

KANSAS CITY DISTRICT'S NEWS MAGAZINE

# HEARTLAND ENGINEER



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APRIL - JUNE 2015



## PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

# EMPLOYEE PROFILE



**Ben Davis,**  
 Manager, Military Programs Branch  
 Photo provided

Ben Davis is a Project Manager in the Military Programs Branch. Davis has been with the Kansas City District for 13 years. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and a master's in Structural Engineering from the University of Missouri.

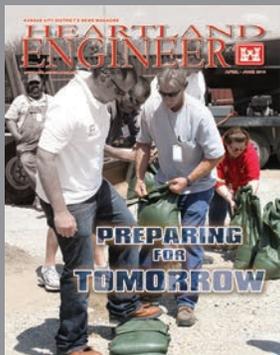
Davis is currently the Project Manager for the KC-46A Pegasus Refueling Tanker at McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita, Kan. The program is one of the top three Air Force acquisition priorities.

Davis has also taken the reigns from Mike Watkins as the Kansas City Corporate Challenge Company Coordinator. "It's always great to get to know co-workers outside the workplace. The camaraderie and competitive spirit associated with this competition helps to cultivate team building both in and out of the workplace."

Davis encourages all those who've signed up to compete hard and also encourages district personnel to support those who will participate.

# INSIDE THE HEARTLAND

- Commander's Notebook \_\_\_\_\_ 3
- Empowering our youth through special campaign \_\_\_\_\_ 4
- CGSC Boat tour \_\_\_\_\_ 5
- Perry Lake hosts Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt \_\_\_\_\_ 6
- Enjoy America's Waterways, Play it Safe and Return Home Alive \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- Kansas City District provides support to Honolulu District \_\_\_\_\_ 8
- District Supports STEM initiatives \_\_\_\_\_ 10
- Promote Dam Safety within our Community \_\_\_\_\_ 12
- District conducts flood fight training \_\_\_\_\_ 13
- Conducting reviews of Structures and Needs \_\_\_\_\_ 14
- Topeka secures \$7M federal funding for levee improvements \_\_\_\_\_ 16
- Staying the Course \_\_\_\_\_ 18
- Kansas City District Emergency Management recognized for achievement \_\_\_\_\_ 19
- Around the District \_\_\_\_\_ 20



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## HEARTLAND ENGINEER

APRIL - JUNE 2015  
 VOL. 15, NO. 2

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### ON THE COVER:

District employees and stakeholders take part in the annual levee safety training given by the Emergency Management staff on May 1 in St. Joseph, Mo. Photo by Amy Phillips



## KC District,

Spring is here and summer will soon be upon us. I, for one, am ready for the warmer weather.

While I may be ready for the warmer weather, I know too that it brings on a busy season for the district. In anticipation, we are preparing for the upcoming recreational season along with the possibility of high water events along the Missouri River and its tributaries.

If we are tested by mother-nature this year, I am confident the district is fully-prepared to rise to the challenge. One of the reasons for my confidence is what we achieved in April. The Kansas City District's Emergency Management Program was granted full accreditation by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). This accreditation recognizes the ability of the district to expeditiously bring together personnel, resources, and communications from a variety of agencies and organizations in preparation for and in response to a disaster of any nature. The district has shown its resolve in its commitment to achieve this accreditation and more importantly the dedication to the safety and security of the residents and stakeholders we serve. This achievement was possible due to our culture and vigilance across many sections and departments. Congratulations to all whose efforts contributed to this monumental achievement.

In addition to our excellence in emergency preparedness, the district continues to demonstrate excellence in the execution of our civil works, military programs and environmental programs. As part of our commitment to delivering quality products to our customers, the district has developed a detailed system of business processes and we have maintained our ISO 9001:2008 certification since 2006. The district just completed our annual ISO 9001:2008 compliance audit and received an excellent review. I commend all of you on your continued efforts to improve execution and provide quality products to our customers. Quality is our cornerstone as we plan and execute our missions.



COL Andrew Sexton

### *Quality Policy Statement*

"The Kansas City District is committed to providing quality products and superior customer satisfaction by executing within scope, schedule, and budget in an environment of continuous improvement."

As a result of your professionalism and quality work, the district's reputation of competence and dependability has again been recognized by our sister districts in Honolulu and Japan through their desire to have us support their missions.

