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Mel Price: On Target, On Time

Story and photos by Alan Dooley, PA



The Rock Island District gate lifting crane Quad Cities easily lifted the 225-ton Illinois leaf of the main chamber miter gate from its down stream location Thursday afternoon, May 10.

Thursday, May 10 provided an auspicious start to a scheduled 53-day repair and maintenance program for the Melvin Price Locks and Dam's 1200-foot main chamber near Alton, Ill.

Throughout the week a six-district crew and equipment had been assembling at the huge concrete structure that spans the Mississippi River.

At 6 a.m. the main chamber was closed. All traffic was diverted to the adjacent 600-foot auxiliary lock. All tows pushing more than six barges are required to split into two sections, or cuts, in order to traverse the smaller chamber. Unlike locks with 600-foot chambers upstream, the smaller chamber at Mel Price is not equipped

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Commander's Perspective



Col. Lewis F. Setliff III

What summer slow down?

Work is continuing at a feverish pace throughout the District and I couldn't be prouder of the way everyone has and is meeting challenges.

Recently we stood up to be ready for possible flooding from the Missouri River. In the end, the primary damage occurred above our District in the Kansas City region. But the effort to stand up our emergency operations center and to prepare for possible challenges was certainly not wasted. We can chalk our efforts up to training and readiness.

One thing that came through loud and clear was the importance of communicating with stakeholders and the public accurately and completely.

Many of you aided that effort in your dealings with counterparts from other agencies and local government entities and you helped PA to perform a similar mission with the media. Well done. It gives me great confidence that we know what to do when the challenge of flooding does indeed come our way in the future.

Simultaneously, we have embarked on a project to upgrade and update equipment at both ends of the main chamber at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam. As I write, this project is more than half done and on or ahead of schedule.

There are two messages being illustrated here.

First, we are working smartly. By combining three projects – upgrading the miter gates on the down stream end, replacing lift gate cables and also replacing motors and electric controllers – in one closure, we are minimizing negative impact on a very important stakeholder, the navigation industry.

The way we are able to do this is important too. While our Service Base team is attacking the upstream lift gates, their counterparts from Rock Island have brought their equipment and expertise to bear on the miter gates. When we saw them snatch those gate leafs and lay them down smoothly, their expertise and experience from doing this 31 times last year alone, was obvious. We're also being supported by individuals from four more districts: St. Paul, Vicksburg, Pittsburgh and Louisville.

This is also a very important demonstration of how different parts of the Corps can be arranged and matrixed together to work as a smoothly functioning team. Mike Feldmann, our on-scene project manager reports that he has seen no "us and them" issues, but rather, a smoothly working team working issues together as a unit.

Finally, with a truly unexpected exception, we have been carrying out a difficult job with large, heavy equipment and materials in a high risk environment without any safety issues. I attribute this to expert and determined up front planning, daily re-emphasis and a work environment where people are aware of their own risks and are watching each others backs to ensure everyone's safety. As we move past the half-way point at Mel Price I could not be prouder of the way everyone is thinking and acting safely.

Safety was further emphasized during our highly successful safety day event in the HQ building Wednesday, June 6. With 200 people in the auditorium and dozens more linking in by phone from our projects, we had a great time exercising our safety minds. It was great fun, but it was also deadly serious. Safety is job number one for all of us. Without it, nothing else is possible.

The St. Louis District is a leader, a bench marker and a standard setter. From the longest serving veterans to our newest family members, I see nothing but enthusiasm, professionalism and desire to excel at all you do. You make me proud.

Hooah! and *Essayons*.



US Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District

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- District Commander COL Lewis F. Setliff III
Chief, Public Affairs Alan J. Dooley 314 331-8002
Editor Nicole Dalrymple 314 331-8068
Design and Layout Chris M. Roberts

Address mail to: US Army Engineer District, St. Louis, ATTN: CEMVS-PA, 1222 Spruce, St. Louis, MO 63103-2833, Phone (314) 331-8002/8068



As work proceeds on the Melvin Price Locks 1200-foot main chamber (far right) and on the miter gates laying horizontal on the tent-covered barge (left), traffic continues to flow through the 600-foot auxiliary chamber. Efficiency and safety of double-cut lockages through that facility were enhanced by two Corps helper boats working around the clock throughout the main chamber closure.

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with an electric hauling motor to aid double cut lockages.

To compensate, two St. Louis District work boats, MV Grand Tower and MV Pathfinder are on hand around the clock to pull the first sections from the lock chamber and then to assist in aligning the two sections for rapid, safe re-coupling with the rest of the tow.

The 53-day, \$5.6 million effort has been carried out by a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers heavy maintenance crew, primarily from the St. Louis and Rock Island Districts. Individuals and small groups from the St. Paul, Vicksburg, Louisville and Pittsburgh Districts are rounding out the team.

After morning diving operations to ensure that the concrete sill under the up stream lift gates was clear, the Rock Island District’s gate lift crane Quad Cities moved into position to lift the first of two downstream miter gate leaves from the water.

Demonstrating competence that grows from experience, the Rock Island crew, which removed and replaced 31 similar gates during 2006, deftly boosted the 220-ton Illinois gate leaf from the water and steadied it alongside the crane barge to enable some 85 tons of silt and mud to be washed with fire hoses from the huge structure’s internal ribs.

Work was halted as thunder rattled in the distance and lightening crackled to the west – safety first. Soon the storm blew past and Quad Cities and her burden were shifted to a berth along side a covered barge on the Illinois shore. Work went ahead there to finish washing down the 65-foot wide, 57-foot high steel gate before it was laid down in a horizontal position to be reworked.

