

THE Water's Edge

SPRING 2017



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Vicksburg District



US Army Corps of Engineers®

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

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Commander's Corner Colonel Michael C. Derosier3, 5

Cabbed Motor Vessel Adds Capabilities to District's River
Navigation and Communications4-5

Knowledge Now6

District Partners with Local Junior High for Fourth Annual
Career Fair7

Regulatory Team Instructs While Cleaning Outdoor
Classroom8

Negotiations Reduce Utility Cost for Tensas-Cocodrie
Pumping Station.....9

Community Outreach and LTG Semonite Visits the Vicksburg
District.....10

Mardi Gras Parade and MATH COUNTS Pre-Competition..... 11

VLDP Members Visit Ouachita, Red River and Attend
Red River Valley Association Conference..... 12-13

District Names Mississippi Valley Division Geotechnical
Regional Technical Specialist 13

District Names Chief of Design Branch's Levee and
Drainage Section..... 14

Columbia Lock and Dam Site for Wounded Warriors'
Fifth Annual Deepocalypse..... 14

Arkabutla Lake Hosts 17th Annual Eagle Watch..... 15

Arkabutla Lake Hosts 18th Annual Outdoor Education Day..... 16

Enid Lake Hosts 26th Annual Habitat Day..... 17

Enid Lake Hosts 14th Annual Clean-Up Day 18

Grenada Lake Sponsors Hope Outdoors..... 19

Need to Know
PEOPLE
Heather Sibley and Colby Bankston

PROCESS
Cabbed Motor Vessel

PROJECTS
Negotiations reduce utility cost for
Tensas-Cocodrie Pumping Station



On the Cover

Col. Derosier and three District team members recently visited six senators and 12 members of the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. to provide updates on ongoing projects and programs. Pictured in front of the Capitol are left to right, Jennifer Mallard, chief of regulatory branch, Patricia Hemphill, chief of Programs and Project Management Division, Col. Derosier, and Jacob Brister, deputy chief of Programs and Project Management Division.

Commander's Corner

with Colonel Michael C. Derosier



Hello Vicksburg District Team Members

Near sunset on most military installations, all activity comes to a halt as salutes are rendered and hands are placed over hearts while the American Flag is lowered during a Retreat ceremony. It is a daily reminder of service to the Nation. Our guard force here at the Vicksburg District also lowers the Flag each evening, but, for any number of reasons, it is rare to find me in the parking lot at 1800 hours to be available to observe the ceremony. So it was inspiring that I found myself departing the office recently as the flag was being lowered. As I was rendering a salute, I felt proud to be an American, and proud to serve and command in the United States Army Corps of Engineers. I felt inspired to work with such a dedicated team of professionals in the execution of our mission and to work across our communities in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas as we deliver value to the Nation and to our stakeholders. Thank you all for what you do - underpinned by your service to the Army and the Nation.

The year 2017 is off to a brisk start! The District had the privilege of hosting the 54th Chief of Engineers, Lieutenant General Semonite, for a Town Hall where he expanded on his philosophy of Strengthening the Foundation, Delivering the Program, and Achieving the Vision for the future of the Corps of Engineers. That same day, we hosted the Corps' Deputy Commanding General for Civil Works and Emergency Operations, Major General Jackson, – areas indeed near and dear to our hearts. And shortly thereafter, we had the opportunity to host Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, Major General Wehr here and at Monroe, Greenwood, Felsenthal and Columbia Locks and Dams, and at Chicot Pumping Plant. In between those visits, Pat Hemphill, Jacob Brister, Jennifer Mallard, and I visited the offices of six Senators and 12 members of the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., to provide updates on ongoing projects and programs. Our engagements – both internal and external – continue to be both very positive and a definite strength and source of pride for the District.

A main theme across all of these engagements has been the great work that the District is delivering across all of our Civil Works business lines. There is much to celebrate, and here are just a few highlights:

- The Vicksburg District was recognized as a “Best Place to Work in USACE in FY16.” Congratulations... and take a minute to think about that! That is a reflection on all of you, and is something that can only be sustained through a persistent team effort.

- Our Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) was recognized as one of the top Two CPACs in the Army (in the ARMY!) for meeting hiring timeline objectives – that is a tribute to both our CPAC and the teamwork that has been forged between our CPAC and the Divisions/Branches/Sections across the District.

- During a Command Supply Discipline Program inspection, the warehouse was recognized as one of the best organized warehouses that the team had ever inspected.

- Regional Planning and Environment Division South (RPEDS) paved the way on the Quiver River Ecosystem Restoration Study for the District to achieve our first successful Agency Decision Milestone (ADM) under the SMART planning approach.

- Engineering and Construction Division (E&C) led the way on the “Pi Day Challenge” which centered on a school supply drive for the STEM teachers at the District's adopted school-Sherman Avenue Elementary. The drive was a great success due to outstanding participation and seemed to be very popular with the E&C team, undoubtedly in part resulting from the opportunity to hit the Division and Branch Chiefs in the face with cream pies.

