first EcoMeet was held in the Pittsburgh District. It was such a success that the idea spread rapidly across the country. Park Ranger Al Lookofsky was involved in the EcoMeet that was held in the Nashville District in the spring of 1977.

When Ranger Lookofsky transferred to the St. Louis District in the summer of 1977, he had firsthand knowledge of how successful the EcoMeet was and he was willing to coordinate the first EcoMeet held at Lake Shelbyville. The EcoMeet has been held for 23 years at Lake Shelbyville and has not drastically changed since it started.

Schools throughout Central Illinois compete in the EcoMeet that is held on the first Thursday in October. Schools can compete in three different age categories: Nature Sleuth (Grades 5 & 6), Junior Varsity (Grades 7 & 8), and Varsity (Grades 9 - 12). Participating schools send a team with a coach, team captain, and three other team members. A few coaches have competed in all 23 Lake Shelbyville EcoMeets. Coaches and team members take this event very seriously. A coveted acorn plaque award is displayed in a school's trophy case beside sports trophies.

(Continued on page 6)



Commander's Perspective



Col. Michael R. Morrow

"Thanksgiving... gives us a reason to reflect on the diversity that makes this Nation of ours great."

Cold temperatures, frost on the windshield, windy, blustery days... It must be November. This is the month we celebrate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is normally a time when families and friends come together to give thanks for the harvest of the year. Thanksgiving also gives us a reason to reflect on the diversity that makes this Nation of ours great.

I have been fortunate this year; I was able to celebrate two Thanksgivings. The first Thanksgiving was celebrated on October the 10th with my son and his fiancée's family in Morehead, Kentucky. My son is engaged to a Canadian girl and the Canadians celebrate their Thanksgiving on October 11th, Columbus Day. Her parents made the long drive down to Kentucky to be with us and share their holiday. We had turkey, potatoes, squash with Canadian maple syrup (not too bad) and all the traditional fixings. We also had stimulating conversation. Did you know that Canada is the United States' largest trading partner? Did you know that the border between Canada and the United States is the longest, unguarded border in the world? Did you know that they are scraping frost off their windshields in October? The temperature in Morehead was very warm and my Canadian friends were amazed at how they had to shed layers of clothing the further south they came. We had a wonderful Thanksgiving and visit. Our friends enjoyed their visit with their daughter, and my son was happy because he kept the turkey leftovers.

We will celebrate our traditional Thanksgiving this November in the United States with family and friends. I will be thankful for many things this year, one of which will be the Canadian Thanksgiving we celebrated in the mountains of Kentucky with distant family and friends.



US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District

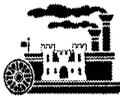
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News Briefs

Mark Twain Lake:

EE Day

The Eighth Annual Environmental Education Day (EE Day) was held on Friday, Sept 24 at the John F. Spalding Recreation Area. Exhibitors, representing 25 businesses, government agencies, and special interest groups, participated in EE Day this year. Over 1100 students, teachers, and parents from 17 different schools visited the presentations.

We would like to give special thanks to all the Corps employees from the District Regulatory Branch, and the Mark Twain Lake Project Office who made presentations and helped set up for the event.



EE Conference

Park Rangers Mary Anne Heitmeyer and Steve Wagner will attend the Fourth Annual Conference on Environmental Education. At the conference, they will present an educational program for teachers and peers that introduces the teachers to the role that the Corps plays in hydropower production while teaching the students and teachers the principles of energy and power.

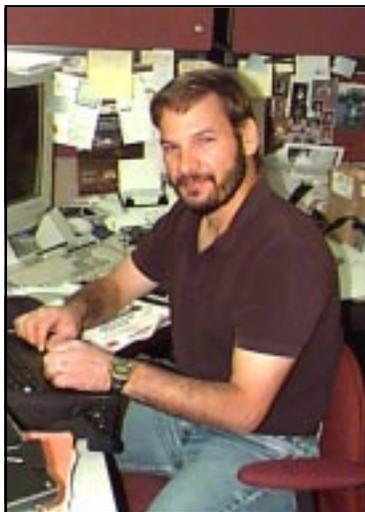
Wappapello Lake:

Lights auto tour

The Corps and the Wappapello Lake Lions Club will work together again this holiday season to host the 7th Annual Festival of Lights Christmas Auto Tour from November 26 through December 25 at the Redman Creek West Campground. This year the tour will be open Friday through Sunday from November 26 to December 12 and nightly from December 17 through December 25, from dusk until 10 p.m.



Jolly ol' Santa himself and others will make special appearances
(Continued on page 4)



St. Louis District Employee of the Month

The Employee of the Month for November is Tom Ruf, Structural/Architectural Section, Design Branch.

Tom's innovative approach to the problem of monitoring stress in the Mel Price miter gate diagonals during repairs in August enhanced the capabilities of the District and the Corps in the area of structural instrumentation. His foresight and expertise in the use of monitoring equipment allowed the diagonal stressing operation to proceed faster and more accurately than in the past when using commercial testing laboratories. The load cells Tom installed will also allow him to monitor loads on the gate over time from the District Office, providing early warning of any increase in load prior to physical damage to the gate.

Congratulations to Tom Ruf, the Employee of the Month for November.



News Briefs (cont.)

to provide candy canes and holiday spirit as they did for the approximately 14,800 people who attended last year.

