ST. LOUIS ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT

ESPRIT

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The powerplant's two generators are able to supply the electrical needs of a small town. The blue Kaplan unit is a refined generator-only design. Its companion, in green, is a Francis combination generator and pump. The large numbers are to aid visitors on self-guided tours of the facility.

Clarence Cannon Power Plant at Mark Twain Lake is Tops in Reliability

America is a nation aglow in night lighting, especially at this holiday season when homeowners, businesses and entire neighborhoods seem to vie with each other by putting up millions of lights to celebrate the season. Images from orbit at night clearly show the cities and major commerce corridors by their brightly lighted outlines.

And of course we all expect that at the flip of a switch our lights will come on at home, in our yards and anywhere else we are prepared to pay for illumination. Indeed, the ready availability of electricity is so universal in America that many of us take it for granted: pay the bill, flip the switch, see the light.

But five people at the Clarence Cannon Hydropower plant at Mark Twain Lake don't take this "miracle" for granted. They know what it takes to ensure reliable energy anytime it is needed.

About one-fourth of the nation's hydroelectricity - electricity generated by the energy of falling or passing water - is generated by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers facilities. While the nation derives only a little more than three percent of its electrical power supply from hydropower, for two reasons, it is a critical three percent.

First, it's renewable. The cycles of the seasons move water in an age-old pattern, eventually returning it to its starting place as precipitation and runoff. Although power plants cost money to build and maintain, the energy they use to generate electricity is basically free.

Second, hydropower plants are very

Cannon Power Plant Cont. page 3

Commander's Perspective

COL Kevin Williams

It is often said during this time of the year that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Elsewhere in this Esprit you will find an article about the just-completed 2004 Combined Federal Campaign, or CFC.

This year more than 300 people in our District family stepped up to the plate and exceeded the 2004 goal of $60,000 to Fund Hope So Others May Cope. More than $62,000 poured in, much of it toward the end of the campaign and 36 percent of our people dug deeply into their hearts and pockets to make this happen. Both figures are up from last year when we had nearly 70 more people.

I especially want to thank the key workers throughout the district – named in the CFC article – for making a successful effort to contact each and every member of our District family. They made this campaign the success it was.

Elsewhere, more than 17 of our fellow District personnel are overseas away from home as I write these words. They are serving their Corps, their Army, their nation and the long-suffering people of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Their professional work is driving forward the difficult and risky mission of rebuilding two long-suppressed and war torn nations. They are rebuilding ignored and deteriorated infrastructure and they are adding new features that will help Iraq and Afghanistan quickly regain their rightful places in the family of free nations.

Of equal or greater importance, they are serving as shining examples to the people of that crucial region, showing them by personal example, how free people live under the rule of laws instead of the whims of despots. The simple acts of sharing water or food, giving someone a book or answering their questions about democracy and constitutionally-based laws, does as much to further this mission as millions of appropriated dollars. It tells the people of Iraq and Afghanistan that we care for them and their loved ones as individuals and human beings.

As we reflect on the year of 2004, please take time to think about what you have accomplished for those less fortunate than you. Please know that your efforts, contributions, thoughts and prayers have made a difference this year.

I have been honored deeply to lead you throughout 2004. Debbie, Ashley, Brittany and I wish each of you and yours the best holiday season ever. We ask you to keep those who are suffering, near and far, either from personal tragedies or their situation in life, in your hearts and minds, as we will keep each of you in ours.

Essayons

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US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District®

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Cannon Power Plant
Cont. from page 1

responsive. They can be brought online to add power to the distribution grid virtually in minutes of the need arising.

The Clarence Cannon Power Plant excels in both categories, as it pushes power out onto a multi-state power grid at 69,000 volts. (Main Power Transformer steps voltage up from 13,800 to 69,000 nominal — voltage varies from 69,000 to approximately 73,000 volts.)

"We are what is called a peaking plant," Project Manager Dennis Foss said in a recent interview. "We are on call to meet increased needs above and beyond the base generating system. At some times of the year, the Clarence Cannon plant generates additional power as water impounded in Mark Twain lake is regulated downward to pool elevations where it provides a combination of optimal flood damage reduction capability and recreation. "We're doing that right now," he explained on Friday, December 10.

Senior Power Plant Mechanic John Hickam's skilled hands create spare parts and special tools when needed.

He said that power plants that use oil, coal or nuclear power can take a day or more to power up and bring on line. "We have to answer the bell much more quickly." The only comparable capability is costly gas turbine generation to meet peak requirements.

Foss explained that while most of the time, the power generated at Clarence Cannon is consumed nearby, though not in St. Louis, the power plant is part of a grid known as the Southwest Power Grid, that runs from east-central Missouri to central Texas. "There's a substantial line loss when you send power long distances, but we can do that," he said.

Senior electrician John Stone works rebuilding one of the massive circuit breakers.

Meeting the emerging needs of the grid, with extraordinary reliability, is a premier characteristic of the St. Louis District's only hydropower plant. According to recent data, the Clarence Cannon plant has been available to meet peak loads 98.85 percent of FY2004. This figures compares very impressively with the MVD overall rate of 81.94%.

According to Foss, "There are a few plants that approach or reach 100%, but they are what we call 'run of river' plants. They run full time and are larger facilities. They might have 24 generators, with perhaps 12 online at any given time. It's relatively easier to bring up a 13th one if needed, than it is for us to answer the call reliably with only two generators."