- And, the Vicksburg District claimed, for the 3rd year in a row, the title of Best Nonprofit Float in the Vicksburg Mardi Gras Parade. Hooah!!!

So, that is a quick look back at a few recent successes across the District. As we look towards the coming months and the next chapter that the District will write, I ask you to reflect on your priorities – what they are, and

(Continued on page 5)

The 24-foot cabled motor vessel.



Cabled Motor Vessel Adds Capabilities to District's River Navigation and Communications

By Drew Smith
Photos by Andrew Simmons

The water management section of hydraulics branch of Engineering and Construction Division recently acquired a 24-foot cabled motor vessel from another Corps office. The vessel will be used for taking discharge measurements and sediment samples on the Mississippi River and its tributaries within the Vicksburg District. This vessel allows the Corps to have capability and expertise in-house as well as allows for more flexibility when taking flow measurements.

Discharge measurements are typically taken on a bi-weekly or weekly schedule on the Mississippi, Red, Ouachita, and Yazoo rivers to maintain stage vs discharge relationships. These historic relationships determine whether or not the rivers are changing in terms of hydraulics or geomorphology. Stage vs discharge relationships are also frequently used in river forecasting by water management personnel. Taking regular measurements to maintain and make adjustments to these rating curves is essential for daily operations of numerous flood control projects within the District.

Discharge measurements and sediment samples are taken by the hydrologic technician team which is comprised

of four technicians who are experienced in electronics, fabrication, computer programming, and radio communications. The team's primary mission is keeping the district's network of nearly 200 critical stream gages operational at all times. Due to the team's wide range of technical capabilities, they have the ability to collect essential data throughout the District on a more flexible and efficient schedule. This means that discharge measurements are taken at more locations than previously and are taken on an as needed basis, determined by existing data on the rating curves and current conditions on the stream.

The vessel has been outfitted with the latest in marine technology for its navigational and communications systems. It provides the capability to see and identify other vessels on each waterway with an automatic identification system (AIS) receiver/transceiver and other vessels can see and identify ours. There is also real time/weather radar and marine global positioning system (GPS) on board, all of which are visible on two RayMarine screens mounted in the wheel house to benefit the boat's operator. For safety precautions, there is a multi-directional HD camera mounted on the rear of the wheel house making it possible for the boat operator to observe the rear deck or the back of the boat on the waterway.

A boom for taking sediment samples was designed by our hydrologic tech team to carry the weight of the 180-lbs sediment sampler required to take depth integrated sediment samples throughout the water column. The boom was designed such that the vessel remains stable while using the heavy sampling weight during sediment sample collection from any location along the hull of the boat.

The Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) modeling lab designed and fabricated an articulating mount for the front of the boat for the acoustic doppler current profiler (ADCP) to be raised and lowered into the water safely and securely. The ADCP is the instrument that records the discharge measurement as the vessel travels across the channel. Having the device on the front allows the boat operator to see the instrument and get as close to the bank as needed to capture the full measurement. The ADCP works in tandem with state of the art RTK GPS and external heading sensor to provide the upmost accuracy in our measurements. RTK will give us 1-2 cm accuracy horizontally and twice that for vertical.



Time/weather radar is shown on screen in wheel house of the motor vessel.

The vessel will be an exceptional tool for Engineering and Construction Division and the Vicksburg District as a whole. Expansion of capabilities for the vessel and operation team such as single beam and multi beam survey technology are being considered as a means of providing quick reaction service to the District. ◀

(Commander's Corner, concluded from page 3)

what they need to be. During a recent lunch with teammates from Operations Division, the conversation drifted to a discussion about priorities. I asked the group to challenge me to ensure that my actions are aligned with my stated priorities and goals for the District. Here is how I articulate mine:

- MISSION: We must execute the mission by delivering our projects and programs – meet all of our scheduled milestones, excel on all of our performance metrics (i.e. – carryover, Small Business goals, Regulatory metrics, etc.), and maintain excellence in our customer satisfaction ratings. Provide regional and national leadership through our MMC and Levee Safety Production Centers. We must be ready at a moment's notice to respond to emergencies and disasters.

- PEOPLE: Recruit the best possible employees into the District. Develop leaders and enhance professional and technical skills to prepare the District for the future. Public and employee safety and security are of the utmost importance! Cultivate an organizational culture that is free of discriminatory, illegal, or toxic behaviors and enables everyone to achieve their maximum potential.

- OPLAN: I routinely pick up a copy of the OPLAN tri-fold to reflect on the goals, actions, metrics, and milestones that are reflected in the District's OPLAN. The

OPLAN itself is intended to be a reflection of the District's priority actions over the span of a Fiscal Year, and even then our mission is so extensive that the OPLAN will not reflect everything. However, the OPLAN should be comprehensive enough that everyone is able to understand where you fit and how your day-to-day mission supports OPLAN implementation. If not, then we need to modify the OPLAN for FY18 so that you can do so.

- COMMUNICATIONS: Effectively communicating and building coalitions internally and externally. This includes efforts aimed at Congressional and stakeholder relationships, direct engagement with employees across the District, outreach events at our project offices, and STEM events.