Country Xmas

As part of the Christmas celebration at Wappapello Lake, the Bill Emerson Memorial Visitor Center will be used as an information center as part of the Wappapello community's Old Time Country Christmas Event. The event kicks off Friday night, November 26 and continues through Saturday November 27 with tours of the lake.

Carlyle Lake:

Christmas town

On Friday evening, December 3, the staff at Carlyle Lake will host the celebration of Christmas Town USA at the Visitor Center. This annual event is Carlyle's kick off for the 1999 Christmas holidays. Local talent and the crowning of Miss Christmas Town will make it an enjoyable evening. On Saturday the Christmas Town parade will proceed through Carlyle for the enjoyment of kids of all ages.

Pheasant hunt

Eldon Hazlet State Park will host a youth hunt for pheasant on Sunday, November 7, beginning at 8 a.m. Youths 10 through 16, with the supervision of an adult, may hunt pheasants in the park.

All pheasant hunters at Hazlet State Park must use non-toxic shot and only #3 Steel, #4 Bismuth, #5 Tungsten or smaller will be allowed. All birds must be checked in and

tagged at the Pheasant Office in the lower level of the Administration Office.

Young Hunters Days will be held on Sunday, November 28 and Sunday, December 26, starting at 8 a.m. Youths 10 through 16 may hunt free with a paying adult. An Illinois hunting license, proof of a hunter safety class and a F.O.I.D. card are needed for hunting.

Anniversary

The Federal Correctional Institution of Greenville, Illinois, celebrated their 5th anniversary on October 15th. In 1994, Carlyle Lake and the Greenville Workcamp began implementation of a Memorandum of Agreement to use federal inmates to do unfunded work on federal property. The inmates started work on the project March 16, 1998. It has been very successful for the inmates, workcamp and especially for the project. The program recently won a Hammer Award.

Rend Lake:

Safety teacher



Park Ranger Dawn Kovarik, from Rend Lake, who holds a certification in Small Craft Handling from the IDNR, taught water safety and basic canoeing techniques to women at the three-day Illinois Department of Natural Resources program "Becoming an Outdoor Woman."

Lake Shelbyville:

Cruitt top sailor

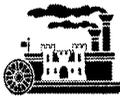
Petty Officer First Class Leanne J. Cruitt has been selected Sailor of the Quarter at the Naval Reserve Center, Decatur, Illinois. Leanne, a park ranger at Lake Shelbyville, was selected for superb performance during additional annual training with Joint Interagency Task Force-East, Key West, Florida.

Leanne was personally requested by the Logistics Director to work at JIATF-East, assisting with the coordination of logistics and supply transfer resulting from the stand-down in Panama. During this same quarter, Cruitt also acted as training liaison with Naval Surface Warfare Center in Crane, Indiana. She scheduled numerous training sessions at Crane for Unit personnel.

Petty Officer Cruitt is a unit Physical Readiness Coordinator and a member of the Color Guard. She was selected as Naval Reserve USS FRANK CABLE (AS 40) Detachment E Sailor of the Quarter for the third quarter of 1999.

Test sentence

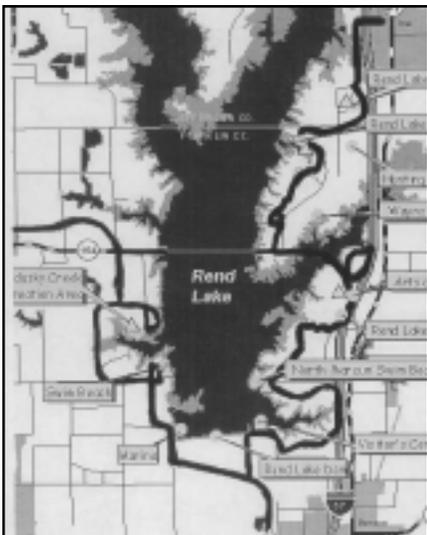
For one week, the consultant held meetings with small groups of employees on a daily basis with the object of getting all their concerns and misgivings on the table.



Rend Lake awarded major grant for bike trail development

By Rend Lake Park Ranger
Maureen Curran

Rend Lake has received a \$1.35 million Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program grant to develop portions of the planned 33 mile Rend Lake Bike Trail system. A total of \$1,080,000 will be provided to the Corps from the ITEP monies over a three year period beginning in FY 2000. The remaining \$270,000 is a sponsor match that will include in-kind services provided by the Corps.



The recently awarded grant money will be used to design, engineer and construct 8 miles of the trail and to do a preliminary engineering study on an additional 4.5 miles of trail that includes a lake crossing. These segments of trail will be added to the 6 miles of the of the Rend Lake Bike Trail currently under development from a previous Illinois Bike Path Grant.

Nearly one half of the network of trails that will comprise the planned 33 mile Rend Lake Bike Trail system have now been funded through grants and matching funds.

A portion of the trail being developed with the Illinois Transportation Enhancement funds will connect the North and South Sandusky campgrounds with the South Sandusky beach and the Dam West picnic area.

On the east side of the lake, an engineering study will be done on the route that will take the bike trail from the North Marcum Beach to the South Marcum Campground and the Rend Lake Visitor Center. Another portion of the trail to be developed with the grant money is a route that will take bicyclists from the Visitor Center along a scenic route along the Big Muddy River below the lake.