Recently, a team of four from the design branch, led by John Dillon, assisted the Honolulu District by performing a survey of all utility meters on multiple Army installations on the island of Oahu. The success of this team has created additional opportunities for the district. Also, the district continues to provide reach back support for the Japan District. Our team recently conducted source selection activities and subsequently awarded a construction contract for \$32.6 million to provide a type III hydrant fuel system in Japan. As a result of our exceptional efforts on the previous projects, POJ requested that our district provide in-house design and contracting support for an FY16 military construction family housing infrastructure project. Successful execution of this work is important to the nation's defense efforts and could lead to additional and greatly welcomed reach back opportunities for us in the future.

As we head into the summer months, please remember safety is in all aspects of what we do, both work and play. Nothing is more central to our mission than the emphasis we place on the safety of our employees. Please continue to practice and promote safety in all of your activities.

Keep up the exceptional effort as we work every day to take care of the team, deliver our projects and support our partners. Together, the Kansas City District is building a better future for the Heartland.

# Empowering our youth through special campaign

By Amy Phillips

On April 23, the Kansas City District participated in the nationally observed educational campaign, “Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day,” marking the 24th year that the district has participated in the enriching educational experience.

“The district’s observance is about working together to strengthen the connection between education, work, community and relationships. By finding various means, such as this annual campaign, we as a nation are helping our daughters and sons reach their full potential, while expanding their future opportunities,” said Col. Andrew Sexton, Commander, in a memorandum to the district.

It is estimated that more than 37 million youth and adults participated in the program nationwide. The district’s Equal Employment Office Special Emphasis Committee organized several activities to make sure that our young business partners were engaged and excited about coming to work with mom or dad. Cynthia Kelley, District EEO officer has spearheaded the coordination of the event for the past 21 years.

“I started out as a volunteer on a committee and eventually ended up being the lead or go-to person. We have done many exciting activities throughout the years, from bus tours to shadowing Corporate Board members and every year we have tried to make the day as enriching as possible,” said Kelley.

The theme for this year’s program, “#MPOWR Knowledge + Choice = Strength,” suggests that there is an even bigger and brighter future ahead for the young participants in the program. The program was designed to be more than just a career day by showing them the value of education, helping them discover the power and possibilities associated with a balanced work and family life, and providing them an opportunity to share how they envision the future and begin steps toward their end goals with a hands-on and interactive environment.

To participate in the program, the kids had to be between the ages of eight to 18 and curious about their parent’s job. Parents had the opportunity to share with their children what they do at work and expose them to their daily activities that they usually only hear about.

Some of the activities available to the group this year included: A welcome from the Commander, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics presentation and experiment, military life presentation, bird skulls presentation and water safety information.

According to the fact sheet, the intent of the program is, “to increase girls’ and boys’ interest in education, influence their decision to go to college or a professional school, and broaden girls’ and boys’ thinking about their goals and aspirations with reference to work opportunities.”

“The day is an eye-opener into the possibilities that will be available to them as they travel life’s journey into adulthood. It takes a village to raise a child and the Corps’ family stands in the forefront. I’m grateful to have had the opportunity to contribute to a worthwhile cause - our youth,” said Kelley.

*(The EEO Special Emphasis Committee contributed to this article.)*



Top: Cynthia Kelley, District EEO officer and event coordinator, poses with Woody Owl at the 24th annual educational campaign, “Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day.”

Bottom: Col. Andrew Sexton provides welcoming remarks at the annual Take-our Daughters and Sons to Work Day on April 23. The theme for this year’s event was #MPOWR Knowledge + Choice=Strength.

Photos by Jennie Wilson

# Boat Tour



*Story and photos by Capt. Joshua Poling*

The District's River Operations team recently paired up with a small group from the Army's Fort Leavenworth Command and General Staff College in a continued outreach program to display the operations throughout the district. On April 28, the CGSC group teamed up with James Rudy and his crew from the Napoleon River office for a three hour boat tour along the Missouri River.

The tour ferried the six CGSC students and their group leader from the marina beneath the Rt. 92 Bridge in Leavenworth, Kan., north to Atchison, Kan., to exhibit the various works along the river performed by the district. The 12 person vessel powered up the mighty Missouri River while Rudy and his crew of three pointed out different river operations along the way.