A total work force of as many as 80 Corps employees has worked two 12-hour shifts, seven days a week since the work started. With 6,500 lockages of about 70 million tons annually, there is no good time to

close the main lock chamber. So an all-out effort has been mounted to coordinate with the navigation industry and to minimize impacts.

“We made the case to capture the necessary funding to multi-task several critical elements into one closure,” said Project Manager Mike Feldmann, from St. Louis. “We are making major upgrades to the miter gates at the down stream end of the lock chamber. At the same time we are replacing the more than two miles of 1.5 inch steel cables that raise and lower the lift gates on the upstream end. And finally, we are replacing aging electric motors and electronic controls for the lift gates,” Feldmann concluded.

“This might otherwise require two or more closures,” Feldmann said. While the Melvin Price Locks and Dam are the newest on the Mississippi, at 18 years old, they were ready for necessary work to ensure reliable, safe operation. In addition, failing to maintain them in good operating condition could have resulted in an unscheduled emergency closure which likely would have lasted longer than the tightly-scheduled period ongoing.

In addition to the timing of the work, the way it is being done says volumes about how the Corps of Engineers can tailor and focus work force and equipment to get the most bang for the buck.

The St. Louis District has neither a crane that can lift the gate leaves (the proper name for the two 220-ton structures – only five tons less than the Statue of Liberty) nor sufficient numbers of maintenance experts to carry out the work at both ends of the chamber, Feldmann indicated. So Rock Island is doing the miter gate work and St. Louis is completing work on the lift gates at the other end of the chamber. Individuals from other districts are being worked into the two main groups to lend special expertise.

“We all speak the same language, use the same terminology and identical



processes,” Feldmann explained. “I’m here 12-plus hours a day and talk to people from the heads of teams to the most junior laborers. I have not heard a word of ‘us and them.’ uttered. I’ve seen nothing but good spirit, cooperation and helping the other guy. This says a lot about how we have organized this work and maybe even more about our readiness to meet emergencies in the future,” he said. “We’ve assembled a real team in every sense of the word.”

While processes and plans are being followed scrupulously, examples of adaptation and innovation abound.

When the first miter gate leaf was lifted from the water, it brought 170,000 pounds of silt and debris with it. That took nearly a day to wash out before the gate could be laid down. While that was going on, a tow boat was positioned in the chamber, with its bow against the side from which the gate leaf had been removed and its propellers pointing at the remaining gate. The prop wash removed the bulk of the sediment in the remaining

gate leaf, substantially reducing time needed to prepare to lay that gate leaf down.

In another example, safely and efficiently handling the 1.5 inch thick steel cables has been a challenge, especially in 140 to 160-foot lengths. “But we have some fellows here from Vicksburg who work with the mat laying team, which make and place mats made of concrete beams and steel cables on banks to stabilize them. They’ve been able to give us a lot of hints on ways to do this better and safer,” Mike Feldmann said.

While the work with the huge gates and steel cables is most visible, Feldmann is quick to praise the part of the St. Louis group that is laboring deep, out of sight within the concrete structure. “The electricians are doing some dirty work, completely out of sight. And they’re doing an unsung, bang up job. When they get done they’ll have replaced virtually all of the electrical components of the lift gates. That’s critical,” he said.

Some of the most important work at the other end of the chamber will be invisible as well once the gate leaves are in the water. There, tensioning bolts on the bottom of the x-shaped cross members that stiffen the gates are being replaced by a single huge steel pin. “We used to have to dewater the gates and reset the tension from the top and bottom. That could easily cost \$1 million and require two or more days,” Feldmann noted. “With the new arrangement we can re-tension the gates from the top only while they are in the water. That saves time and money,” he emphasized.

“We’ve planned well. We’re executing well. We’re heading toward an on-time completion. July 3rd is a magic date, both because we expect to see 15-barge tows again routinely passing through the main chamber then and because we want everyone to be able to sit back and enjoy our nation’s birthday – with a day off,” Feldmann concluded with a smile. “I’m confident we’re going to make it.”

Much Anticipated Water Trail Debuts on Mississippi River

Story and Photos by Nicole Dalrymple, PA

Outdoor enthusiasts celebrated the much anticipated dedication of the Pike’s Passage portion of a new Mississippi River Water Trail, Saturday morning, May 19. The riverine version of a hiking trail provides designated day use and primitive camping areas along a 27.8 mile portion of the river from Lock and Dam 22 in Saverton, Mo., to Lock and Dam 24 in Clarksville, Mo.

The dedication ceremony, held on the Clarksville riverfront, was part of the first ever Great River Rendezvous, a day of fun and activities that included bicycle time trials, a kayak race and paddling clinics.

The plan for the trail was to start at the top of the District boundary and

work down, explained Kim Rea, Rivers Project Office natural resource specialist and lead project coordinator on the water trail initiative. But the ultimate goal is a 300-mile-long water trail that runs the length of the Rivers Project Mississippi River project boundary which the St. Louis District oversees.



Members of the St. Louis County Canoe and Kayak Club gather near the Clarksville, MO., riverfront to celebrate the dedication of the Pike’s Passage portion of the new Mississippi River Water Trail. In the background is the tow, Motor Vessel Cooperative Venture approaching the downstream end of Lock and Dam 24.

The Pike’s Passage portion is in what’s known as Pool 24. Future



A cooperative agreement for the newly established Mississippi River Water Trail was signed May 19 following a dedication ceremony in Clarksville, Mo. From L to R, Jeff Greenstreet, co-chair of the Mississippi River Water Trail Association; Col. Lewis F. Setliff, District Engineer; Pamela Dillon, executive director of the American Canoe Association, and Beth Pitrolo, Office of Counsel.

sections will include Pools 25, 26 and 27 and the open river down to Cairo, Illinois. Discussions are also ongoing regarding the lower 80 miles of the Illinois River and plans are being made to also include the Illinois River that is incorporated in the Rivers Project Office management area.