Visitors to the Clarence Cannon plant are invariably impressed with its cleanliness. Through thousands of square feet from the bottom of the plant to the top of the dam that impounds Mark Twain Lake, floors are clean enough to eat off of and shine like just-waxed tile. The pride the small crew exhibits in their responsibility is on display at all times, even though they normally work only a day shift.

Certainly one of the driving forces behind the impressive appearance and performance of the plant – Senior Power Plant Mechanic John Hickham – has his eye on retirement in the near future. Hickham, with more than 27 years of service under his belt has been part of the Clarence Cannon facility since its construction began. Everyone in the crew credits him for his total grasp of the intricacies of the plant and it operation, as well as his eagerness to pass that knowledge on to them. His in-depth almost encyclopedic knowledge of the plant makes him the lead in promoting safe operations and maintenance.

So how can the plant respond at night or on weekends when the crew is absent?

According to Power Plant Senior Electrician John Stone, "Through the SCADA, the fulltime operators at Truman (a Kansas City-District hydropower plant 200 miles to the northwest) can bring our turbines online when needed." The SCADA – or Supervisory Control Automatic Data Acquisition – system enables those technicians to remotely control and monitor operation of the turbines when they are needed. They can see remotely what an operator sitting at Clarence Cannon could see firsthand.

Electrician Terry Oltman is seated at the plant's control desk. Day-to-day operation is performed remotely from The Truman Plant, some 200 miles away.

Stone is more than ably assisted by Power Plant Electrician Terry Oltman, who is a journeyman electrician known for being available 24/7, either to respond with emergency repairs at the plant or to work with the operators at Truman. Oltman, who is lauded as a professional who has uncanny ability to see operations through from start to finish, has received several awards for his suggestions to improve processes and operations at Clarence Cannon.

The Clarence Cannon Power Plant's two generators appear to visitors to have names: Francis and Kaplan. When asked who they were, John Stone laughed and explained, "They're types of turbines." He went on to detail how a Francis turbine has fixed blades on its rotor. A Kaplan on the other hand, has variable-pitch blades, which may be fine tuned to make most efficient use of the passing water as they spin the General Electric Generators.

The two turbines can generate nearly 43,000 horsepower each: the Francis at 75 rpm with a 75 foot head of water above it behind the dam and the Kaplan at 128.6 rpm with the same lake condition.

The Francis turbine has another function. To help improve the quality of power on the grid – ironing out peaks and valleys – it can be run in what is called the condensed mode. Kevin Long explained as he walked past a bank of giant compressed air tanks, "We can close the wicket gates that regulate the amount of water passing through the turbines and blow the water out of the turbine housing area. Then we can switch electricity into the turbine, making it a motor that uses electricity versus a generator that makes it. This improves the quality of the power on the grid."

The Francis can also pump water up from below the dam into the lake. But that is not routinely done and would in any case, happen only during extreme drought.

"If we had minimal elevation of water in Mark Twain Lake and simply had to generate power during peak loads – maybe during peak use of air conditioning during extreme heat – we could pump water from the pool below the dam at night to be ready to generate electricity the next day."

Mechanic Kevin Long shows some of the massive sockets and wrenches necessary to maintain and repair the giant machinery of Cannon Power Plant.

The extreme reliability of the Clarence Cannon Power Plant has been recognized in a meaningful way – with money. According to Dennis Foss, "The Southwestern Power Administration, which runs the grid for its users, has deemed it to their advantage to help fund maintenance and upgrades here. They see us as an extremely reliable supplier of high quality power at low cost. They have sent us $2.7 million for that work during the last four years," he said. "That's a lot of money, but it cost less to keep Clarence Cannon in top shape than it would to get power elsewhere."

Travis Arch has entered a four-year training program to ultimately become a journeyman mechanic.

The newest employee at Clarence Cannon, Travis Arch, is being groomed in a four-year training and development program for hydropower power plant personnel to become a journeyman mechanic. Arch, who has been recognized for diligence and excellence by fellow plant operator Terry Oltman's recommendation for a St. Louis District "Kudo Award," was identified for his keen interest and swift learning abilities. "He's also one of the only people around here who can pick up some of these tools from the floor," Kevin Long noted, mentioning Arch's physique and strength.

The training that Arch is undergoing is a key to continued safe, efficient operation of the power plant. All personnel undergo this type of preparation, which consists of three to four years of book study, intensive on-the-job training and a series of tests – oral and written – before they are fully qualified to fill more responsible positions.

There's another reason the Clarence Cannon Power Plant is so highly prized by consumers of its product.

Generating electricity requires more than simply spinning a turbine. It requires reference frequencies and voltages so that the final product is reliable and predictable in all of its qualities. Starting a grid after it has

collapsed – such as the U.S. Canada grid failure in the northeast last year – requires some place where the starting ingredients – proper frequency and voltage can be made. Clarence Cannon is one of only a small number of what are called "Black Start" facilities from Missouri to Texas.

Showing off a spotless room full of large batteries, John Stone explained, "These batteries can provide the initial control voltage to get our hydroelectric generators started and producing power, and in turn, we can provide the requirements to bring others onto the grid in succession." What if the batteries are depleted? "We have an emergency diesel generator for that too," Stone replied.

Clean power. Cheap power. Reliable power. "Our average annual 'payback', at the rate determined by the original authorization for this plant is about $4 million," Foss said. "I wish we got that money, but it goes directly into the treasury."

Clearly the Clarence Cannon Power Plant is part of a well-integrated project. The system generates commercially valuable quantities of increasingly costly electricity; it sustains a valuable water supply and recreation opportunity. Also it's environmentally friendly. Kevin Long and John Hickham – the latter soon to retire from the senior position at the plant – finishing a bottom to top tour of the plant and dam, gazed from a catwalk high above the plant's spillway: "Do you see those dark and white spots in the trees down there" they asked? Those are bald eagles."