The students were able to see many different operations that the district has completed in the past. The boat took the students within feet of a few of the different rock levees to display the self-scouring effect the levees create along the river for navigation. Asian Carp, an invasive species, made their presence known by leaping from the water when boat captain Robert Martens would throttle the boat engines.

Along with river navigation, the tour pointed out the different restoration programs that are led by the district. The boat was maneuvered close to a channel that was created for shallow water habitat for wildlife to include the endangered Pallid Sturgeon. The crew members described to the students how the restoration programs were funded and constructed.

The partnership was a beneficial one for the CGSC students as they learned about the different operations that the Corps of Engineers partake in as well as roles they may be asked to fill in their future military careers. Beautiful spring weather made for a great trip to be had by both the crew and the students and the students were able to take away shared knowledge of district operations.

*Inset: An Asian Carp leaps from the water of the Missouri River during the April 28 Command and General Staff College boat tour with the Kansas City District.*

*Top: A small group from the Army's Fort Leavenworth Command and General Staff College paired up with the District's River Operations team on April 28 in a continued outreach program to display operations throughout the district.*



## hosts Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt

By Capt. Joshua Poling

The weekend of April 18 and 19 brought rain, cooler weather, and lots of great memories to the Perry Lake area. For the second time, the Perry Lake office held a Wounded Warrior hunt at their Lake site hosting two Soldiers from the Warrior Transition Battalion located at Fort Riley, Kan. This particular hunt afforded the participating Soldiers the chance to harvest two Kansas turkeys during the Kansas spring turkey season.

The staff at Perry Lake utilized their resources to conduct the hunt at their lake site, donating personal time and effort to ensure that the hunt would be an eventful one for the Soldiers involved. Park ranger, Kyle Ruona, who facilitated the Wounded Warrior deer hunt in the fall, led the coordination once again for the hunt. Through donations from the local American Legion, Perry State Park, local businesses and volunteers, the Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt was a successful one.

The Soldiers were greeted on Friday evening of the 17th to participate in some target practice and to get them familiarized on the shotguns that they would use during the hunt. After their confidence levels with target shooting were satisfied, the Soldiers went to the Perry American Legion and were treated to a full course meal by the

members of the Legion. After dinner, the Soldiers were briefed on the next day's timeline and then retreated to their cabins at Perry Lake.

The hunt was successful for the Soldiers as both hunters were able to harvest a bird before 8 a.m. the first morning. Torrential downpours weren't enough to keep the guides and the Soldiers from entering the spring woods. The sounds of spring time woods are enough to complete a day afield.

Krystal, one of the participating Soldiers, was ecstatic when she harvested a bird on her very first turkey hunt.

**"For me the Wounded Warrior hunt was an opportunity to focus on something I am still able to do. I was able to relax and have fun instead of worrying about my limitations. It was an amazing experience that I am deeply grateful for,"** Krystal stated.

The Rangers at Perry; Ruona, Reece Nelson, and John Swinford were instrumental in a successful hunt throughout the weekend. Ruona spoke of what the Wounded Warrior hunts mean to him and the staff at the lake.

**"This is a great opportunity for the Corps and the community to give back to our Servicemen and Women and get them outdoors to experience hunting and the camaraderie that comes along with the sport. Not to mention affording them the best opportunity to see and harvest game in parks areas normally closed to public hunting,"** said Ruona.

The lake staff took the time to scout areas for birds, set up blinds, and most importantly prepared the food for the Soldiers and guides throughout the weekend.

The hunt itself wasn't just rewarding for the Soldiers. Speaking on behalf of the volunteers, guides and Perry Lake staff, the hunt was humbling and just as rewarding for those who were able to donate their time to see that the Soldiers were well taken care of and enjoyed their time at the lake site. The volunteers were able to walk away with a feeling of great gratitude while the Soldiers were able to take with them memories of their first turkey hunt, and a successful one at that.

Left: Hunters and park rangers pose with the turkeys that were harvested during the Perry Lake Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt held April 18 and 19. Picture from left to right, back row: Josh Juristy, Dan Rosencutter, Kyle Ruona and John Swinford. Front row: Capt. Joshua Poling, Krystal Nelson, Mandela Dekon and Justin Pius.