The decision to name the trail in Pool 24 – Pike’s Passage – resulted from much brainstorming and the realization that the river is bordered by a Pike County in Illinois and Missouri, explained Sarah Miller a biologist at the Rivers Project Office. It seemed a natural moniker.

The Mayor of Clarksville, Jo Anne Smiley, and Mayor Pro Temp Kathy Smith of Louisiana, Mo., were on hand for the dedication ceremony. Also in attendance were Pamela Dillon, executive director of the American Canoe Association; Jeff Greenstreet, co-chair of the Mississippi River Water Trail Association, and District Commander Col. Lewis F. Setliff III.

Pamela Dillon described it as a day to celebrate, thanking the Mississippi River Water Trail Association, the Army Corps and all partners for making it happen. Organizers appreciated Dillon

for traveling all the way from her offices in Northern Virginia to attend the ceremony. She in turn, praised the Mississippi River as a beautiful venue and resource, describing Pool 24 as one of the most beautiful sections of the river.

Dillon looks forward to seeing the trail extended and said the audience might wonder, “Why water trails?” She explained that water trail participation is at its height with more than 32 million paddlers

nationwide, to include coastal and sea kayaking. She also noted that the entry level to the sport is experiencing the largest growth. Rea said the Rivers Project Office has noted a surge in paddling recreation, including both canoes and kayaks, on the Mississippi River.

Col. Setliff lauded those behind the scenes who put forth a tremendous amount of effort the last few years getting this first section of the water trail completed. He also thanked those cooperating in the partnership.

“An accomplishment like this takes people with vision,” Setliff said. He left the podium emphasizing the Corps’ continued commitment to the water trail and its extension.

The water trail partners for the Pike’s Passage section include the Army Corps, American Canoe Association, Mississippi River Water Trail Association, St. Louis County Canoe and Kayak Club, Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Also involved in the water trail initiative were the cities of Louisiana and Clarksville, Missouri. As the project

moves downriver additional partners will come onboard in support of the water trail.

Pat McGinnis, project manager for Riverlands, read a letter sent by Bruce Carr, executive director of the Audubon Chapter of Missouri. Carr wrote of his enthusiasm for this “new and exciting way to enjoy the Mississippi River,” and mentioned the heart healthy benefits of the paddling sports. This reach of the river is “a rich source of culture and nature” and he expects paddlers on the river to increase now that the first section of water trail is completed.

Jeff Greenstreet, co-chair of the Mississippi River Water Trail Association, voiced his appreciation for the “tireless effort from the Army Corps and the St. Louis County Canoe and Kayak Club.” He said that the first 30 miles of the trail represent “a significant effort” and the association is committed to making the trail a success and keeping the momentum going with efforts moving to the establishment of the next reach in Pool 25.

The newly formed Water Trail Association will assist in operating and maintaining the trail, doing many of the individual site checks. The rest areas, also known as day-use areas, are lunch spots, many on beaches. The primitive campsites include fire rings, a cleared sleeping area, and rules and regulations.

At the end of the ceremony, Col. Setliff, Dillon and Greenstreet signed the cooperative agreement as a group of paddlers gathered at the river’s edge to witness the signing. A buzz of enthusiasm grew among the crowd as people noted the name on the towboat approaching the downstream end of Lock 24. It read “Cooperative Venture”.

“It couldn’t have been more perfect,” Rea said. “The establishment of a 300-mile-long water trail is definitely a cooperative venture and having the tow by that name there, while it was a coincidence, represented a great end to the ceremony.”



Katy Manar, of Rivers Project Office, discusses the benefits and features of the new water trail.

Reflecting on the long road to the mid-May ceremony, Rea described how the genesis of the water trail came about after Pat McGinnis read an article about water trails in an outdoor magazine in the summer of 2005 and challenged his staff to create one on the Mississippi River.

From August to December 2005, Rea and several staff members at the Rivers Project Office, including Sue Abel, James Broyles, Matt Chlibec, Charlie Deutsch, Chris Garcia, Katy Manar, Sarah Miller and Karen Watwood, researched the feasibility and interest in creating a water trail. They gathered insight and information from personnel with comparable trails in the United States. The assistance of the Washington Water Trail Association and Corps personnel who partnered in the development of the Northwest Discovery Trail was invaluable.

She explained how they talked to area paddle organizations about their needs and desires for such a trail. The response was enthusiastic and many said the trail was a long time coming. Everything culminated in a presentation before the St. Louis County Canoe and Kayak Club last September and the commitment to have the Pool 24 portion of the trail ready in time for the rendezvous.

project had been fun but following that presentation our enthusiasm for the project tripled. This project has been very rewarding for me and Sarah as well as many others within our office because we can see how excited the paddling community is about the trail. Not only are we excited about the trail but we are excited about the new



The race is on! A kayaker races the length of the newly-established Pike's Passage water trail as part of the Great River Rendezvous.

partnerships that have been formed as a result of this project.”

“As Sarah Miller and I presented to the Club in September of 2006, we realized how important this water trail was to the paddlers in our local communities,” Rea explained. “Up to that point the

“We are on the fringe of being one of the first Corps of Engineers water trails,” Rea said. “With the exception of the Northwest Discovery Water Trail, we were only able to find projects with small scale trails. The only trail that is comparable in length and diversity of mission to the Mississippi River would be the Northwest Discovery Water Trail.”