The Rend Lake ITEP grant may represent the first time the Corps has been awarded funds from the federal transportation enhancement program for bike trail development. Previous cycles of the program have excluded federal agencies from participation.

Rend Lake is thrilled to be part of this project that has been supported by many organizations and individuals including the Southern Illinois Bike Trails Coalition, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Rend Lake Conservancy District, the Illinois Department of Transportation, Benton/West City Economic Development Corporation, Rend lake College, the National Park Service and the cities of Benton, West City and Sesser.

The Office of Economic and Regional Development at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale was pivotal in starting the planning process that led to the development of the Rend Lake Bicycle Plan.

Rend Lake offers hunting for people with disabilities

Rend Lake offers a unique hunting opportunity for persons with disabilities to return to the field to hunt geese. An in-ground goose pit is available for reservation. The goose pit features a gradually sloping sidewalk for easy access and a "roll top" for maximum camouflage. Construction was made possible by funding provided by the Big Muddy Chapter of Waterfowl USA. Hunters who wish to hunt from the pit must possess a P2 or P2A disability card issued by the Illinois Secretary of State.

Hunters must be accompanied by at least one person to assist them in their hunt. Assistants who are properly licensed by the state may also hunt. In no case shall more than five persons occupy the pit and surrounding hunting area.



Prospective hunters must complete an application form available from the Rend Lake Project Office. Applications have been accepted since October 18. Only one hunting date will be assigned per application and each applicant will be limited to three hunting days per month. If multiple applications are received for the same date, an in-house lot-

(Continued on page 12)



EcoMeet (cont.)

There are three different events for each age category. The schools are aware of what the events are before they register. Events are based primarily on environmental topics such as conservation, preservation, and several different types of wildlife. Topics such as water safety and orienteering have also been topics for events.

Only three members of the team can compete in any given event. The team captain has to compete in all three events. One team member serves as an alternate for each event. Each team member who is competing in the event completes a test. Corps of Engineers personnel and students from Lake Land Community College and Eastern Illinois University grade tests and monitor events.

After each event, the teams receive a raw score and an event placing. The raw score is calculated by adding team members' test scores together. The team with the highest raw score receives a first place for that event. The next highest raw score receives a second place and this continues. This system of scoring works well in keeping the competition close throughout the EcoMeet.

After all three events are completed, placings from each event are added up to determine the winners. If a tie occurs individual event placings are taken into consideration. If a team places higher than the other team in an event then they are ranked higher. If a tie still exists, then raw scores from all tests are added to see who scored

the highest. If there is still a tie, team captains are asked tie-breaking questions. In the 23 years that the EcoMeet has been held at Lake Shelbyville, tiebreaker questions have only been used twice. Ironically, one of the teams that competed in the first tiebreaker about 15 years ago also competed in the second one this past October.

The top five teams in each age category receive a plaque in the shape of an acorn that varies in size depending on what place the team receives. The Mattoon Exchange Club donates the plaques. It would be pretty impressive for a school to win first place in all three age categories in the same year. That outstanding accomplishment has happened twice at Lake Shelbyville.

A St. Louis District EcoMeet was started in 1978. The top three teams from each project in the District competed against each other. The District held EcoMeets for six years.

The Lake Shelbyville EcoMeet is held outdoors at Camp Camfield Environmental Study Area, so the weather plays a major role in determining if the event is held on the scheduled date. If the competition is cancelled due to bad weather, a rain date is scheduled, but surprisingly the EcoMeet at Lake Shelbyville has only had to be rescheduled once.

By 1995, the Lake Shelbyville EcoMeet had become so popular that it had outgrown the project's means. There were more than 25 teams competing in each age category. The Corps of Engineers partnered with Douglas-Hart Nature Center in nearby Mattoon, Illinois, to conduct the Nature Sleuth competition. This partnership has proven to be very successful. The Junior Varsity and Varsity

competitions are still held at Lake Shelbyville.

Some people have asked if it is justified to coordinate such an elaborate event just to contact a few students from each school. This competition affects more than just the team members that compete in it. Several coaches use the study materials that are provided for the EcoMeet in their teaching curriculum, so a large number of students are involved in an indirect way. Many coaches test students on the current year's subjects and pick the top students for their team. The EcoMeet revolutionizes effectiveness by reaching out to students who may be willing to pursue a career in math or science. Several coaches once participated in prior EcoMeets as students. Others have mentioned students who have pursued science careers.

The personnel at Lake Shelbyville pull together every year to ensure that this competition is a success, and different park rangers have coordinated the Lake Shelbyville EcoMeet over the years. It is a lot of hard work, but very well worth the effort.

When this competition first started, the Pittsburgh District coordinator commented that if an EcoMeet was coordinated well it could possibly last as many as 10 years. That says something for the Lake Shelbyville EcoMeet, which has been going strong for 23 years and hopefully will continue for many more.



Jule Bartels



New chief of Information Management

nationwide. As developer of the St. Louis District Water Control Data System and contributor to other districts' automated information systems, his expertise is recognized Corps-wide. He recently developed the Next Generation Radar (NEXRAD) Data Collection System for Corps-wide use.

As a nationally recognized expert in automation systems technology, Jule has chaired and participated on numerous committees at USACE level, at the Hydrologic Engineering Center (HEC), the Topographic Engineering Center (TEC), the Cold Regions Research Engineering Lab (CRREL), MVD, and Waterways Experiment Station (WES). Responsibilities involved the use of a hydrometeorological data satellite, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration satellite, and the national Weather Service Satellite for other hydromet data, coordinating with the US Geological Survey Office of Hydrology and HEC, and interfacing with other Districts, Divisions, Air Force and outside-Corps Army personnel.