Right: Capt. Joshua Poling poses with Krystal Nelson during the Perry Lake Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt. Photos provided by Capt. Joshua Poling

# Enjoy America's Waterways, Play it Safe and Return Home Alive

*Provided by  
the National Water  
Safety Program Manager*

Before you head out for a day on or near the water, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers encourages you to make sure you have life jackets for everyone and that they please wear them.

On average, nine out of 10 people who drowned at a USACE lake or river project didn't wear a life jacket. Life jackets save lives by keeping you afloat and providing time for rescue.

Make sure you size it right and buckle it up. A child should not be put in a life jacket that is too big for them because it will slip over their head if they fall in the water and they could drown. Life jackets are categorized by a person's weight so check the label and test it to make sure it fits snug.

Most people who drown never intended to be in the water; they unexpectedly fell from a boat or dock into the water. When this happens, a person will reflexively gasp and can inhale up to one liter of water and drown in less than a minute.

Others get into trouble swimming out to retrieve a boat that floated away, or swimming in association with a boat. Swimming in natural waters is not the same as swimming in a pool. Even strong swimmers can get into trouble and be gone within seconds. It takes an average of 60 seconds for an adult to drown and just 20 seconds for a child to drown. Swimming ability also decreases with age.

Swim at a designated swim beach. These areas have been inspected to provide a safe swimming environment. At all USACE beaches you swim at your own risk so adults please watch your children, because most people drowned within 10 feet of safety. Many shorelines at USACE lake and river projects have drop offs and you can be in water over your head instantly or pulled under by the current.

Expect the unexpected and wear the right size and type of life jacket because nine out of 10 people who drowned didn't.

USACE is the Nation's largest federal provider of water-based outdoor recreation, managing more than 400 lake and river projects in 43 states and hosting more than 370 million visits per year. With 90 percent of these recreation areas within 50 miles of metropolitan areas they provide a diverse range of outdoor activities close to home and to people of all ages. For more information on USACE recreation sites and activities, visit [www.CorpsLakes.us](http://www.CorpsLakes.us).



Jim Dickerson, park ranger at Longview-Blue Springs lakes, presents water safety tips to kids and their parents during the Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day on April 23. Photos by Jennie Wilson

# Kansas City District provides support to Honolulu District

By Amy Phillips

In 2014, the Army issued an executive order for all Army installations to review and ensure that their facilities electricity, natural gas, water and steam use were metered to provide effective, accurate and compliant collection and reporting for timely energy and water management and accountability. The task to complete the metering survey came from Huntsville.

Under this order, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was tasked with the responsibility for program management of the installations meter program which consists of approximately 8,500 electric meters, natural gas meters and required water and steam meters.

As part of this program, USACE was tasked to provide a meter inventory of all the installations. Kansas City District's responsibility includes Fort Leonard Wood, Fort Riley, and Fort Leavenworth and the Kansas Air National Guard. Multiple teams from the Design Branch were developed to survey those installations.

"If the installation had an accurate list of their meters, the teams were required to perform a quality assurance check to verify the information," said John Dillon, Cost Engineering Section chief. Since our installations had a good list, the teams only had to perform a 10 percent check of the meters on the list.

In addition to supporting the local metering survey effort, it was identified that Honolulu district was going to require assistance completing the metering survey within their district boundaries. NWK volunteered to assist POH in the metering effort.

"POH has a large military presence with several military installations but lacked the manpower to complete the detailed surveys," said Dillon.

Top: Cathy Davis inspects a meter at one of the installations in the Honolulu District.

Top right: John Dillon, Cost Engineering Section chief, inspects a meter at one of the seven Honolulu District military installations. The Kansas City District sent four people to assist POH complete this task.

Background: Mike McCollum, one of the four people from the Kansas City District that traveled to the Honolulu District, inspects a meter at the building at Helemano, Hawaii.

Middle right: Mike McCollum leaves a secure area after inspecting meters for the Honolulu District.

Bottom right: Team members from the Kansas City District pause while inspecting meters in Hawaii.  
Photos provided

Teams were developed from several districts including Kansas City. NWK supported the call to action with four team members including Cathy Davis, Mike McCollum, Kyle Haake and Dillon. The Charleston, Baltimore and Huntsville districts provided support as well to cover all islands under POH's responsibility.

Since the installations did not have a good list of the meters on the installations, a 100 percent survey was required. This required significantly more effort than the 10 percent check performed within the Kansas City District. NWK was put in charge of inspecting the seven installations in POH and sent our teams of two to perform the necessary checks of the meters.