The Clarence Cannon Power Plant is a hands down, win-win-win operation. We just thought that you'd like to know about it.

Cannon Power Plant is a winner to the environment and to the eye.

The M.W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center will be badly missed, having been closed due to developing structural problems. The future of the center or its replacement has yet to be determined.

Permanent Closure of Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center at Mark Twain Lake.

On Sunday, November 21, 2004 the M.W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center at Mark Twain Lake closed its doors permanently. The facility, which is operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, typically closes this time of year and reopens in the spring at the beginning of the recreation season. However, due to unforeseen complications, the Visitor Center will not reopen in the spring.

The permanent closure of the Boudreaux Visitor Center is the result of accelerated structural deterioration of portions of the structure due to a wood preservative treatment used during the construction of the facility.

The deterioration presents a potential hazard to the safety and welfare of the visiting public and in the interest of public safety the center will be closed. The future of the Corps Visitor Center is unknown. The Corps will begin to look at all potential options for providing the services the closed Boudreaux Visitor Center has provided to the lake.

The M.W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center stands on one of the most scenic overlooks at Mark Twain Lake. It has served as welcome center, special event site, field trip destination for thousands of students and meeting place for community organizations and agencies for 20 years.

It is also the site of the Northeast Missouri Vietnam Memorial and home to historical, cultural and natural resource displays. The Vietnam Memorial, overlook and picnic area in the Boudreaux Recreation Area will remain open according to normal seasonal schedules. Visitor information or brochures on Mark Twain Lake and surrounding attractions may be obtained at the Mark Twain Lake Project Office.

Purple Heart Awarded to Roger Hayes for Vietnam Wound

In the movies, a soldier gets wounded and then the scene shifts to a hospital ward hours or days later as a general pins a Purple Heart medal on the wounded individual. Recent District retiree Roger Hayes knows first hand that often it doesn't happen that way or that quickly.

Hayes was wounded on August 1968 in Vietnam. He stood at attention Monday, November 15, 2004, in the second-floor auditorium as Brigadier General Robert Crear pinned the long-missing medal on his chest. It was 36 years late, but nonetheless deeply appreciated by the veteran of a year of combat in Vietnam.

Hayes, recipient of two previous Purple Hearts for wounds received in Vietnam, said he was never irritated that he had not received a third medal for the August 1968 incident. He told how medics were often busy saving lives–paperwork came second or maybe not at all. "Those things happened," he acknowledged. "Our medics were very busy during battles and it's understandable how that fell through the cracks."

Hayes was in fact wounded on four occasions, but received medical treatment only three times. On the other occasion, he chose not to be treated and continued in action.

Later in life, Hayes would recount the battle in which he received the wound for which he was recently recognized. In his book about a year in the life of an infantryman in Vietnam, *On Point*, he told of the fight in which he was wounded when an enemy bullet from either an AK-47 rifle or light machine gun ("They used the same round," he reported) struck his right arm, penetrating to the bone.

Wounded, Hayes jumped from the top of an Armored Personnel Carrier (APC). It was doctrine not to engage the enemy from the top of their vehicles, Hayes said. Unfortunately though, Hayes was the only one to jump while the rest of the company withdrew, leaving him wounded and alone in waist-high grass.

"I figured I wouldn't survive long if I remained there, so I started to run, crouching as low as I could," he said. The enemy persuaded him to run faster with a hail of fire until he fell hard over a log. "They must have assumed they got me when I went down, because they shifted their fire to the remainder of the company," Roger said. After catching his breath, he continued running, finally catching up to his APC and climbing on top. "The rest of the guys were excited to see me," he remembered. "They thought I had been killed." Hayes wasn't the only casualty; each member of his squad was wounded in the action. Fortunately, each survived and recovered fully.

Roger Hayes accepts congratulations from Mississippi Valley Division Commaner Brig. Gen. Robert Crear. Hayes' wife Lonnie and son Chad look on.

Fast forward to 2003, as St. Louis Deputy District Commander, Major Joseph Tyron, read Hayes's book.

Major Tyron was intrigued and concerned that Hayes had been wounded four times but recognized formally only twice. He contacted the Pentagon and the Army Human Resources Command, and initiated action leading to subsequent awards.

"Major Tyron saw the 1968 oversight as an injustice, and worked tirelessly, submitting documents and following up with numerous phone calls and email messages, to correct the record. He was in grade school, I believe, when I was wounded. Many of his generation would have left the matter to the dust bins of history, but not Major Tyron. For that he has my lifelong admiration and respect," Hayes later commented. "It really touched me that, despite the fact that he had more important matters on his plate, this issue remained a high priority."

Hayes went on about the Major's endeavors for a former junior enlisted man. "He is a superb officer, intelligent, mission-focused and yet compassionate. I hope one day to see him wearing rank insignia higher than that which adorns his epaulets today."

The process was complete by the time Major Tyron moved on to duty in Afghanistan, where he is currently serving as District Deputy Engineer in that war-torn nation. The medal and certificate, approved and signed in July, arrived in St. Louis shortly before the major's departure, but the ceremony could not be arranged until later.

Finally on a chilly November morning in an auditorium in the Robert A. Young Building in St. Louis, with the unmistakable posture of rigid attention that marks a professional soldier, Roger Hayes stood before the Mississippi Valley Division Commander, Brigadier General Crear. With his wife Lonnie and son Chad looking on with admiration and love, the long wait ended.