Taking into account all the Corps expenses, the Pool 24 project cost less than \$10,000, including brochures, signage and grills for the primitive camping areas.

The benefit to starting with Pool 24 was the presence of a lot of public land, Rea explained. As the trail gets closer to the St. Louis metropolitan area and further south, a greater amount of coordination will be required.

“We are testing the water in Pools 24 and 25,” Rea said. “Pool 26 [which is near Alton, Illinois] will offer a lot of different challenges.”

To date a conceptual map is done for Pool 25 and the Rivers Project staff hopes to begin work by the end of June. “Our plan is to have Pool 25 done by this time next year,” Rea said.

Rea greatly appreciates the staff at Rivers Project, including Sarah Miller, who played a tremendous role in identifying sites and GIS mapping.

“Without the team we would never have been able to meet the May deadline for dedicating the first section of the trail,” Rea said. “It’s never about one person, I was lucky enough to be able to lead this effort but it was the Riverlands staff and our partners that made this trail a reality.”

So, while there are other, more daunting sections of the trail to come, Rea and the Rivers Project staff are up to the challenge and look forward to the day when a completed, high quality water trail will be a reality on the 300 miles of the Mississippi River in the St. Louis District.



Middle Miss Partnership: It works!

By Brian Johnson, PM, and Deanne Strauser, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

What do you get when you combine federal and state governments, non-governmental organizations, and local interests? No, not a recipe for disaster, but a collaborative planning group that utilizes the expertise and input of the full spectrum of users!

An example would be the dynamic working group known as the Middle Mississippi River Partnership (MMRP). It is a partnership that includes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Missouri and Illinois State governments, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and conservation and environmental groups to include the American Land Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, and The Nature Conservancy.

The MMRP was formed in 2004 and has a stated goal of improving the

Middle Mississippi River (MMR) by improving economic interests, and restoring and enhancing the natural resources of the river corridor from its confluence with the Missouri River near St. Louis, Mo., to its confluence with the Ohio River at Cairo, Ill., a distance of 200 miles. The partners all have different priorities when it comes to the river, but they share a common goal.

The Middle Mississippi River region, with the newly established MMRP, and strong stakeholder base, was ready to take the next step, which was to accept the challenge of conducting meaningful watershed level natural resource based collaborative planning.

With the backing of the MMRP, the St. Louis District submitted the Middle Mississippi River regional corridor as one of the pilot collaborative planning study efforts outlined by Congress in the FY 06 Energy and

Water Development Appropriations Act. In May 2006 it was one of the five planning efforts selected from throughout the country to conduct planning using a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency approach.

Almost immediately additional agencies requested to join the Partnership, quickly increasing the level of communication and collaboration within the region. An initial summit workshop was held in July 2006 and over 250 stakeholders from throughout the corridor attended to share information, discuss regional priorities, and identify common issues and goals.

The Middle Mississippi River Regional Corridor (MMRRC) focuses on three main areas as part of its planning effort:

- 1) Conducting collaborative natural resource based river reach assessments which focus on identifying needs and opportunities in each reach.
- 2) Developing a hydro-geomorphic planning model which will help drive future planning efforts in the corridor.
- 3) Further development of a unifying set of basin level goals, objectives and strategies, which in turn result in implementable and actionable items for the regional stakeholders.

To complete detailed reach assessments over 200 miles of river and floodplain, the Middle Mississippi River was divided into five reaches, each approximately 40 miles in length.

Lead coordinators were established for each reach. In a true testament to the interest and desire of agencies to participate in a collaborative planning process, each reach has had a different agency step up and volunteer to serve as the coordinator. Individuals from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), American Land Conservancy (ALC), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) are all serving as reach coordinators. Their charge is to prepare



The Middle Mississippi River Partnership gathered for its first river summit in Chester, Illinois on July 12, 2006. The Middle Mississippi River Partnership is dedicated to aligning the efforts of multiple agencies so that the greatest benefactor of everyone's work is the river. (Photo by Alan Dooley, PA)



The river's natural forces formed the River Mile 100 Islands after the Army Corps notched the dikes in the 1970s. (Aerial photo by Russell Elliott, PA)

a series of reach assessments which will be used to guide future ecosystem restoration and natural resource based planning within the corridor. There are team members from each partner agency on each reach team.

The agencies responsible for natural resource management in the region have also expressed a strong desire for a basin level planning tool to help guide and focus ecosystem restoration efforts. That need has resulted in an effort to create a hydrogeomorphic (HGM) model for Middle Mississippi River corridor. This GIS-based model will incorporate soil type, flood frequency and topography to predict native habitat conditions. This proven planning tool will document pre-settlement ecosystem conditions, document existing ecosystem conditions, and define the habitat-based restoration potential for the MMR. Once completed, the regional partners intend to employ this planning tool as part of both collaborative and internal planning efforts (including non-

environmental project planning efforts). The outputs of the model will drive future ecosystem restoration, preservation, and conservation planning and decision making.

The final challenge lies in the further development of a unifying set of goals, objectives, and strategies for collaborative, multi-jurisdictional natural resource planning. The focus of this effort will be developing implementable actions for all agencies, improving communication between agencies, and leveraging future resources, and striving to balance both the economic and environmental needs of the region. Together with reach assessments and the HGM results, this effort is expected to greatly further the planning needs of the region.

The products from this study will tie into other ongoing efforts within the region. These include Missouri's Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy, the Corps' Navigation & Environmental Sustainability Program and Environmental Management Program, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Threatened and Endangered Species Management Program, the Illinois Fish and Wildlife Action Plan, as well as several non-governmental programs such as The Nature Conservancy's Upper Mississippi River Program.