The last thing I would ask you to do is reflect on three questions: Would you recommend the organization to others? Are you satisfied with your job? Are you satisfied with your organization? If you cannot respond with an emphatic "YES" to all three of those questions, then I would ask you to engage leaders within the District so that we can get there. The future of the District depends on it, and it will take the entire team to help us get there!

In closing, I would like to extend my continued condolences to the family and friends of Cordellia Warfield, Larrielle Ross, and Willie Rowland – we miss them, and they are not forgotten. ◀



Knowledge NOW!!! A New Tool for Everyone in USACE

<https://kn.usace.army.mil>

Who is using "Knowledge Now?" Who should be using it?

To answer these questions we need to look at what KN does. It is a place for ALL of us throughout USACE to "Collect, Pull, Push and Connect" information and knowledge! It is a "YouTube-like" web site where we can all find "how to" videos on simple, and complex, topics. Curious about how to do something that you think should be simple? How to do something specific in CEFMS? How to do timekeeping? You may just find a helpful video in Knowledge Now if you just take a look! Knowledge Now is already populated with a multitude of short videos on many topics. And if you can't find something you know would be helpful to others you can easily contribute your own helpful videos. Simply go to <https://kn.usace.army.mil> to see what you can find. And if you want to contribute, create a video yourself. See your District Knowledge Management Representative if you have questions. Many USACE employees are already taking advantage of what they can find in Knowledge Now.

MVD Emerging Leaders recently briefed the RMB on a series of videos they will be filming that will serve as their annual Class Project and will eventually be added to the USACE KN site. The topics of their videos will include ProjectWise, Storyboard, CEFMS, SharePoint, and Career Program."

"Knowledge Now" supports keyword searches and includes functions for uploading work-related videos, attaching documents, and connecting people to additional information through web links. The site is CAC-enabled and internal to the USACE.

Knowledge Now will allow our teams to positively influence others beyond their immediate sphere of coworkers. Employees can create screen capture videos with Microsoft PowerPoint (you can learn how by looking through the KN site and the video capture software companies' many on-line tutorials.

ACE-IT has approved two video software packages for video editing: SnagIt and Camtasia. The software can be purchased through CHES; call ACE-IT. Video files must be smaller than 50 MB and must be formatted as an .MP4. Most videos are less than 10 minutes and either provide an overview or detailed "how to" instructions for a specific topic. By collaborating together across the entire Corps to share our collective knowledge and information, we will accelerate the pace of learning; reduce errors and unnecessary rework; and increase our readiness and adaptability."

Another great informative article about Knowledge Now, written by Jessica Napier for the PPM CoP, can be found at the following link: <https://team.usace.army.mil/sites/MVN/PDT/KM/KN/PPM%20CoP%20NewsFlash87.pdf>

We have some SnagIt software licenses available. You can work through your supervisor and KMR to check on availability.

If you have questions, the point of contact for this message is Danny Thurmond, MVD KMR.

Test Drive Knowledge Now.....NOW!

DANNY THURMOND
Knowledge Management Representative
Mississippi Valley Division (MVD)

Student does push-ups while carrying military equipment.

District Partners with Local Junior High for Fourth Annual Career Fair

By Charlene Mosley
Photos by Joe McClammy,
ERDC

For the fourth consecutive year, the Vicksburg District's Career Fair provided eager-to-learn students from the Vicksburg-Warren County area a wealth of various career choices. The Career Fair is a part of the Vicksburg District's Operations Plan, Task 4d2.1, and promotes outreach by hosting a career day for junior high students. The career fair was held April 13, 2017, at Warren Central Junior High School. More than 33 Corps team members of various fields of expertise participated. Six hundred eighty seven students from Warren Central Junior High, Vicksburg Junior High, Academy of Innovation, St. Aloysius Catholic School, and Vicksburg Christian Home Educators Association attended this year's career fair.

Geotechnical engineering presentations were given by Kimberly Cruz-Fernandez, Dylan Jenkins, and Blake Gober. Their presentations included a breakdown of geo-technical-engineering before engaging students in three different hands-on activities. Two of the activities involved handling three different soil types: silty, sand, and clay, as well as identifying the differences among them. The last activity involved a sieve analysis or particle distribution, where students learned the difference between coarse and fine soils. Geotechnical branch of Engineering and Construction Division were 1st place winners for their presentations.

GIS specialists Julie Vicars, William "Bill" Sisneros, and William Paul Richards, gave students a brief introduction of unmanned aerial survey (UAS) technology. The students were afforded the opportunity to handle the UAS units and look at the data, images, and videos col-

lected from recent UAS flights. Students were then shown how mapping and geographic information systems (GIS) technology has evolved through the years, from paper maps to digital maps, finishing with a demo of our Emergency Operations center forecast resources and live weather radar web application. After the demo, students were invited to explore the application and its features. Geospatial services section of Engineering and Construction Division were 2nd place winners for their presentations.