As the general stepped back so all present could see the historic purple ribbon with the heart-shaped medal bearing George Washington's profile glinting in the floodlights, Hayes grasped the general's hand. They quietly exchanged words of appreciation and then applause erupted in the auditorium

as Hayes' family surrounded him with hugs.

But there were four wounds, weren't there?

"That was May 4, 1968," Hayes told. "We were assaulting an enemy position, attempting to gain firepower superiority, which means shooting at the enemy more than he shot at us," he remembered. It was going pretty well until a comrade only fifteen feet away was struck in the chest by a point-blank recoilless rifle or rocket-propelled grenade, killing him instantly and halting the attack.

A piece of shrapnel damaged Hayes's rifle, and another entered an ammunition pouch, passing through three magazines and stopping in a fourth. A third piece of shrapnel lodged in the lower right side of his chin, where it remains today.

"I didn't know it until I wiped my chin and saw blood. Because of the concussion of the explosion and subsequent excitement, small wounds were difficult to notice. But it didn't hurt and had stopped bleeding," Hayes recounted. Realizing that if he went for medical treatment it would reduce the number of men remaining in his squad from three to two, Hayes elected to remain in the field. Since he never sought treatment, the wound does not meet Purple Heart eligibility criteria.

Speaking later of the ceremony, Hayes commented that his family was impressed by the warmth of the large number of people who came up to visit with him afterward. "The District really is a family," he commented.

Noting the senior grade of the general officer who presented his award, Hayes quipped, "It was quite a ceremony for an incident during which someone forgot to duck." That might have been the case in this specific incident. But if you read Hayes's personal account of combat in his award-winning book, *On Point* (a copy can be found in the District library), you will get both an accurate image of what combat in Vietnam was really like and the splendid, too-often faceless and nameless young Americans who fought so bravely and so well there. Roger Hayes was certainly one of them.

Ozark Border Electric Co-Op and Townsend Tree Service combined efforts to decorate the Wappapello Lake's entrance tree this year.

Wappapello Lake Hosts Their Annual Festival of Lights

Add excitement to your holiday season by attending the spectacular 12th Annual Festival of Lights Christmas Auto Tour at Wappapello Lake! The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Wappapello Lions Club invite everyone to come and tour the beautifully decorated Redman Creek East Campground starting the day after Thanksgiving, on November 26, 2004. Over 20,000 individuals enjoyed this spectacular event last year! A special thanks goes out to Ozark Border Electric Cooperative and Townsend Tree Service for overseeing the decoration of the entrance trees.

Beginning November 26 through December 12, the tour will be open Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. From December 17 – 26, the sites can be viewed nightly from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission is free. The Wappapello Lions Club will accept donations for sight and hearing needs. Santa, Smokey Bear, and Woodsy Owl will make special periodic appearances on weekends. Free sweet treats (courtesy of Wappapello Lions Club) will be provided to all who attend.

Let the Festival of Lights brighten up your holidays! For more information, please contact the Wappapello Lake Project Office at (573) 222-8562. Ranger Willie B. Safe reminds everyone to make safety as number one priority this holiday season!

State of District is Reported to Employees

District Commander Col. Kevin Williams presented his second State of the District briefing to the District employees, Thursday, Dec. 16, 2004.

The event began with recognition awards for two District employees who have completed tours in Iraq.

Tim Pinner was cited with the Superior Civilian Service Award for his work ensuring safe reception, staging and onward movement and integration of all Gulf Region Division and Central District employees (RSO&I). Through his diligent preparation and focused execution, his citation read, the district logged zero incidents, injuries, loss of life or government equipment for all movements.

Marilyn Kwentus was next recognized for completing two tours of duty in Iraq. Her first of two Commanders Awards for Civilian Service cited her technical expertise and engineering knowledge, paired with her ability to get things done. The second such award lauded her for management contributions to two building projects in Baghdad.

In his address and PowerPoint presentation, Col. Williams reviewed the District's accomplishments over past years.

District Commander Col. Kevin Williams delivers his 2004 State of the District report to employees assembled in the Ray Building Auditorium. Video cassettes copies are available to our field offices.

He also reiterated goals set for 2004 by senior leadership, assessed our accomplishments against those goals and then set forth the bench marks for 2005.

In his remarks, the Colonel highlighted the potential for growth in coming years with the progress of several projects including the Upper Mississippi River – Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study. Noting the very large environmental element of that and other future work, he predicted that sustaining the environment would assume a great role in the District's future.

Turning from his slide presentation, the Colonel concluded the State of the District with an audio-visual tribute to the District's employees, noting their service to the region, the Army and the Nation, as they are employed and deployed throughout the District's 28,000 square miles, throughout the nation helping with hurricane recovery and worldwide in the Global War on Terrorism.

Marilyn Kwentus received a Commander's Award for Civilian Service citing her technical knowledge and abiltiy to get things done.

Tim Pinner (ED-SD) accepts a Civilian Superior Service medal from Col. Williams for his RSO&I work in Iraq.

CFC District Chairman Catherine Cummings is assisted by Claude Strauser to add the "over the top" splash to the campaign thermometer.

St. Louis District CFC Campaign Succeeds… and Exceeds

The family of employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District has indeed shown itself to be a caring and compassionate family in the just-recently completed Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

This year's campaign exceed the last two years' results as 229 District employees dug deeply in their pockets to donate $63,090.59 – or 105.15 percent of this year's goal for giving of $60,000.

According to Cathrine Cummings, who headed up this year's campaign, "The response was simply astounding. It was heart warming, especially in a year when the number of fulltime employees has declined from a year ago. People really stepped up to the challenge."