Consistent with the Mississippi River's Congressional designation as both a Nationally Significant Transportation System and Nationally Significant Ecosystem, the Middle Mississippi River Partnership is founded around the principle that you can have both economic development AND environmental sustainability. And together they can work in harmony and sustain one another. The Middle Mississippi River Regional Corridor study, in concert with the MMRP is working to make great strides in that direction.

Passing of LTG(R) Joseph K. Bratton

Corps Teammates,

I am sad to report that the 45th Chief of Engineers, LTG(R) Joseph K. Bratton, died on June 2, 2007. He had been suffering from Parkinson's disease for quite a while, but died suddenly from an aneurism.

LTG(R) Bratton was a patriot and a master at his craft. A graduate of the US Military Academy at West Point, he went on to serve in both Korea and Vietnam. Many of you may have worked with or for LTG(R) Bratton while he was with the Corps. He served as South Atlantic Division Engineer and briefly as Deputy Chief of Engineers before being confirmed as Chief, a title he held from October of 1980 to September of 1984.

While he served as the Chief of Engineers, Army family housing more than doubled to its highest level since WWII; two Israeli airbases, required by the Camp David Accord, were completed six months ahead of schedule; the processing time for permits was cut in half due to implementation of simplified review procedures; and Corps disaster response teams were called on to help after the eruption of Mount St. Helens.

LTG(R) Bratton's wife passed away last year. He leaves behind three surviving children and a nation grateful for his selfless service and dedication.

Essayons!

R. L. VAN ANTWERP
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding



Van Antwerp Assumes Command

Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp took command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a ceremony in Headquarters on May 29.

“The key to the Corps’ accomplishments is its people,” said Gen. George Casey, Jr., the Chief of Staff of the Army, during the ceremony. “I am confident that in the Van Antwerps you have a fine team that will lead you into the future.”

“I want to thank you for the warm welcome,” said Van Antwerp. “I feel like I’m back home. This is where we want to be, and it feels good.

“I want to leave you with a word,” Van Antwerp continued. “The word is team, and each letter is important. The **T** in team is trust. Frankly, we’ve got some trust restoration to do. How is trust restored? It’s done by delivery. We’re going to say what we’re going to do, and we’re going to do what we say, so that people can count on us.

“The **E** is for excellence,” Van Antwerp said. “Excellence comes from passion. It comes from a person waking up in the morning, and if you love what

you do, you’re going to put your whole heart into it.

“The **A** is all about people,” Van Antwerp said. “It’s going to be mission first, but it’s all about people. I’m looking for people with character. I’m looking for people with competency, and to be truthful, your attitude is worth about twice what your abilities are. And I’m looking for people with commitment. You’ve got to be committed to what we’re about, down to the last person.

“The **M** is about motivation,” Van Antwerp concluded. “That’s the long way of saying I’m going to give you my best. I’m happy to be part of your team; thank you for this opportunity to serve.”

Van Antwerp’s previous assignment was as Commanding General, U.S. Army Accessions Command and Deputy Commanding General for Initial Military Training at Fort Monroe, Va. The Army Accessions Command consists of U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Fort Knox, Ky.; U.S. Army Cadet Command, Fort

Monroe; and the U.S. Army Training Center, Fort Jackson, S.C. Additionally, Van Antwerp exercised Department of the Army executive agent authority over the Military Entrance Processing Command.

Command assignments include the U.S. Army Maneuver

Support Center and Fort Leonard Wood/Commandant, U.S. Army Engineer School; Los Angeles District during the Northridge Earthquake of 1994; South Atlantic Division; and the 326th Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Other assignments include USACE Chief of Staff; Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, Washington, DC; Director, Office of Competitive Sourcing, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Research, Development and Acquisition), Washington, DC; Executive Assistant to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC; Executive Office, Office of the Chief of Engineers, Washington, DC; Chief, Military Engineering and Construction Division, U.S. Army Western Command, Fort Shafter, Hawaii; Executive Officer, 84th Engineer Battalion, 45th General Support Group, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and Instructor, Department of Mechanics, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.

Van Antwerp graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1972. He completed Ranger, Airborne, and Air Assault training, the Engineer Officer Basic Course and the Engineer Officer Advanced Course. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan, and a Master of Business Administration Degree from Long Island University in New York. He is a Registered Professional Engineer.

Van Antwerp and his wife, Paula, have three sons, Jeff, Luke and Rob; and two daughters, Julia and Kathryn.



Van Antwerp’s wife, Paula, holds the Bible as he takes the oath of office from Gen. George Casey, Jr., Chief of Staff of the Army. (Photo by F.T. Eyre, HESCA)





In Memoriam



Ronald L. Jackson 1949-2007

The sorrow is still fresh for Gloria Jackson, whose beloved husband, Ronald Jackson, a shift chief at Locks 27, died suddenly April 16 following a heart attack at their home in Godfrey, Illinois.

Ron was not only a much-loved husband and father but he was also a valued member of the military and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's family. After serving as a U.S. Marine for 12 years, Ron found his niche with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, first at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam and then at Locks 27, working for the District for over 20 years.

It was actually at Locks 27 that Ron and Gloria first met. Prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks, Locks 27 used to be open to the public and people could come watch tows lock through. Gloria, who was new to Illinois in 1991, was invited by a friend to go meet a gentleman at the locks. Little did she know that she was meeting her future husband. The couple dated for four years and married in Battle Creek, Michigan on September 1, 1995.

Just about five years ago the couple found a fun outlet for their mutual love of music – karaoke. Ron loved music and knew how to play the

bass guitar, keyboards and drums. "He was extremely talented," Gloria said. "He loved performing gospel music and rhythm and blues."