Team members with the civil, mechanical, and hydraulics branches of Engineering and Construction Division also participated by providing students a glimpse into their disciplines. River operations of Operations Division showed a video on the one-of-a-kind work of the Mat Sinking Unit. Regulatory branch presented an overview of how to protect aquatic resources and the various types. The Public Affairs Office team members engaged the students with live broadcast interviews. Office of Counsel team members involved the students with critical thinking skill activities. Resource Management Office team spoke with students on different career paths offered by the District, such as tracking money management which includes skill-sets of accounting, budgeting, management, manpower and auditing. ACE-IT gave a time capsule of past information technology. Regional Planning and Environmental Division South gave a diverse presentation of biologists, economists, and archaeologists. The District's two military captains tested student's endurance with carrying military equipment while attempting push-ups.

Greg Raimondo, chief of the Public Affairs Office, stated, "All Corps team members exemplified the dynamic and dedicated disciplines that the Vicksburg

District has to offer. Each one gave a glimpse of some of the missions of the District." Charlene Mosley, biologist in regulatory branch, stated, "The students, as well as the teachers, were impressed with the Career Fair. Several students expressed interest in the various disciplines and stated that they would like to further their studies in those areas." ◀



Brandon Griffin discussed civil engineering with students.



Greg Raimondo (PAO) assists students with camera features before their broadcast session.



Paul Richards introduces the students to the unmanned aerial survey technology.

Regulatory Team Instructs While Cleaning Outdoor Classroom *Earth Day Activity*

Regulatory team members inspect area to be cleaned along the nature trail at Vicksburg High School.

**By Thomas McCabe, Arel Simpson and Bryan Williamson
Photos by Kristi Hall**

Over the past several years, the regulatory branch of Operations Division has selected a day in April to commemorate Earth Day. Thomas McCabe, chief of evaluation section of regulatory branch, stated “As a part of the 2017 regulatory branch Earth Day activity, the regulatory branch team initially made plans to work on a trail at the Tensas National Wildlife Refuge, but Mother Nature had other plans. Due to flooding in the area, the team was forced to change work locations.”

The team went to Vicksburg High School on April 6, 2017, to clear and clean an old nature trail located east

of the school’s south parking lot. The team consisted of 13 volunteers who were equipped with tools to cut, clip, saw, and rake the trails. They were also equipped with the knowledge to address environmental concerns of the students.

The Vicksburg High School Environmental Club sponsor, Whitney Kenney, along with several students, walked the trails with the team. The students asked environmental questions related to wetlands, plants, and animals. During the outdoor classroom experience, students were also inquisitive as to what fields of study are necessary to accomplish the mission of the regulatory branch-environmental issues. Team members discussed their fields of study and degrees attained that resulted in their expertise regarding the environment.

During past years, the Vicksburg High School nature trail complex consisted of an amphitheater with seating for approximately 50-75 students, an elevated podium and a few bridges along the trail. Due to a lack of maintenance, the trail showed signs of deterioration. To avoid further deterioration, the team selected three sections of the nature trail to perform routine maintenance, and additional sections may be added for further cleanup depending on the need and usage of the sites.

Arel Simpson, environmental specialist in regulatory branch, stated, “As a result of this year’s Earth Day project, and thanks to the regulatory team, Vicksburg High School students have been given another opportunity to encounter nature first hand, located only a short walk from the classroom.” ◀



Regulatory team members, botanist Katie Steinmetz and wildlife biologist Andy Sanderson, teach the students about the different species of plants along the nature trail.

Negotiations Reduce Utility Cost for Tensas-Cocodrie Pumping Stations

By Debra Valine

U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville

Thanks to the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville's Commercial Utilities Program (CUP), the Vicksburg District is saving nearly \$34,000 monthly in costs to operate the Tensas-Cocodrie Pumping Plant in Monterey, Louisiana. The program negotiates with utility providers to ensure reliable utility services for Army installations and facilities at the lowest possible cost. Over the course of the 10-year contract period, the Corps will save \$402,000 annually or \$4 million.

Vicksburg District contacted CUP program manager Bernard Givan in August 2014 requesting assistance to find a way to reduce the \$54,000 monthly power bill. The District had been paying this amount for electric power at the pumping plant since 1993, with slight adjustments based on actual operations. The plant controls water levels in a basin near four major rivers, including the Mississippi. The plant consists of five large three-story electric pumps. Other than routine testing, the pumping plant does not operate until a flood event occurs.

Givan stated, "The Corps needed to reduce this high cost of electric service due to budget constraints and because it was shown to be above average." The district decided to take the following steps: terminate the existing contract for electric service; implement a temporary agreement for up to six months; and negotiate a more cost effective permanent contract. The contracting officer could execute the first step, but steps two and three would require subject matter expert support.

Givan said he used his prior experience with the Alabama Public Service Commission and Alabama Power Company to develop a strategic approach to reduce the monthly rate to more accurately reflect pumping plant operations and to provide and calculate rate components that

allowed the contracting officer to productively lead negotiation discussions with the utility provider. Army Regulatory Law was also added to the team to provide advice, serve on the negotiation team and, if necessary, go before the state public utility commission for resolution.