Returns started slowly, and with only a four weeks left to give, only about $25,000 had been pledged. But just when it appeared to some that we might not meet our goal, the donations started to pour in. "I have to give all the credit in the world to our Key Workers," Cummings noted. "They are the ones who carried the message to each and every person in the District. They are the ones to whom a lot of St. Louis area people in need should be grateful. They just did it!"

Alan Dooley, who assisted Cummings with this year's drive noted that the entire campaign went very smoothly, crediting the new web-based catalog of recipient agencies for a lot of the campaign's success. "It made it much easier for people to identify those charities they wanted to support and to target their giving exactly where they wanted it to go.

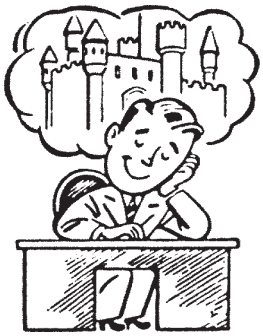
The campaign's slogan – Giving Hope So Others May Cope – was on target this year, as the greater St. Louis Region also exceeded its annual goal with a total of $2,920,566, or more than $70,000 than was brought in last year.

The Corps of Engineers family clearly cared, and was equally clearly ready to put their money where their concerns were. In Lt. Col. Greg Romaindo's words, "They gave until it felt good!"

Key workers who personally carried the campaign to 100 percent of the District's employees were:

- **Dana Barrentine**
- **Shelly Barunica**
- **Shirley Bledsoe**
- **Shirley Boyer**
- **Donna Bryant**
- **Sharon Cable**
- **Lesley Carr**
- **Chris Coe**
- **Kathy Crone**
- **Dave Davis**
- **Deb Davis**
- **Connie Driscoll**
- **Sharon Gebhardt**
- **Marla Hayes**
- **Kisha Hurst**
- **Mary Miles**
- **Teresa Montgomery**
- **Maoise Palmer**
- **Vivian Ratliff**
- **LaDonna Supancic**
- **Vel Swindle**
- **Kent Thomas**
- **Clarice Trigg**
- **Arnold Washington**
- **Jeanette Wellen**
- **Linda Wichlan**
- **Judy Willett**
- **Anne Woodrome**
- **Cindy Zimmerman**

The Way I Remember It.



As I begin to clean out my darkened corner office, I have been finding things I haven't seen for years. I just came across a publication entitled, "Historic Names and Places on the Lower Mississippi River". This book was published by the Mississippi River Commission in 1977. This book contains a wealth of river history and folklore and I wish we had a similar book for the Middle Mississippi River.

It's one of those books that you pick up, start thumbing through and stop in several places to read things that catch your eye and interest. Before long you feel a growing sense of having to read this book in its entirety, and not having found it in a library, you must buy it. I have found these kinds of books to be irresistible. They sit on the shelves until I come by, and then they call out quietly, "Claude… Claude…," and I pick them up and never let go of them.

There is a table of contents in the beginning of the book. The various places are listed by river mile (beginning at Cairo and then proceeding downriver). As you go through the pages and look at each name, you often see a sketch of the locality, maybe a picture and then a description of the origin of the river name.

This is fascinating reading and I want to share with you an example of how much information can be obtained when studying names. For no reason in particular, I will start with Wolf Island (also known as Island No. 5).

When Zodok Cramer gave Wolf Island its number in 1801, he described it as a very large island with about 15,000 acres of fine land and an open prairie in the middle where cattle were pastured. James Hunter, an early settler, was keeping a herd of several hundred cattle and a large number of hogs on the island when Cramer first visited it. At Hunter's warehouse, flatboat men could purchase meat, butter and eggs to supplement their rather monotonous diet.

John James Audubon, America's great naturalist and painter, was a passenger on a flatboat making the river voyage to New Orleans in 1820. He had just begun his monumental work which would later result in the fabulous volumes entitled, "Birds of America".

Audubon kept a journal on his voyage down the river, and in it he noted that he had stopped at Wolf Island on Sunday, November 19, 1820, to bathe and shave. He explained that he and his companions had agreed before leaving Cincinnati that they would stop every Sunday to take a bath. Wearing the same shirt all week and sleeping in odiferous buffalo robes at night made these weekly occasions memorable.

You see, a lot of information can be obtained by studying the names of places along the banks of the Mighty Mississippi.

Another example I find interesting is a location called Bird's Point. This is located at approximate river mile 2.0 in the Middle Mississippi River. A casual observer may intuitively believe this is an area where many birds accumulated in the early years and someone appropriately named it for the birds. Wrong!

Here is the "rest of the story"!

In 1798, Abram Bird of Virginia cleared a patch of forest on the west bank of the Lower Mississippi and built a warehouse where flatboat men could obtain supplies needed for their long trip to the New Orleans markets.

The Bird family still owned the property when the Civil War broke out in 1861. Officially, Missouri was a Union state but many of its citizens were southern sympathizers. When General U.S. Grant was assembling his Union army at Cairo Point to begin a campaign to gain control of the Lower Mississippi River, the head of the Bird family was arrested on the suspicion of harboring "secessionist" views. The ferryboat he owned was confiscated, and his land became a camping ground for thousands of Union soldiers.

Did you ever want to know the definition of a bayou? Let's look at another location on the river called, Bayou Du Chien.

Bayou du Chien is a small tributary of the Mississippi. It joins the big river just above the town of Hickman, Kentucky.