Ron also loved to write songs and Gloria's favorite is one he wrote in memory of her mother, who died when Gloria was 10 years old. While Ron wrote music and played instruments, he was not the front man and did not sing, Gloria remembers. But when the two got into karaoke, she said Ron found a whole new joy in entertainment and found that he in fact, loved to sing. His signature performance song became Teddy Pendergrass's "Close the Door." Gloria remembers with a smile that he'd "woo the whole crowd" with his performance.

The two started their own business, Karaoke Business – Jackson and Jackson, and entertained several nights a week. Ron always wanted to be sharply dressed and Gloria estimates there are probably 30 to 40 different suits, in a rainbow of colors, with matching accessories, in his closet. Gloria would dress to match and the couple would be ready for a night of song, dance and fellowship.

"We were so close," Gloria remembers. "We did everything together. He was a good man and a good husband."

Ron had an incredible aptitude for all things electronic and was described as a computer "wiz." Gloria recalls that he could read a manual on a new piece of electronic equipment and shortly afterwards be operating it to its maximum. "He loved to learn and he loved to read," she said.

John Tatum, electrician at

Locks 27, has fond memories of Ron, remembering he was into computers, programming, and writing and playing music. "He was a smart man, very personable," Tatum said. "I miss Ron. He was a very good man."

Eric Davis, assistant lockmaster at Locks 27, knew Ron for many years and remembers him as funny and trustworthy. As shift chief, Ron was often in charge of the lock in place of the lockmaster. Because the lock is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the shift chief is in "total control of the lock" outside of normal business hours.

"I always felt confident and comfortable with Ron in charge at the lock," Davis said.

Ron retired from the District on March 3, 2006 but decided to come back as a retired annuitant on August 7, 2006. The fact that Ron had been retired only six months before agreeing to come back as a retired annuitant to help out is a testament to the way he lived his life – selflessly, and what a large role his Corps family played in his life.

Ron has two grown children, his son, Ronald Jackson and a daughter, Francine Jackson, and two grandchildren, Alexis Jackson and Maykell Jackson, all residing in Alton, Illinois. Both his personal and Corps families are greatly saddened by his untimely passing.



Ron and Gloria Jackson dressed to impress for a night of karaoke.



The Art of Multitasking Workshop

Story by Nicole Dalrymple, PA

CEFMS, ARIMS, NSPS, Pure Edge, the boss’s calendar. Whenever a new computer support program is placed into use or a new process is required to manage the flow of administrative tasks, there is intensive training. But people change jobs, time passes and some functions aren’t performed very often and are thus easily forgotten.

To meet this challenge, the St. Louis District hosted its first ever offsite training workshop for administrative staff May 2-3 at the Pere Marquette State Park in Grafton, Illinois. Thirty-five secretarial and administrative employees from around the District attended the two-day training session – The Art of Multitasking – hosted by the District Executive Office.

Kathy Bradley, Sonja Moore and Vel Swindle, executive office secretaries, coordinated all aspects of the workshop, which started with getting it authorized by the District’s Corporate Board. They also handled the contract with the hotel, coordinated logistical and computer support, planned the training schedule, set up speakers and even conducted some of the training.

The intent was to provide all the District’s secretarial and administrative employees comprehensive training that included a review of correspondence procedures and instructions on office appointment calendars. Other processes covered included an introduction to a new awards standard operating procedure, a demonstration of the new Pure Edge forms and ARIMS records programs, and team building exercises.

“Refresher training and instruction in new systems and procedures is an ongoing need in the ever-changing work place,” explained Sonja Moore, secretary to the District Engineer and

Executive Assistant. “It’s even more necessary with more and more organizational functions being delegated to the admin staff. This training, along with team building exercises, connected field office personnel with District staff to help develop a sense of team work. We were fortunate in having the most knowledgeable people within the District provide the training.”

During the workshop, presentations were given by Executive Office staff and members of Human Resources, Resource Management and Information Management offices.

From IM, Christy Huskey trained on a new forms program called Pure Edge; Sharon Leeker discussed records management, and Anne Meehan presented calendar functions. Molly Wiegand and Patti O’Connor from HR provided information on recruitment, resume tips, classification, in-processing, student programs, comp time and the new National Security Personnel System. Jennifer Landsaw, also from HR, provided training on awards.

Chris Bonucchi, chief of the Finance and Accounting Branch, provided training on time and attendance, travel and the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System (CEFMS). Sonja Moore provided training on correspondence.



Thirty-five District administrative and secretarial employees attended “The Art of Multitasking” workshop held May 2 and 3 at Pere Marquette State Park. Shown here, (L to R) Kathy Crone, from Mel Price Locks and Dam, Chris Leffeler, from Construction Branch, and Cindy Zimmerman, Lock and Dam 24, visit during a session break. (Photo by Vel Swindle)



“We had mostly good comments on the evaluation sheets with many of the attendees expressing the desire to have this be an annual event for the admin staff,” Moore recalled.

Some of the comments stated that the training was “very beneficial” and provided a great way for administrative staff to interact and for many, meet each other face-to-face for the first time.

Nancy Santel, from the Engineering Design Branch, sent a message of appreciation to the Executive Office: “Hats off to Sonja, Kathy and Vel! It was wonderful! The training cleared up a lot of questions for me. I appreciate all the hard work they did. It was wonderful to match faces with e-mail addresses. I also appreciate Molly, Chris, Anne, Sharon, Christy, Jennifer and Patti for their time.”