"The team negotiated with the utility provider over a six-month period. CUP provided rate analysis and transmission line service cost estimates. The Corps invested only \$16,771 for CUP labor and travel," Givan stated.

To further clarify technical support, the utility said maintenance and operation expenses of the transmission line serving the pumping plant were substantial and could not be reduced. Givan found a generally acceptable method to calculate the cost to operate and maintain the transmission line that demonstrated the O&M cost should be only \$12,000. This transmission line cost combined with the calculated minimum monthly usage cost of \$10,000 helped establish a new total monthly rate of \$22,000 that allowed the utility to comfortably recover all costs.

"Since this was the first negotiation for the program, the experience and team building approach for this project helped establish the ideal Army utility negotiation team model," Givan said. He also stated that the model team consists of the CUP program manager, contracting officer, utility regulatory law attorney and one or more representatives of the supported facility. A utility consultant will be added to the team as required. This effort can be replicated by any agency or department that owns large facilities. Utility contracts are generally 10-year agreements that should be reviewed for utility market or industry changes as well as outdated facility requirements. A similar negotiation team will provide the depth, knowledge and flexibility to arrive at a 'win-win' negotiation. ◀



COMMUNITY OUTREACH CHRISTMAS PROJECT

Photos by
Alfred Dulaney

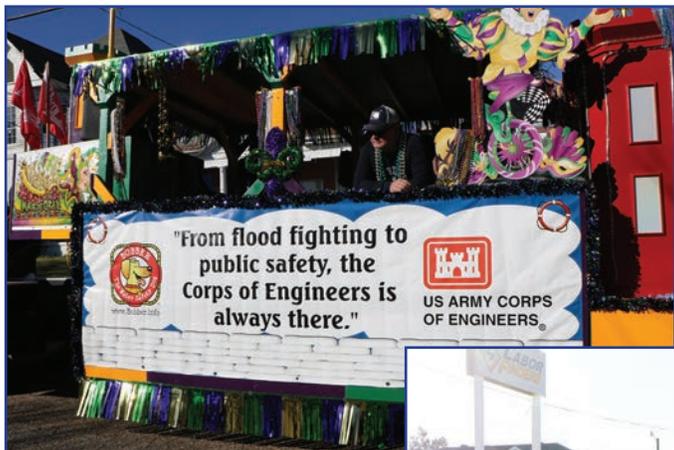


LTG SEMONITE VISITS THE VICKSBURG DISTRICT

Photos by Angela White



MARDI GRAS PARADE



Photos by Angela White



THE DISTRICT HOSTED A PRE MATH COUNT COMPETITION WITH STUDENTS FROM ACADEMY OF INNOVATION, PORTERS CHAPEL ACADEMY, ST. ALOYSIUS CATHOLIC, ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC, VICKSBURG JR. HIGH AND WARREN CENTRAL JR. HIGH.

Photos by Angela White



Pictured from left-to-right are members of the 2017 Vicksburg Leadership Development Program: David Jenkins (Program Champion), Walker Moller, Joshua Neisen, Jamie Baker (program administrator), Cherrie Collins-Burks, Matt Engbretson, Angela White, Lance Gullet, Porter Holliday, K.C. Ellis and Michael Warren. The members were on tour at the Columbia Lock & Dam.

VLDP Members Visit Ouachita, Red River and Attend Red River Valley Association Conference

**By Jamie Baker, Michael Warren, and Lance Gullet
Photo by Jacob Brister**

The 2017 Vicksburg Leadership Development Program Class (VLDP) had its first major field trip the week of February 21-24. Jamie Baker, VLDP coordinator stated, “During this trip, they visited many of the District’s field offices and project sites, while also attending an impressive Red River Valley Association (RRVA) conference held in the beautiful city of Shreveport, Louisiana.”

The week began with a breakfast and an educational mentoring session with District Commander, Col. Michael C. Derosier, and the Champions

of the VLDP Program, Jacob Brister, David Jenkins, and Will Bradley, as well as the program administrator, Jamie Baker. The Commander received a briefing from the VLDP members regarding this year’s Lunch-and-Learn Program. Col. Derosier gave feedback and guidance, discussed his expectations of VLDP, and then a question and answer session.

After breakfast, the VLDP members departed for a visit to the Monroe Navigation Project Office/Louisiana Field Office to learn more about their mission. K.C. Ellis briefed the class

on navigation, Monroe Office projects, and the Monroe Folding Flood Wall; the next stop was at the Folding Flood Wall. The VLDP class members then traveled south to the Columbia Lock & Dam on the Ouachita River, where Ellis took them on tour of the facility and demonstrated locking operations.

The next day, the group traveled to Natchitoches, Louisiana where they met with the Red River Waterway Commission (RRWC) and received a briefing from the Commission’s executive director, Colin Brown. The RRWC is considered a partner and

stakeholder of the Corps' Vicksburg District and was excited to provide information about their organization's mission as well as answer questions regarding commerce and navigation along the Red River.