The word "bayou" is said to have been a French adaptation of the Choctaw Indian word "bayuk," which meant "small, sluggish stream." Why this particular bayou should be called Bayou du Chien, or Bayou of the Dog, no one knows. The name appears on maps made more than 200 years ago, but the reason for it has long since been lost in the mists of time.

One last story for this article. Let's look at the location called, Bixby Towhead. Mile 873.9, left descending bank.

Captain Horace Bixby was one of the best-known steamboat pilots on the river. He was piloting an old boat called the Paul Jones when a boy named Samuel Clemens left his home in Hannibal, Missouri, and went down the Mississippi, determined to become a pilot. For the modest sum of $500, Horace Bixby agreed to let young Clemens serve as his "cub pilot" so that he could "learn the river".

Captain Bixby was once quoted as saying, "That fellow Twain knows a

Horace Bixby
1826 — 1912

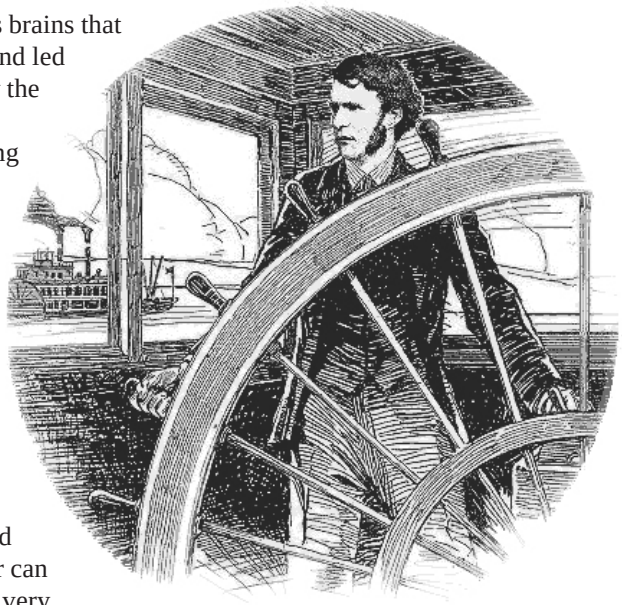
heck of lot more about book-writing than he ever did about steamboats."

After the death of Sam Clemens, Bixby changed his story a little bit and was quoted as saying the following:

"Sam Clemens was a good pilot," the old man declared firmly. "He was also a smart fellow, and it was his brains that made other pilots jealous and led them to say he didn't know the river – that he was just an inspired loafer, or something of the sort. What they said wasn't true; Clemens was a good pilot – and he learned it from me."`

There is a location on the Middle Mississippi River called Hanging Dog Island, river mile 70.5, left descending bank. Hmmmm, I wonder about the history of this name?

Studying the names found along the Mississippi River can be a very fascinating and a very rewarding endeavor. I encourage you to do this on a rainy day when you can't find anything to watch on the television. Or maybe, just maybe, I should instead recommend watching television only when you can't find a good book!



An artist concept of young Samuel Clemens piloting the Mississippi

I've found mine, so rain or shine, please leave me alone for the next few days!

Claude Strauser

Over a Century of Federal Service Departs

Three senior engineers are hanging up their hard hats and putting away their slide rules in January in the St. Louis District. The three, John Dierker, Claude Strauser and Stan Ebersohl will end their service to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with a combined 106-plus years of time onboard.

The three claim to really be retiring, but for gentlemen of their energy and involvement in life and service, retirement will likely mean only a shift of focus for the direction of their contributions.

Dave Busse has been selected to succeed Claude, but the other two positions are being filled with a series of details and training assignments until they can be filled.

Bon voyage, good luck – and don't forget to come back from time to time for the great food downstairs!

Claude Strauser addressed the joint international USACE-MLIT (Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation) conference held in St. Louis in November. Claude's ties with numerous overseas organizations and governments mean he will be missed in St. Louis as well as around the globe. Service since 27 January 1969.

John Dierker accepted gifts and well-wishes at his retirement ceremony and coffee gathering in Executive Conference Room One of the District Headquarters. John's service has included numerous projects throughout the District as well as with professional groups including the Society of American Military Engineers. Service since 2 August 1966.

Stan Ebersohl (r) of the Rivers Project Office, listens as Col. Kevin Williams describes emergency lock gate repairs to congressman Kenny Hulshof and David Hobson at the Chain of Rocks Main Chamber in August. Stan brought a rare blend of navigation infrastructure knowledge combined with a keen appreciation for the environment to his work. Service since 14 November 1972

Christmas Party 2004 is Noisy Success

Each year the Civilian Affairs Comittee (CAC) sponsors a festive fund-raiser-bonding-holiday event which has moved around St. Louis from year to year before settling this year at Al Hrabosky's new ball park bar across the "dollar lot" from the St. Louis District Office.

Hopefully for the "Mad Hungarian's" sake, this event will not portend the demise of the facility like it did two years ago when the St. Louis District gathered to celebrate the holidays in an establishment since torn down and converted to a parking lot!

A buffet line stretched through the tightly packed establishment for more than an hour as each attendee wrote their name on their ticket and turned it in to Paula Bell before filling their plate.

Soon thereafter, Col. Williams' wife Debbie drew a series of tickets from a glistening gift bag before each was revealed as an attendance prize winner. Prizes ranged from District denim shirts to gift certificates donated by a number of our businesses to a steak dinner for two at an exclusive Lake of the Ozarks eatery. This year's prize distribution featured a new twist, with each winner being called to the stage and made to sing a karaoke song – some carefully selected to reflect the recipient and performer – before gathering in their prize.