Jule and his wife Dianna (who he met here in the District), live in Arnold, Mo. with their children Alyssa, six and Colin, one year. Say hi to him in the halls. He is the bearded guy that is always carrying a coffee mug. He honestly wants your thoughts, complaints, and suggestions.

By Terrie Hatfield, HR

Congratulations to Jule D.

Bartels, the new Chief, Information Management Office. Jule is looking forward to combining his knowledge and skills with those of IM to better serve the District and Corps missions. His first priority is to provide the best customer service possible and to provide users with a customer originated service, responsive to the division/field office needs. Additional goals include assuring that the St. Louis District has the best web site in the Corps and bringing better video teleconferencing to the District. Jule's long-term mission is to help IM to become a world class team.

Jule brings a wealth of information technology to the IMO. He obtained his BS in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois and his MS in Civil Engineering at Washington University where he

served as a Research Associate for nine years and occasionally teaches Artificial Intelligence and Structural Engineering. At Wash U, he managed the first civil engineering microcomputer aided design and education laboratory in the world. As a Structural Engineer in the private sector, he created the first microcomputer facilities for Sargent & Lundy, the largest Architectural Engineering firm in the world.

As the District's Water Control Data Manager, Jule directed and administered all phases of the District's Water Control Information System, including communications, automation, information dissemination, and all associated activities and services in support of the navigation and flood control missions. He insured that the information cycle of data collection, processing, storage and disposal was effectively managed and integrated throughout the Water Control Community, including support to offices



Trinity Site

The beginning of the atomic age



Jim stands at ground zero of the first atomic blast.

By Jim Luebbert, ED-P

The Trinity Site in New Mexico could be called the mother of all historic military sites. The world's first atomic bomb blast, the culmination of the 'Manhattan Project,' a Corps of Engineers project by the way, occurred at the Trinity Site on July 16, 1945. The success of this first atomic bomb blast was due to research and development at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

I, as a historian working for the Ordnance and Technical Services Branch in Engineering Division, recently completed a World War II Los Alamos history project. My boss, Mike Dace, assigns us the most fascinating projects.

I visited Los Alamos three times during the past year to re-

search and inspect this Formerly Used Defense Site. As a representative of the Corps of Engineers, my job is to accurately locate the old demolition ranges and identify unexploded ordnance. Environmental concerns are pressing issues. A project manager and explosive technician run the site visit. I'm responsible for the research.

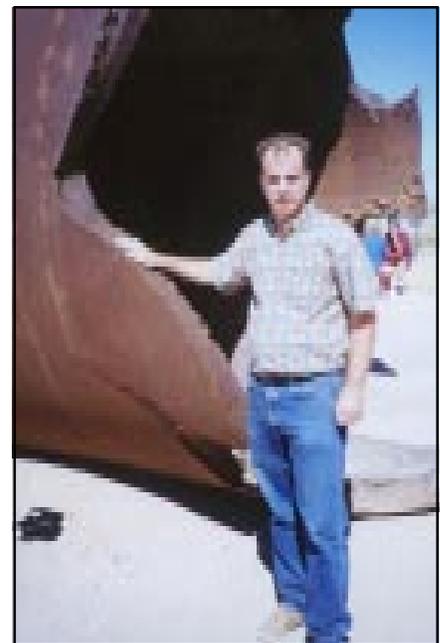
While on assignment at Los Alamos, I learned about the Trinity Site, located in a remote New Mexico desert about 220 miles south of Los Alamos. The Trinity Site is open to the public only twice a year: the first Saturday in April and the first Saturday in October. I took annual leave and visited the Trinity Site on Saturday, this past October 2.

The Trinity Site is very job related and just rich with history. I took lots of pictures, including some of "Ground Zero." A few years ago I met retired general Paul Tibbets, who piloted the Enola Gay, the B-29 bomber, over Hiroshima, Japan, for the first atom bomb attack on August 6, 1945. Among my many historic collectibles, I rate the autographed photo of General Tibbets as my favorite.

It's roughly 1,000 miles from here to Albuquerque, where I spent the night before visiting the site. I spent the historic weekend with history-buff friends from California. Five Los Angeles buddies arrived on Friday, October 1, and we spent Friday afternoon at the National Atomic Museum at Kirtland Air Force Base near Albuquerque. Most of the displays focus on the Manhattan Project. On Saturday

morning we drove together to the Trinity Site. The weather was perfect for driving the nearly 100 miles (one way) and for picture taking. We had a terrific time!

I've always been a history buff. In high school I took pleasure in memorizing places and dates, especially as pertained to military history. I was later stationed in Germany with the Army for six years and graduated from the University of Missouri-St. Louis with a BA in history in 1987. I'm also a Desert Storm veteran. I am pleased to take my personal hobby and military experience and put it to good use with the Corps of Engineers. I've made major contributions to the success of our program. I get great satisfaction knowing I play a personal role in helping clean up the environment. I am serving in my 24th year of military service, currently with the Air Force Reserves.



What's left of The Jumbo - cylinder originally meant to house the bomb's plutonium, but not used.