Teri Geahlen from the Hydrologic and Hydraulics Branch added her thanks, “I can’t even imagine how much work it took these ladies to pull the conference together while accomplishing their normal duties. I had a great time meeting other admins and I appreciate the opportunity to have representatives from HR, IM and RM available to answer questions.”

“The Corporate Board has recognized the value of this kind of ongoing training and given it their ‘go ahead,’” Moore explained. “The Corporate Board’s guidance is to continue with the training using monthly or quarterly meetings and possibly another offsite meeting. For future training we plan to solicit ideas from the staff so we can identify the areas of greatest need. We want this to be value added for everyone attending, as well as a fun time, giving employees a chance to share experiences and get to know one another.”

TEN LITTLE DRIVERS

(Author unknown)

Ten Little Drivers, cruising down the line.
One had a heavy foot, and then there were nine.
Speed limits are set for your safety.

Nine Little Drivers, the hour was getting late.
One dozed a moment, and then there were eight.
A tired driver is a dangerous one.

Eight Little Drivers and the evening seemed like heaven.
One showed his driving skill, and then there were seven.
Drive sensibly and sanely at all times. A car is no place for a clown.

Seven Little Drivers, their lives were full of kicks.
One bought a bottle, and then there were six.
Gasoline and alcohol are a deadly mix. Don’t drink and drive.

Six Little Drivers, impatient to arrive.
One jumped a traffic light, and then there were five.
Don’t gamble years of your life to save a few extra seconds.

Five Little Drivers, wheeling near the shore.
One viewed the scenery, and then there were four.
Careful driving demands alertness at all times. Keep your eyes on the road.

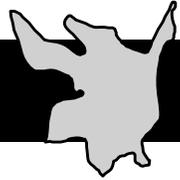
Four Little Drivers, happy as could be.
One passed a car on a hill, and then there were three.
Never pass another car when your vision is obstructed.

Three Little Drivers, busy it is true.
One neglected car repairs, and then there were two.
For safety’s sake, keep your car in top condition.

Two Little Drivers and the day was nearly done.
One didn’t turn on his lights, and then there was one.
Slow down for dusk or darkness. Adjust your driving to existing conditions.

One Little Driver, who’s still alive today. By following the safety rules, he hopes to stay that way.





Across the STL District

Volunteers Construct New Boardwalk at Wappapello

Once again the AT&T Pioneers have volunteered time and resources to make Wappapello Lake a better place to visit. On March 23 and 24, 36 volunteers donated 428 hours to build a boardwalk over a damaged section of the Memory Lane Trail at the Old Greenville Recreation Area. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers extends a hearty "Thank You" to the AT&T Pioneers for the awesome work performed during this two day project.

For the past four years, the AT&T Pioneers have joined the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in cooperative agreements to improve public recreational facilities by providing money and, more noteworthy, countless hours of volunteer labor. Such

improvements include a fishing pier and an accessible picnic site, both located within the Redman Creek Recreation Area. The fishing pier provides an easily accessible location for those seeking fishing opportunities at Wappapello Lake. The picnic site, which includes a concrete slab, table and grill; provided a much needed replacement to an aged wooden table and grill.

Visitors to the Memory Lane Historical Trail (located within the Greenville Recreation Area) will notice hundreds of feet of newly constructed boardwalk placed over badly deteriorated and missing sections of sidewalk. These improvements will make the trail more



The completed boardwalk replaces a damaged section of the Memory Lane Trail at the Old Greenville Recreation Area.



Thirty-six volunteers from AT&T donated 428 hours to construct a boardwalk at Wappapello Lake. The volunteers, known as the AT&T Pioneers, have partnered with the Army Corps on several projects over the last 4 years.

accessible for folks with mobility impairments and all who visit this area. Last year, the AT&T Pioneers constructed a boardwalk which ties together two existing sidewalks to complete the trail. Additionally, in 2004 the AT&T Pioneers were successful in completing a sidewalk, providing access to the playground adjacent to Memory Lane.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on behalf of all the visitors to Wappapello Lake commend these hardworking, talented individuals who selflessly donated their time to improve the public facilities at Wappapello Lake. So, whether you seek fishing, camping or picnicking opportunities or maybe a place for a child to play in the great outdoors, come out and experience these remarkable efforts of the AT&T Pioneers.



Carlyle Lake 'Celebrates the Earth' at Earth Day 2007

Story and Photos by Nicole Dalrymple, PA



Bill Williams, hydrologic technician, explains how the Army Corps monitors water levels.

The Carlyle Lake Project Office has hosted an annual Earth Day event on the Friday of Earth Day weekend for eleven years. This year's event was held April 20 in the Carlyle Lake Dam West Recreation Area and on the Visitor Center grounds. Over 3,000 students from 23 local schools and 140 different classrooms participated in this year's event, titled "Celebrate the Earth."

The intent is to bring in local school kids to learn about the earth. There is really no other similar program in the area, said Carlyle Lake Park Ranger Kim Hammel. The event includes preschoolers through 8th graders but the heaviest participation is from K-6th grade.

Hammel has been involved in the event since its inception and has been the sole organizer for the last two years. She recalls that about 500 students took part in the early years but thanks to its growing popularity, it has grown to

over 3,000. "Adding all the helpers, teachers and parents, who chaperone the kids, pushes that figure up closer to 3,500", Hammel said.

Hammel recalls that the idea to start an Earth Day event at Carlyle Lake started with Park Ranger Jackie Taylor who had worked at Rend Lake, where they host a very popular two-day Earth Day event. The Carlyle Lake staff decided to start their own program.

During the day students attend five, 25-minute sessions; three before lunch and two afterward. The first year had about 10 presenters and that number has continued to grow to this year's record number of 41. "We get tremendous support from our speakers," Hammel said.