The well-behaved, albeit noisy crowd enjoyed the whole place for four hours as a private party, with some hardier souls extending their stays into the evening hours. While it remains to be seen if the District will vote to return to Hrabosky's next year, clearly they chose to doff their ties and pass up thoughts of a formal sit down event this year.

Congratulations to the CAC team consisting of: Catherine Cummings, Tandika Gates, Paula Bell, Maoise Palmer, Phillis Thomas, Shirley Bledsoe and Carolyn Ruebusch for pulling the 2004 District Christmas Party together.

Either Corps or Christmas red was the dominate color everywhere you looked.

Catherine Cummings serves Al Brandt from the hardy buffet line.

Col. Williams and his wife, Debbie teamed together and pulled winning tickets for all the attendance prizes obtained by the CAC.

Maoise Palmer, Tandika Gates, Col. Williams and Catherine Cummings joining in the exceedingly popular karaoke singing.

The 'battle of the bands' continued with Patti Carr, Natalie Eshmann, Col. Williams, Donna Kavanaugh and Lesley Carr.

Warren Jones and Maureen Wagner show us real Christmas cheer

Pat Conroy takes the opportunity to serinade his wife, Lou with his rendition of "Brown-Eyed Girl."

CAC members Catherine Cummings, Tandika Gates, Carolyn Ruebusch, Maoise Palmer, Phyllis Thomas, Shirley Bledsoe and Paula Bell (front), worked very hard to make our Christmas party a huge sucess.

Mike Kruckeberg, gone too soon.

"Life is not some journey to the grave trying to arrive safely in a handsome, well-preserved body, but rather sliding in broadside, completely used up, worn out, and loudly proclaiming, 'Lord, what a ride!'"

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District family was shocked Friday, Nov. 19 to learn in the morning of the death of 47-year-old, 25-year Corps veteran Michael G. "Kruck" Kruckeberg. The word spread throughout the District with an email message from District Commander Kevin Williams, informing us all.

Within less than 90 minutes the word spread nationwide, as calls started to come in from as far away as Florida and other points, asking if it was indeed true.

We were to learn later that Mike, who had only days earlier returned from hurricane relief duty in Florida, had passed away early that morning after arriving at his carefully chosen deer hunting location on family farmland.

In keeping with Esprit "policy, this is not an obituary of Mike. This isn't intended to be great literature either. Rather, it is a celebration of a few of the many, many fond memories of his life that remain in the District.

In grade-school report card language, Mike "Worked hard and played hard." He shared his philosophy on life, as stated above, with longtime friend Larry Strunk recently.

Officially, Mike's assigned work was as a civil engineer, supporting operations and maintenance activities at the District's locks and dams. But to many, he was the glue between the technical and engineering aspects of work support, the District's navigation and those who did the hard, dirty, hands-on work every day. "Mike communicated so very well with the blue-collar workers in the field," Larry Strunk related.

Mike was also the Illinois River Area Flood Fight Team Engineer for the stretch of that river in the St. Louis District when floods attacked the region. Readiness Branch Chief Jake Scanlon said of Mike Kruckeberg in that capacity, "He was always ready to go to the action. He was a real leader who knew how to get things done. Nothing was too tough for him. If he didn't know how to do something he would find out."

One of Mike's characteristics was his thoroughness and attention to detail. Co-worker at the Rivers Project Office, Stan Ebersohl called Kruckeberg, "almost over-thorough. He would come into my office to explain something, and before long I would find myself saying, 'Mike, I don't want to know all that." Larry Strunk said it another way: "I'd tell him, 'Mike, we're not building a watch. I just want to know what time it is.'"

But all agreed that Kruckeberg was an extraordinarily talented engineer who left no stones unturned. When he presented an issue or solution, you knew he had covered all of the angles and considered all of the alternatives. The job was simply done correctly when he finished it.

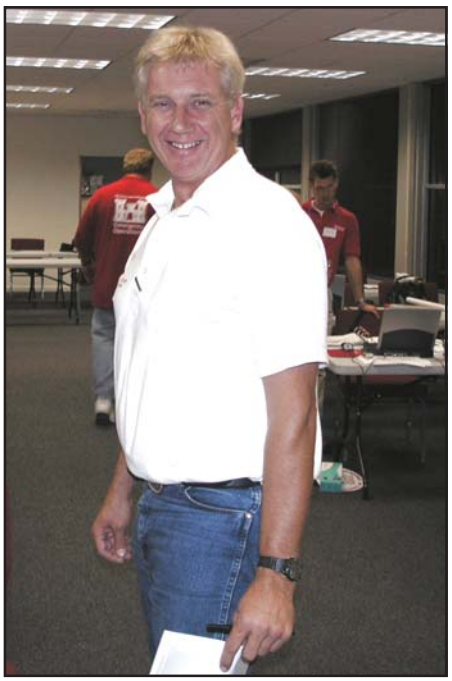
As Stan Ebersohl also told, "Mike handled all the marine and admiralty claims. When he testified in court on the necessary repairs, you knew that he had a firm grip on all aspects of what had happened."

That is a small snapshot of Kruck's professional side. That's the side that many outside of the District knew and respected so well.

But there was an after-work side as well.

"He loved to socialize," said Larry Strunk, who spent many happy weekends boating and water-skiing with Mike and his daughters Katie and Courtney. "He was extraordinarily dedicated to those two girls," Larry said. "He and I were both kind of halfway athletes – average in many sports and excelling in none. He conveyed that joy of sports to his daughters and they really experienced a broad variety of athletic opportunities through him," Larry concluded.