Least Tern nesting to return to St. Louis

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the St. Louis Audubon Society Newsletter, Tale Feathers, Volume 66, Number 4, August 1999, and is reprinted with the approval of the St. Louis Audubon Society.

By John Solodar

Of the three Least Tern populations in the United States only our local population, the interior Least Tern, is listed as endangered. This population may soon be on the rebound, however, as the Army Corps of Engineers, the St. Louis Audubon, and biologists collaborate to re-establish appropriate nesting habitat at Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area (REDA).

The Mississippi River and its tributaries once hosted active nesting colonies of interior Least Terns. Though hunting decreased population size from 1870 to early 1900, bird numbers recently plummeted with the completion of several lock and dam systems on the Mississippi River and its tributaries. For example, since the construction of Lock and Dam #26 at Alton, IL, successful Least Tern nesting has not been reported locally.

To nest and raise young, interior Least Terns depend on vegetation-free sand and gravel bars. Island habitat further increases nesting success by preventing predators such as coyotes and raccoons from feasting on tern eggs and chicks.

In the past, natural fluctuations in river levels created and maintained appropriate least tern nesting habitat. Springtime floods scoured river bars and islands, ridding them of vegetation. Summertime droughts kept the bars and islands above water, allowing chicks time to fledge. By lessening both spring floods and summer droughts, lock and

dam systems make continuous barge traffic possible; a repercussion of this success, however, is the elimination of the Least Tern nesting habitat.

Three years ago, local birders witnessed Least Terns attempting to nest on the Mississippi River. Their nests were washed away when water levels were raised to accommodate summer barge traffic. Though REDA biologists responded to birders' observations with a habitat re-establishment proposal, budget cuts at the Army Corps of Engineers prevented expedient action. This spring the Corps, the St. Louis Audubon Society and REDA reopened plans for habitat reestablishment.



As a collaborator, St. Louis Audubon offers to contribute money and, most importantly, to provide member-volunteers for nest and predation monitoring.

This collaborative action is timely; Audubon birders spotted least terns trying to nest on a temporary island (it was recently flooded to allow for barge traffic) in Ellis Bay in July. Nesting attempts by least terns indicate the terns are still flying over the area and are interested in nesting here. Habitat re-es-

tablishment may start as early as Fall 1999 with hope of attracting interior least terns by Spring 2000. At present, REDA biologists favor Ellis Island isolation (proposal #2, see below).

The four proposals designed by REDA biologists for the establishment of least tern habitat include:

1. Constructing an island on Ellis Bay made of an outer ring of stabilizing rock with an inner area of sand. A key impediment to this idea is the cost, which is estimated at \$200,000. Much of this cost, perhaps \$100,000, is involved in dredging a channel through which to bring barge with the rock and sand for the island. The Corps also worries about boaters tying up at the island and disturbing the birds.

2. Isolating the eastern end of Ellis Island, stripping off the vegetation, and bringing in sand to make a beach. If the land chosen is high enough, the sandy portion could be above the summer pool level and thus not be subjected to the flooding. Flooding has ruined previous nesting attempts at this site.

3. Covering rooftops of some flat buildings at Riverlands with sand to generate a nesting area. Atlantic coast populations of least terns are using flat rooftops very successfully, especially comparing results of rooftop nesting with nearby ground nesting. Two problems with rooftop nesting at REDA are the distance of the buildings from the water and the question of whether or not the roofs are strong enough to accommodate a layer of sand as well as winter ice and snow.

4. Constructing a floating barge in Ellis Bay and covering it with sand. It could be anchored to keep it in place, yet allowed to float with the water level to avoid nest flooding.



Ideas wanted



Army Ideas For Excellence Program

Even though our work days may proceed smoothly on a day-to-day basis, things can always be improved. And even when all is well, one can usually spot a way to improve something without looking hard. One of the simplest ways for you to get your winning ideas implemented or to improve your work environment is through the often overlooked Suggestion Program.

Making things better is what the District's Suggestion Program is all about. It's set up to review and process new ideas on how to cut the District's operating costs, save materials, and improve quality and services for everyone.

The Army Ideas for Excellence Program (AIEP), better known as the Suggestion Program, is designed to provide an opportunity for employees to take part voluntarily in the improvement of management within the Government. It provides

you the opportunity to be rewarded, maybe monetarily, for a suggestion that saves time or money. And, it gives you an opportunity to be a part of the solution. All too often work processes can become so routine that we fail to review them objectively to improve efficiency. The Suggestion Program gives you a chance to step back and look at the work processes in which you are involved, and submit your ideas for improvement.

What is an eligible suggestion? To be accepted in the AIEP, an idea must satisfy the following conditions:

- a. Be submitted in writing on DA 1045, Aug 90, to RM-M.
- b. Benefit the District, Army, or other U.S. Government activity.
- c. Present a problem or situation, propose a solution with sufficient rationale to support the requested new procedure, and provide benefits to be derived when implemented. (Remember...you want to "sell" your idea. The more you can explain about how your solution benefits the District, the better chance your idea has of being adopted.)

Each suggestion is sent to the appropriate division or office chief

for evaluation. If a suggestion is not approved, the Deputy Commander reviews the suggestion to determine why not. The suggester can also submit for reconsideration within 60 days following certain guidelines. Suggesters remain anonymous throughout the process!