The class then toured Lock & Dam #5 on the Red River, where the lock master guided a tour of the site. The class then traveled to Bossier City-Shreveport, where they attended a very informative navigation briefing at the RRVA's Annual Navigation Committee meeting led by District Chief of river operations, Tommy Hengst. The night ended with an exciting "social hour" with the other RRVA attendees and a formal dinner with a guest speaker.

On the third day, the VLDP was back at the RRVA and attended numer-

ous interesting and wide-ranging sessions from state, federal, and private corporations. The conference speakers included Col. Derosier, the Deputy Commander for the Mississippi Valley Division, Col. Richard Pannell, and Congressman Dr. Ralph Abraham from Louisiana. The class then toured the Bossier City Field Office discussing challenges faced by the office during the 2015/16 Red River Flood-Fight. Finally, the class took advantage of the drive back from Shreveport and used it as a valuable mentoring session with the program champions to talk about their quarterly leadership reading assignment and discuss general leadership philosophies and lessons learned.

On the final day of the trip, the

class received two briefings from Jacob Brister, one on the mission of the Programs and Project Management Division and the other on the Corps' relationship and interactions with Congress. Baker also stated, "All in attendance agreed the information was very valuable and were grateful for the opportunity to have such a briefing."

The goal of the four major VLDP week-long field trips is to provide well-organized and meaningful trip content, networking and mentoring opportunities, and a vast amount of invaluable knowledge about the Corps, the Vicksburg District, and the District's partners and stakeholders, as well as the importance of the economic impacts of our Vicksburg District mission. ◀

District Names Mississippi Valley Division Geotechnical Regional Technical Specialist

By Shirley J. Smth

Photo by Alfred Dulaney



Heather Sibley

The Vicksburg District recently selected Heather Sibley as a Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) geotechnical regional technical specialist.

In this position, Sibley will serve as a regional subject matter expert in the geotechnical engineering community of practice. She will also serve as a leader on complex, non-routine dam and levee safety modifications and geotechnical analyses.

She has worked in the MVD Dam and Levee Safety Production Center, Engineering and Construction Division since 2015. In that position, she served as a member of a cadre working on risk assessments and modification studies on high risk dam projects across the country.

Sibley began her career with the Corps in 2009 in the District's geotechnical branch, where she quickly became a recognized leader in geotechnical engineering in the district and throughout MVD. Some of her key accomplishments include serving as the lead MVK geotechnical engineer for the Plaquemines Parish Project and the lead geotechnical designer for the Wilkinson Canal Pump Station. The Wilkinson Canal Pump Station is one of the most complicated projects in Plaquemines Parish that included a unique combination of deep soil mixing, wick drains, preload pad, strength gain estimates, geotechnical instrumentation, staged construction, and pile founded T-walls.

A native of Bentonia, she is a 2004 graduate of Yazoo County High School. She earned her Bachelor degrees in civil engineering and mathematics from Mississippi State University and is a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Mississippi.

She and her husband, Caleb Sibley, are residents of Bentonia. ◀

District Names Chief of Design Branch's Levee and Drainage Section

By Shirley J. Smth
Photo by Alfred Dulaney



Colby Bankston

The Vicksburg District recently selected Colby Bankston as chief of its design branch's levee and drainage section of Engineering and Construction Division.

In this position, Bankston will oversee a talented group of engineers and technicians who are responsible for the production of construction plans and specifications for levee and channel projects throughout the District.

Bankston started his career in Design Branch in 2010 working in the levee and drainage section where he was responsible for the design and development of plans and specifications on Mississippi River Levees projects. He has served as the lead engineer on several Hurricane Protection Office levee projects in the Hurricane Storm Damage Risk Reduction system in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana and on emergency levee repair projects.

A native of Brandon, he is a graduate of Northwest Rankin High School. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in civil engineering from Mississippi State University. He is a member of the Society of American Military Engineers and is a Registered Professional Engineer in the state of Mississippi.

He is the oldest son of Bussy and Cheri Bankston of Brandon. Bankston is married to the former Megan Wheat of Flowood and they are residents of Clinton. ◀

Columbia Lock and Dam Site for Wounded Warriors' Fifth Annual Deerpocalypse

By Shirley J. Smth

The Wounded Warriors fifth annual Warrior Deerpocalypse was held December 3, 2016, at the Columbia Lock and Dam's Wildlife Management Area.

Hunters were divided into two groups. One group went to the Primitive Arms Hunt at Columbia Lock and Dam and the other group was at another hunt on private property in Ouachita Parish due to safety precautions.