This year's sessions highlighted a variety of topics including forestry, weather, recycling, and ecology. Native Americans, herpetology, birds, wolves and butterflies, watershed management, fishing and pollution rounded out the offerings.

Presenters came from throughout the region, with one traveling from Tennessee to participate. Agencies represented included the St. Louis

District, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the St. Louis Science Center, Scott Air Force Base, Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District, Clinton County Electric Co-op, the University of Illinois Extension, the St. Louis Herpetological Society, World Bird Sanctuary, the Natural History Education Company, Wild Birds Unlimited, McDonalds of Carlyle, Carlyle High School's FFA, Wild Canid Survival and Research Center, Cahokia Mounds, U.S. Forest Service, Natural History Survey, Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House and Lewis and Clark Historical Site.

Early on many programs were given by Carlyle Lake employees. Now, the lake staff is able to focus on planning and directing the day's activities while presentations are given by a variety of agencies and organizations. Local restaurants donate food for the presenters' lunch but the rest of the event is planned by Army Corps staff. The staff pulls together for the big day to provide traffic control, patrol for safety, and to check in with presenters.



Bob Tarter from the Natural History Education Company in Collierville, Tenn., uses animals to teach kids about the environment and conservation. Ready for his close up is Pike, an alligator snapping turtle.



Hammel said appreciatively that employees from the District Office continue to support the event. For the past four years staff members from the Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch and Regulatory Branch have given presentations.

This year, Bill Williams, June Jeffries and Russell Errett gave programs on the management of the Kaskaskia Watershed. Jaynie Doerr, Alan Edmondson and Linda Werdebaugh, from Regulatory, presented information on the importance of wetlands. Doerr said the emphasis is on telling the students about conserving and preserving wetlands and telling them about their multiple uses and why it's important to protect them.

Bob Tarter from the Natural History Education Company in Collierville, Tenn., has supported Carlyle's Earth Day for a number of years. For him the most important thing to communicate to attendees is conservation, and he said the key to doing that is through education.

"I am teaching the kids about conservation and to facilitate that I am using something cute or cuddly," Tarter said. "We all have a role in stewardship and conservation, and this is a great forum for kids to learn about the earth and how they can interact in a healthy way with the ecosystem and the environment."

The event continues to grow as many schools return each year and new ones add the program to their schedules.

As sole organizer Hammel starts planning in November. After she gets the presenters lined up, a brochure is created and an information package is sent to local schools. Teachers are asked

to rank their preference on presentations and once those ranking lists are received, Hammel works to set the schedule.

Once the scheduling is done the schools are sent confirmation sheets that list the sessions the classes are to attend, times, locations and maps. Stations are numbered and marked on the map and the teachers are responsible for moving their classes from one session to the next. It moves fairly smoothly.

"The first several schools get pretty much what they request," Hammel explained. "I work hard to ensure that



Over 3,000 students from 23 local schools participated in Carlyle Lake's Earth Day 2007 event. Some students travel up to one hour to get to the event. They attend five, 25-minute sessions during the day and a record 41 presenters participated this year, giving presentations on ecology, conservation, wildlife, pollution and watershed management.

every class has at least one live animal show and we try to give everybody the programs they want."

When schools are mailed their information packet they are sent a comment sheet to fill out following the event. The event continues to get great feedback from the schools and the organization and presenters are highly praised, Hammel said. The comments are considered in planning for the following year's event. "We learn too," Hammel said.

"This is one of the most important events of the year," Hammel said. The attendance is second only to the lake's highly popular Fourth of July Fireworks celebration.

"The education the students get by coming is priceless," she went on to say. "We have college kids working for us now who can remember coming to the event with their schools. Everyone looks forward to this event and the kids have a really good time."

Every year has been a success but the last two years have had the largest attendance. Remarkably, it has only rained during one of the past eleven events. While ambulances stand by and every possible contingency is planned for, Hammel says the event has a great safety record with no injuries or incidents.

So, what is the most rewarding thing about this event?

Hammel says it is seeing all the kids come out and have a good time and learn something and gain an appreciation for the environment. The event provides an added benefit to the local communities.

Hammel explained that many of the local school districts have seen budget cuts over the years and are no longer able to take their students to St. Louis for field trips. The Earth Day event brings several representatives from St. Louis, including the Science Center, the Butterfly House, the World Bird Sanctuary and the Wolf Sanctuary, to the area and provides the lake with an opportunity to share some of the "big things" with the students without their having to travel to St. Louis.

"This is certainly a win-win opportunity for everyone involved," Hammel concluded.

Safety Tips for Grilling

July is National Grilling Month

The National Fire Protection Agency reports that about 1,000 structure fires and 3,400 outdoor fires were caused by barbecue grills in one recent year.

It's important to realize that safe grilling begins before the cooking starts.

With gas grills, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line to be sure it is working properly and not leaking. If you suspect a leak, put soapy water on the area and watch for bubbles to discover where it is. Never use a match to check for a gas leak, and never light the grill until the leak is fixed.

Position any grill on a level surface that is at least three feet away from other objects, including the house and



shrubs or bushes. Keep children and pets away from the cooking area.

When you are ready to barbecue, protect yourself with a heavy apron and oven mitts that fit well over your forearm.

When the party is over, store the grill outside and away from the house. Make sure the valves are turned off.

For charcoal grills, use only starter fluids designed for that purpose. Never use gasoline. If the fire is slow, add dry kindling. Don't add more liquid starter or you could cause a flash fire.

Remember to soak the coals with water before you put them in the trash.

Never use a barbecue grill indoors or in an unventilated space. It's a fire hazard and could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

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