Colonel Morrow fully supports the AIEP and encourages you to send in your ideas today. In fact, he'd like to begin providing some nonmonetary incentives to solicit your ideas, such as opportunities to shadow him or some other District manager or employee for a day. We'll provide details on that later.

To help get the creative juices flowing, here are some examples of ideas that would be accepted into the program:

- * Ideas showing how to accomplish a job better, faster, more efficiently, or less expensively.
- * Ideas to simplify or improve operations, services, support, procedures, or quality.
- * Ideas to conserve materials, time, money, or manpower.
- * Ideas to substantially reduce or eliminate the likelihood of serious accidents.
- * Ideas to avoid wasted time or eliminate duplication of effort.
- * Ideas that offer an alternative procedure to a regulatory requirement that impairs efficiency, slows down progress, or keeps you from doing your job faster and more efficiently.

So, what are you waiting for? Let's get those ideas rolling! Remember-YOUR ideas CAN make a difference. If you need more information on the AIEP, check out DR 5-2-17 (which is now on the District's Home Page) or call/send off an e-mail to Debby Trimble, 331-8072.



Environmental programs added to Water control web site

By John Boeckmann

The Water Control Management Office has added two new features to its web site documenting Environmental Pool Management (EPM) and the efforts to improve Fish Spawn at the St. Louis District lake projects. Both environmental efforts are accomplished in cooperation with other federal and state agencies.



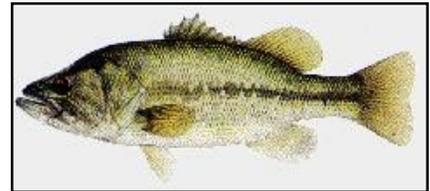
Water Control's web site can be accessed directly from the St. Louis District home page by clicking on "Water Control" at the left side of the screen. The site consists mainly of the district's gage data and river and reservoir reports.

Web users can access the new features by clicking on the web graphics like the two shown here.

The Fish Spawn page shows how effectively the reservoirs in the St. Louis District have been regulated throughout the spring fish spawns in recent years. As stated on the web page, "in cooperation with other responsible agencies, the Corps seeks to maintain steady pool elevations which enhance the quality of spawning." Graphs of lake elevations during spring fish spawns are available on the web site for Mark Twain Lake, Carlyle Lake, and Lake Shelbyville.

At the Environmental Pool Management site, visitors may look up summer pool levels at the locks and dams in the St. Louis District as they are drawn down to promote wetland vegetation. The St. Louis District developed this program in 1994, and successful growth of important wetland veg-

etation has been accomplished each year since then. Our partners from other agencies help monitor the progress of the program, which has won several awards for efficient water control management.



The efforts to improve Fish Spawn and EPM are vital portions of our continuing mission to serve our customers, and they allow us to focus on environmental areas where we can have a positive impact. Both web sites are instrumental in presenting information to members of environmental agencies, as well as the general public. The development of these new web sites is an innovative way of displaying our concern for these issues in a factual, meaningful manner. For more information, contact the Water Control Management Office.

St. Louis District Winter Ball

Your CAC would like to invite everyone to the St. Louis District Winter Ball.

The Ball will be held December 3rd from 7 to 11 p.m. on the Becky Thatcher Riverboat out of Laclede's Landing. Dinner and dancing will be included in the ticket price. If weather cooperates, there will be a three hour cruise.

Tickets will cost approximately \$33 each, with a cash bar. There are only 300 tickets available (because of capacity), so it's first come first buy. Tickets will be on sale from November 8th to November 26th. Contact Dianna Bartels at 314-331-8526 or Debbie Warner at 314-331-8028. Retirees please mail your check to: Corps of Engineers, 1222 Spruce Street, St. Louis, MO 63103, ATTN: CT-Y, Dianna Bartels. Please include a return address with your check.

It's going to be great fun. Hope to see you there.





Our new employees



The Dredge Potter has a new machinist student trainee. He is James Adden, Jr. from Mt. Olive, Illinois. After being laid off from his job at Hillsboro Glass Company, Jim went to Ranken Technical College to update his skills. He's married and has one daughter. He is active in community sports coaching.

Hunting (cont.)

tery drawing will determine who will hunt that day. Applications must be received at least two days in advance of the requested hunting day.

Applications may be obtained in person at the Project Office, or by calling (618) 724-2493 or by fax at (618) 724-4089. For further information, contact Park Rangers Kevin Curran or Ray Zoanetti.

The 67-day goose season at Rend Lake runs from November 26, 1999, through January 31, 2000, or until a quota of 6,600 geese are harvested in the Rend Lake Quota Zone.

Happy Halloween



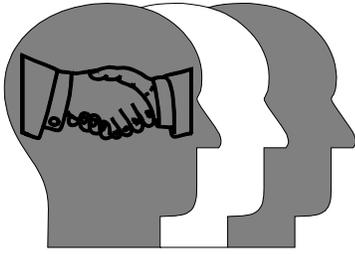
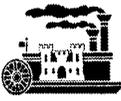
Strange things slither out of the darkness on Halloween. Is there anything stranger than Pat DiBello? Pat appears with witch Dianna Bartels and shark? Ida Morris.



This frightening creation, Jack Skellenton, by Claudia Tonsor took first place.



Halloween enthusiasts made some interesting and creative jack o lanterns.



EEO matters

Avoid defensive reactions

When Discussing a grievance with an employee, you may find it doesn't have to be an unpleasant experience.