The hunt included combat veterans and their families. Twelve of the 20 combinations of the hunters were father/sons-daughters teams. This hunt brought combat veterans and families together for a weekend of hunting and family oriented activities around the Twin cities of Monroe/West Monroe.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers public lands offer an array of safe recreational opportunities that include fishing, boating, camping, hiking, bicycling, swimming, and photography. Shelley McDowell, operations manager for the Louisiana Field Office (LFO), stated, "The LFO provides day-use activities and camping at two river systems and three lakes and encompasses the Ouachita-Black River, Red River, Bayou Bodcau, Caddo Lake, Wallace Lake, Grand Ecore Visitor Center, and the J. Bennett Johnston Waterway Regional Visitor Center. The annual attendance at these areas has totaled over 1.3 million visitors." ◀

Arkabutla Lake Hosts 17th Annual Eagle Watch

By Kandy Alldread

Photos by Kandy Alldread and Cody Scruggs

Arkabutla Lake was the site for the 17th Annual Eagle Watch held recently. Eleven volunteers assisted five rangers with counting eagles for the Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. The purpose of the Midwinter Bald Eagle survey is to monitor the status of Bald Eagle wintering populations in the contiguous United States by estimating national and regional count trends, overall and by age class.

Each January, several hundred individuals across the nation count eagles along standard, non-overlapping survey routes. Arkabutla Lake's volunteers used the fixed point survey method at Dub Patton Campground, Dub Patton Day Use, Bayou Point, Kelley's Crossing, Senatobia Wetlands, Hernando Point, and Coldwater Point. A total of six mature eagles were spotted during this year's survey. Two mature eagles were spotted in a tree off Hernando Point boat ramp. Two mature eagles were seen at the nest in the Senatobia Wetlands. Another two mature eagles were spotted in a tree at the South Abutment beach area.

After the completion of the watch, everyone returned to the Arkabutla Lake Field Office for a live Birds of Prey Program provided by Kate Friedman and Natalie Bright of Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitation. They entertained the volunteers with a live Birds of Prey program and made



Youth and volunteers look for eagles.

presentations on local owls and hawks. The volunteers were afforded the opportunity to see up close some beautiful winged creatures.

Team members at Arkabutla Lake thank all volunteers and persons with the Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitation for making the event successful.

To learn more about the Vicksburg District, visit our website, www.mvk.usace.army.mil. ◀

Natalie Bright with Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitation entertains with Clippy the screech owl during the Live Birds of Prey presentation.





Park rangers Cody Scruggs and Kandy Alldread discuss the environment and wildlife with the students.

Arkabutla Lake Hosts 18th Annual Outdoor Education Day

Story and photo by Jamie Richmond

Arkabutla Lake's 18th Annual Outdoor Education Day received the largest turnout in the history of the event. The two-day program was held within the Dub Patton Recreation Area. The event demonstrates how critters, conservation, and outdoor safety can be cool!

Desoto and Tate counties Soil and Water Conservation districts and the staff at Arkabutla Lake partnered to orchestrate the activities. Approximately 1,800 students, teachers, and parents from Desoto and Tate counties, and

schools from Magnolia Heights, heard presentations from various organizations. The children learned about water safety, boating, and outdoor safety. They also learned the importance of conserving water, reducing pollution, and the significance of recycling. They encountered live animals, talked to foresters, and had a one-on-one experience with wildlife enthusiasts. The event provided a very remarkable, educating outdoor classroom explored by all attendees. ◀

Enid Lake Hosts 26th Annual Habitat Day

By Chris Hannaford

Photos by Chris Hannaford and Deborah Freeman

Prior to 1993, Enid Lake contracted the work for placing fish shelters in the lake. Due to budget/manpower constraints, it became necessary for the Corps to look for other means of accomplishing this endeavor. In 1993, the Corps joined with concerned sportsmen, fishing clubs, and members of the local communities to form the Enid Lake Habitat Volunteer Association. Through this partnership, an annual event called “Habitat Day” was organized. Enid Lake’s annual Habitat Day was held February 4, 2017. Two hundred volunteers and 22 Corps and contract employees participated with the largest Habitat Day of record for Enid Lake.

This year, 1200 trees and 2,000 wooden stakes were used to construct more than 500 shelters that were strategically placed and anchored in many locations throughout areas along Long Branch, Midway, and Chickasaw Hill creeks. These man-made structures will provide future shelter for many bait fish, which are needed to sustain a healthy population of larger game fish. Due to the hard work of these volunteers, these structures will provide many enjoyable days of fishing.

The Corps and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks selected areas around the lake that needed habitat improvements. Different areas are targeted each year so that improvements in the habitat can be made throughout the entire lake. Cedar and discarded Christmas trees were used to construct fish shelters in the targeted areas. The trees were cut and transported to the specific areas through in-house labor. The actual placement of fish shelters is accomplished by volunteers who donate their

time and equipment. They dragged the trees with ATV’s, and anchored them with concrete blocks and other weights along creek beds and other designated areas. Restoration of the fish habitat is very important to the future fisheries at Enid Lake. Years of inundation have claimed much of Enid’s fish habitat. Fish use these shelters for various reasons such as cover, areas to feed, and a place to spawn. Restoring the habitat also increases the health and populations of fish. According to studies performed by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, the restoration program has shown enormous benefits to the fish and habitat in Enid Lake.

Since inception of “Habitat Day,” approximately 69,250 trees have been placed in the lake, which constructed over 23,000 fish shelters on the barren mudflats of Enid Lake.