He had a practical streak as well, according to Stan Ebersohl, who said, "He had that old farm boy common sense in him." Ebersohl told how about 18 months ago, a secretary at the Rivers Project hit a deer coming to work in the dark. We were looking at the damage to her car and discussing that, he told. But "…when Kruck heard about it, he tugged on his coveralls and said, 'let's go get it.'" They went to the scene and before long Kruck was on his way to get the meat processed.



Mike Kruckeberg in Mobile Al., en route to Flordia to support Hurricane Francis victims this fall.

Carol Cotter, who worked closely with Kruck on hurricane relief duty in Florida credited him for extraordinary leadership capabilities. "He was great at managing crazy situations." Carol told how she had previously consulted him about career decisions and always prized his straight forward answers, but she related. "I had no idea how smart he really was until I got the chance to work with him every day. He was awesome."

"There was not a day that he didn't enjoy life," Stan Ebersohl observed. And the morning he left us he was doing just that, preparing for a day enjoying the thrill of a hunt.

"Lord, what a ride." In his too-short life, Mike Kruckeberg touched so very many people, and he left them better for the experience.

Retiree's Corner

The retirees had their luncheon on November 18, at the Salad Bowl.

Joe Bisher related that he had a very good hunting season, this year. First he got a large turkey. He dressed and prepared it at his "country estate". He intended to have it for dinner. Unfortunately, after he put it in the oven, he got distracted doing some outside work and forgot it was in the oven. When he came in it was "charcoal". Needless to say, the only pleasure he got was to have shot the bird. From the picture, it was a good sized bird. On the other hand, he also killed a 14 point deer and had pictures to prove. This he is having processed and will have his wife cook.

Wally Feld mentioned that the District has about 35 employees deployed overseas and state side. That is a large contingent. Other Districts also have employees deployed, but he didn't know the numbers. Some of the St. Louis District employees are on repeat deployments overseas. Unfortunately, the news media doesn't pick up on the work being done to help rebuild the infrastructures in these foreign countries. (God Bless those brave employees that are there.)

Lew Scheuermann met Carol Sherril and Mary Maddox, (both formerly with the Operations Division) recently at the bowling alley. They are both enjoying their retirement and said they had only one regret-not retiring sooner.

Larry McCarthy said that he and his wife will be very busy again this Christmas, decorating their home with the thirteen trees, (Yes, he said 13 trees.) They have one in every room and in the hall and foyer. Most of them are rather tall, but some are little. (That should get them in the Spirit.)

Don Wampler hasn't been too successful contacting Bob Maxwell. (Bob has the distinction of currently being the only "nonagenarian" of the retirees, to our knowledge.) Everytime he called Bob he would get his answering machine. Eventually, Bob's son from New York called Don and said that Bob is slowing down a bit and has stopped some of his volunteering. Bob was currently taking a little vacation and would be in touch shortly. (For the uninformed a nonagenarian is someone in their 90's.)

Bill Thomure is still teaching billiards at his living complex. In fact, he is so good, that his pupil is now beating him at the game. It doesn't bother him, though, since he now has a great competitor. It will help both maintain their skills.

Charlie Denzel mentioned that it was much easier getting on an airplane with a chain saw than with a set of golf clubs.

He and his wife went to Florida to visit their daughter and family, just after the several hurricanes. Being a great dad, he went prepared to help with the cleanup. He said they had a fair amount of damage, but that no one was injured.

He did enjoy the look on the various airport security people when they saw the chain saw. It did cause a lot of questions and raised eyebrows. (Knowing Charlie, he probably gave them a lot of "good" answers.

FLASHBACK October 1969

Four District personnel returned after supporting recovery efforts from Hurricane Camille in New Orleans and Mobil. They were: Herbert Cooper from the Rend Lake Resident Office, Davis Hoffman, William Taphorn and Robert Wich all from Engineering Division.

Bill Richardson from the Personnel Office, directed a Department of the Army "Conference Leadership Course" for local employees.

Rusty Williams spoke to the Chester Ill., Rotary Club about the Kaskaskia Navigation Project.

Erv Baumeyer, Jim Luther and Dennis Gould participated in Career Night at DuBourg High School.

The Shelbyville Project's public relations received a boost. Larry Meier, Milt Walter, Al Anderson, Gary Webb, Ed Henne, Wayne Williams, Phil Jenkins, Bob Kennedy and Farrell Burnett either conducted tours or gave presentions.

Ten long term employees of the District retired during October 1969, taking with them an aggregate of 336 years of experience.

- Wilburn Hitt from Mississippi River Project Office with 42 yrs
- Paul Miller from Operations Division's Plant Branch with 40 yrs
- Ray Ziegler from Lock and Dam 24 with 38 yrs
- Dan Gifford from Planning Division with 37 yrs
- Sam Hoffman from Engineering Division's, Foundations Branch with 37 yrs
- Cliff Meeker from St Louis Flood Protection Resident Office with 33 yrs
- Herman McKinney from Engineering Divisiion, Hydraulics Branch with 31 yrs
- Elston Skinner from Lock and Dam 25 with 30 yrs
- Ed Sticka from Office of Administrative Services with 28 yrs
- Charles Torryeson from Engineering Division, Design Branch with 21 yrs

The next Retiree's Luncheon will be on January 20th, at the Salad Bowl Restaurant, 3949 Lindell, St.Louis, MO 63108.

We start about 11:00am. Everybody's welcome. Hope to see you soon.

Robert Wich wrote us concerning Loren E. Christofferson. Loren passed away on December 6th.

Loren worked as a Civil Engineering Technician in the Specifications Section of Design Branch.

He retired from the Corps of Engineers in 1983.

Good will to everyone.