Both parties are usually emotional when they sit down to discuss a dispute. The employee sincerely believes you have violated some law, regulation or provision of the collective bargaining agreement. You naturally become defensive.

Instead of letting your emotions take over, sit back, ask questions, listen carefully and take notes. Let the employee explain the grievance. Don't defend yourself until you have a complete picture of the allegations.

Get answers to these questions.

- *What exactly is the problem?
- *What are the facts?
- *What is the desired resolution?
- *Why is that resolution proper?

Too many grievances are described in vague terms. Allegations

of unfair treatment, harassment and violations of the contract are only starting points. Make it clear that you can't resolve the complaint until you understand the issue.

Finding out that an employee believes you treat them differently than other employees does not give you adequate information. Find out the specific problem.

There's absolutely nothing wrong with allowing employees to vent their feelings as part of a grievance presentation. However, your response and any resolution you might offer must be based primarily on the facts.

At some point you must insist on the answers to the good old "who, what, when and where" questions. The employee must understand that you can't offer a resolution without a clear understanding of the facts.

Ask about specific occasions when you counseled the employee, but did nothing to others who committed the same infraction. Ask in a manner that indicates you are not challenging the statement, but merely

trying to get all the facts before you respond.

Many employees who file grievances do so without giving much thought to what they want as a result and many managers who entertain grievances fail to ask. Does the employee want a decision reversed or does he/she want to be treated a certain way in the future?

Grievance resolutions must conform to law and to the terms of the collective bargaining agreement. The rights of other employees must also be considered. For example, if you promise to give an employee first consideration for the next promotion, you are, by the very nature of that resolution impacting an untold number of other employees who might want that job.

Start by asking the employee why they believe they are entitled to the resolution. You should never answer a grievance without careful consideration and review of the facts, as well as the rules concerning the matter.

Questioning rather than defending allows you to listen better and to make more informed and supportable grievance decisions.

(Info taken from the publication "Managing Today's Federal Employees")

Why is Thanksgiving Day on Thursday?

Our Thanksgiving Day falls on Thursday as the result of a long chain of circumstances.

The custom of celebrating Thanksgiving on Thursday arose with the pilgrims. As Puritans, they selected Wednesday or Thursday for festive occasions because they wanted them as far as possible from the Sabbath, which they observed with simplicity.

In the autumn of 1621, William Bradford, governor of the Plymouth Colony, called for a day of thanksgiving after their first harvest.

Indian Chief Massasoit and 90 of his people joined the three-day feast, contributing deer to the menu.

Four of the colonists also hunted for the feast. Prominent on the menu were numerous wild turkeys, then common in the woods of Massachusetts. From this circum-

stance, the Thanksgiving feast was associated with turkey.

After 1630, Thanksgiving Day came to be observed every year after the harvest, and other colonies gradually adopted the practice.

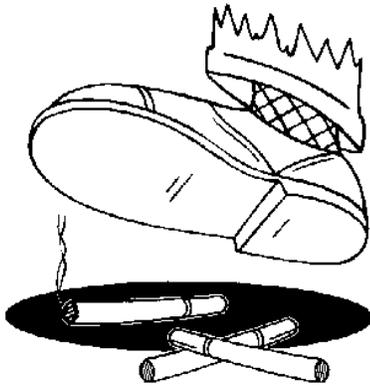
In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving Day a national holiday and chose Thursday, in recognition of the pilgrim tradition.



To your health

The Great American Smokeout: November 18, 1999

Quitters see big, early rewards



Stock up on the nicotine gum, start getting some exercise and get ready to quit. At least for a day. The Great American Smokeout comes on November 18. What better day to start?

As smokers well know, quitting is tough. Such is the nature of the

addiction that they smoke in spite of increasing their risk of lung cancer by a factor of ten, the odds of developing emphysema by a factor of six and doubling the expectation of premature stroke and heart attack.

Quitting brings fast rewards says the American Cancer Society:

* After 20 minutes: Blood pressure, pulse and carbon-monoxide levels drop to normal.

* After 48 hours: Sense of smell and taste are enhanced and nerve endings start to regrow.

* After two to 12 weeks: Circulation improves. Lung function increases by up to 30 percent.

* After one to nine months: Coughing, sinus congestion and shortness of breath decrease. Cilia

function returns to the lungs.

* After one year: Risk of heart disease is half that of a smoker.

* After five years: Risk of lung cancer is half that of a smoker.

* After 15 years: Life expectancy is equal to that of a non-smoker.

New research on quitting suggests that, in addition to such medications as Zyban, nicotine replacements and exercise are very helpful.

Another tip, quitting makes your body pH become more acidic, say the editors of *Men's Health*. To neutralize your system, eat a handful of raisins every day for a while.

Migraine massage

Research by the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami shows that massage therapy leads to more days without migraines.

Participants got massages twice weekly for five weeks and took their regular migraine prescriptions. By the end of the study, about 60 percent of the subjects enjoyed an entire headache-free month. To get the massage instructions on the Web, go to www.miami.edu/touch-research.

Cancer fighter

Calcium plays an important role in preventing colon cancer, the third-leading cause of cancer death among Americans, according to a recent study published in the new England Journal of Medicine. It's an often-overlooked nutrient with potent anticarcinogenic effects. By taking a multivitamin and drinking milk, you can be assured of getting enough of this important mineral.