Natural resource management projects such as “Habitat Day” not only sustain and enhance Enid Lake’s fisheries, but also promote natural resources stewardship to surrounding lake communities as well as visitors who frequent Enid Lake. These volunteer efforts contribute greatly to support one of the missions of the Corps, which is protecting and sustaining natural resources for future generations. ◀



Volunteers anchor trees for placement into creek beds and other designated areas.



Volunteers prepare to transport trees.

Enid Lake Hosts 14th Annual Clean-Up Day

**By Chris Hannaford
Photo by Jackie Ferrell**

Team members of the Corps' Enid Lake partnered with Enid Lake Volunteers for Waste Management to conduct Enid Lake's 14th Annual Clean-Up Day held February 25, 2017. More than 200 Enid Lake Volunteers for Waste Management along with Corps team members including RBS Contractors and South Panola High School ROTC students cleaned the shoreline and roadways around Enid Lake to enhance and sustain the lake's beauty.

This clean-up effort resulted in the removal of 45 compacted cubic yards of trash and debris and 30 tires

from around Enid Lake. During the past 14 years, this event has been directly responsible for the removal of more than 923 compacted cubic yards of trash and debris and 760 tires from along Enid Lake's shoreline and roadways. More than 2,750 volunteers have contributed significant services to this event valued at \$335,000.00, and a saving to the Corps.

Following the clean-up, the volunteers prepared lunch. The afternoon also included raffle drawings and the awarding of door prizes. Enid Lake team members thank all volunteers, the merchants who donated door

prizes, and others who assisted with the coordination and planning of this successful event. Events such as this promote environmental stewardship as a way of life.

Chris Hannaford, supervisory ranger at Enid Lake, stated, "The lake traffic brings approximately \$10,500,000 annually to the local economy and supports almost 170 jobs." Information on Corps lakes and recreational areas can be found on the Vicksburg District Operations Division's website at <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation.aspx>. ◀

ROTC students from South Panola High School prepare to clean up designated areas around Enid Lake.



Grenada Lake Sponsors Hope Outdoors

Story and photos by Damon Blakely

Grenada Lake was the site recently for Hope Outdoors, a special hunt for persons with physical impairments. The hunt, held below Grenada Dam, offers special outdoor adventures to children and adults with physical limitations, disabilities, or life threatening illnesses.

Grenada Lake staff contacted Hope Outdoors chairperson for the Calhoun County Chapter, Josh Morgan, and partnered to obtain sponsorships for the special hunt from many local businesses, churches and individuals.

Day one of the hunt began with a welcome from Hope Outdoors volunteers, Grenada Lake park rangers, and local sponsors. Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks conservation officer, Todd Fowler, discussed hunter



Col. Derosier, Daniel Shoemake and his dad David Shoemake.

safety. The safety briefing allowed the hunters an opportunity to familiarize themselves with their rifles prior to the hunt. Conservation officer Fowler demonstrated how to safely use firearms. After the briefings, and the hunters felt comfortable, they were taken on the first hunt where two deer and a coyote were harvested.

Following the afternoon hunt, hunter Jason Gill and Reverend Chris Owensby of Way of Life Ministries of Grenada led the attendees in devotion. The Grenada Chapter of the Christian Motorcycle Association provided the hunters, their families, and volunteers with a delicious dinner.

The second and final day of the two-day hunt was another productive and fun-filled day for hunters and volunteers. Four more deer and one coyote were harvested. Way of Life Ministries provided lunch for everyone who participated in the special hunt.

More than 50 volunteers and sponsors donated their time and efforts to make this special hunt a great success. Grenada Lake Field Office thanks the sponsors and volunteers for their invaluable contributions and look forward to conducting future events with Hope Outdoors. ◀



Rev. Chris Owensby is shown with young hunter Jason Gill.

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Sardis Lake (662) 563-4531
Arkabutla Lake (662) 562-6261
Enid Lake (662) 563-4571
Grenada Lake (662) 226-5911
Bayou Bodcau (318) 949-1804
JBJ Waterway (318) 677-2673

Ouachita-Black Rivers, Monroe
Navigation Project Office, &
LA Field Office (318) 322-6391
Corps Wetland Permits (601) 631-7071
Apply, ask questions, or report violations
Contracting & Bids (601) 631-7684
Vendors, status of bids, specs
Community Support (601) 631-5223
Tours, speakers, volunteers
Historical Questions & Research (601) 634-7023
Mississippi River History Center
Real Estate Issues (601) 631-5979
Corps impacts to your property
Employment Questions (601) 631-5858
Vacancies, status, qualifications
River Forecast (601) 631-5900

Other Vicksburg Engineer/Federal Organizations

Mississippi Valley Division (601) 634-5760
Engineer Research and Development Center (601) 634-2504
412th Engineer Command (601) 636-1686
168th Engineer Group (601) 313-5290
Vicksburg National Military Park (601) 636-0583
Marine Safety Detachment Vicksburg (601) 636-5516
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