Pneumonia test

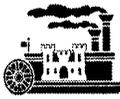
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved a new urine test for pneumonia. It prom-

ises a probable diagnosis in 15 minutes, compared with two days for the fastest current test. It proved 93 percent accurate among people known to be infected.

The test will be available in hospitals within a few months.

Pneumonia vaccine

While the pneumonia vaccine has been recommended for older people, young children and those with chronic conditions, Dr. Daniel Musher of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Houston believes everyone should be vaccinated every five to 10 years. Thousands of people die each year because they are unaware of the vaccine, he says.



Retiree Review

By the Retiree Correspondent

The October Retiree's luncheon brought out some of the irregular regulars, the ones who attend on an irregular basis. They are the ones who have schedule conflicts and cannot make the third Thursdays. It is good to have them, when they can attend.

Joe Bisher was in attendance in his usual sartorial splendor - dressed to the nines. He looked like he was either politicking for election or about to officiate at a very solemn occasion. He was asked if he had anything to do with the "fire" at the Arch last month, as maybe a practice drill, or maybe he just became overzealous in his duties. He said no to both situations. He also said that he is good, but not that good.

Sandor Dombi mentioned that the retirees are invited to join the computer group that meets on the last Tuesday of each month, at 1 p.m. at the Weber Library. Everyone is invited to attend one of the meetings to see if it will meet your needs before you consider joining.

Elsie Kalafatich mentioned that she and her husband, John, were recently at the American-Czech Center on Lansdowne for some festivities and met Eli Hydar there. He was dancing up a storm, belying the fact that he is well over 39 years of age. For the recent retirees, Eli was the Chief of Budget Branch during the Homer Duff era. I guess that shows you that Eli does lead a good clean life, even after retiring.

Lew Scheuermann stated that he recently talked to Elmer Huizenga and that he and his wife are feeling just fine. In fact, they recently took a trip to the Kansas City area to visit their daughter and then even ventured even further into Kansas to visit other family. Elmer told Lew that this is fair warning that if the weather is agreeable for the December luncheon, they will be in attendance. Lew also mentioned that he and Helen were recently in Highland, Illinois, for the wed-

Editor's note: We received a note from Bill Haynes. Although in his 90s, he's still going strong. He sends his regards to all, and says he misses the luncheons at the Salad Bowl.

ding of one of Ron and Nancy Messerli's children. What made it so special was that many years ago, Lew was at the wedding of Ron and Nancy. (I guess Lew knows most of the family secrets of the Messerli household.)

Laurel Nelson said that she recently met Len Alfeld at the St. Louis Zoo. She was asked if he was visiting or on display. She did say that she invited Len to the monthly luncheons, but that he said he is too busy at the present time. Maybe sometime in the future.

Don Wampler also mentioned that he met Len at Alice Etherton's wake. She was a long time employee of the Personnel Office. Len told Don the same story about coming to the monthly luncheons - too busy.

Pete Puricelli mentioned that in addition to the passing of Alice Etherton, another member of the retiree family recently passed away, Mrs. Homer Duff. (Our condolences to the Etherton and the Duff families.) Pete also mentioned that he received a call from Neil Krigbaum, informing him that rumors of his death were greatly exaggerated. In fact he has changed careers since he retired. He is now a magician and does performances at various malls and for groups. He and his wife live in St. Peters and are having a great time. Pete invited Neil to bring his talents to the Retirees luncheon sometime and dazzle the group.

Bob Lutz was the story teller this month, with a story about computer operations and the Almighty.

The December luncheon was briefly discussed and it was decided that no special arrangement will be made. Rather, the group will go through the cafeteria line as they do each month, and then enjoy each other's company.

The November luncheon will be November 18th at about 11 a.m. at the Salad Bowl. Hope to see more of you there. Mark your calendars.

Sentence analysis

For one week, the consultant met daily with small groups of employees to get all their concerns on the table. *Traps avoided: held meetings, on a daily basis, with the object of getting and concerns and misgivings.*

Veterans Day

Monument to veterans of WWII planned

Though the heroes of World War II are commemorated in bronze and marble in many communities, no single national monument has been erected to honor them.

The time has come, says Memorial Campaign National Chairman Robert Dole. A decorated and wounded combat veteran, Dole observes:

"World War II is one of those rare events of history that looks even larger from a distance. For those of us who served, we did not see the big picture; we saw the small struggles. We did not hear the call of history; we heard the voices of friends."

The National World War II memorial on the National mall in Washington, D.C. will honor the 16 million people who served in the U.S. armed forces, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions on the home front who supported the war effort.

In 1993, Congress approved legislation authorizing the memorial. Responsibility for design and con-

struction was passed to the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). In 1995 the Constitution Gardens on the National Mall was selected and dedicated in a ceremony that marked the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II.

The design of renowned architect Friedrich St. Florian was selected. A ceremonial entrance to the Memorial on 17th Street will lead to a lowered plaza surrounding the Rainbow Pool. The oval plaza will feature walls topped with stone and metal ornamentation as well as two 36-foot-tall memorial arches. Bronze laurels will be suspended within them to symbolize valor and victory.

Curved pathways heading to the north and south of the arches will lead to quiet places for contemplation. The Memorial Campaign hopes to break ground by Veterans Day 2000. Money for the construction, funded by private contributions, must be in place before construction begins.



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