The teams contacted the installations ahead of time to coordinate their visit and inspect the buildings for meters. They located all on-site meters, documented the type and serial number, took pictures and developed a detailed report for each installation.

"We are doing this to help the Army to get a better handle on what meters they have and what meters that they need. The general goal is to get a good inventory to help make decisions on installing new meters where they are most needed," said Dillon.

One military site they visited had only one meter for the entire site, which included over 50 buildings. There was no way to track how much energy is being used at any of the facilities as compared to other buildings on the site. The same issue existed for water and gas.

Another part of the inventory was gathering information on the communications rooms at all of the installations.

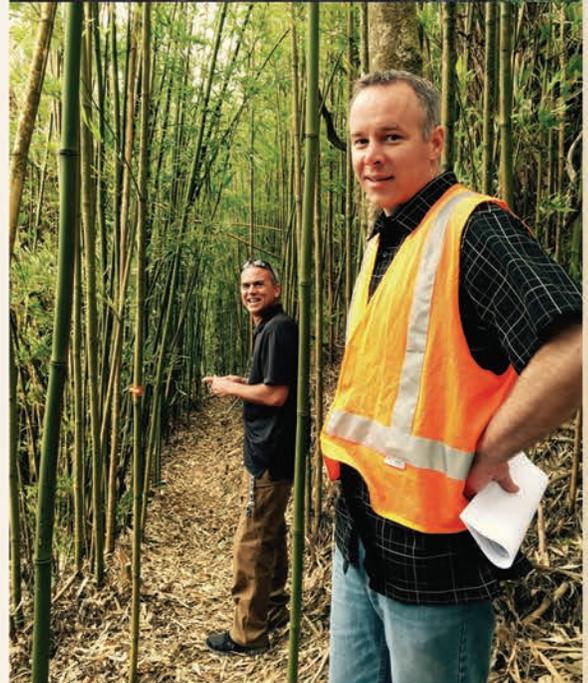
According to Dillon, one of the biggest challenges was coordinating with the installations and the Directorate of Public Works on short notice. They had to ensure everyone knew where they were going, that they would have access to the required areas, and had the permissions to go to the locations because there were some sensitive areas that required an escort.

The team spent a week in Honolulu. They felt that POH was happy with their work and felt rewarded to build relationships and help out another district. The hope is that this will open up other opportunities for the district for future work.

"I believe the plan is for the Army to use these surveys to make decisions on where they need to install meters. They want to make sure they are being energy efficient and make sure they understand who is using what utilities. This will help the Army make decisions on what meters they will install in the future. Bottom line, they want to know what is out there and what might be needed," said Dillon.

The goal was to have all the surveys completed by April 30 but there are a few exceptions to that. In addition to what the team completed in Honolulu, they will send a team out to Kwajalein Island, which is part of the Honolulu Districts area of responsibility. There are three main islands that require an inventory. It is a highly secure area that required a lot of coordination and approvals which pushed it past the April 30 deadline. The team will leave in early May to complete the inventory at the island.

"Our goal was to make sure the customer received what they needed and I believe we met that goal," said Dillon. "With the detailed reports developed, I felt POH went above and beyond what the Army was looking for. The additional information POH is providing in their reports, including specific building reports and photos, was requested by the DPWs within POH. Ultimately, our efforts should help POH build their relationship with the DPWs they work with on a daily basis."



A woman in a patterned shirt and dark pants stands at the front of a room, presenting to a group of children. The children are seated at desks, and a projector screen displays images of a city. The woman is also seen in the foreground, interacting with a group of children who are holding paper and a roll of paper towels.

# District support STEM initiatives

Molly Boughan, geologist and STEM volunteer, participated in an outreach project during the district educational campaign, Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day on April 23. Photos by Jennie Wilson



District Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics program volunteers interact with Girl Scouts at an event on May 2, 2014. Molly Boughan and Jean Schumacher taught 100 scouts the properties of copper, how and why it's mined and helped them use an acid to shine a copper penny then used it to prepare a STEM keepsake necklace. Photo provided

Only 16 percent of American high school seniors are proficient in mathematics and interested in a STEM career. Only about 50 percent choose to work in a related career. The United States is falling behind internationally, ranking 25th in mathematics and 12th in science among industrialized nations. USACE is making a difference for our nation.

Through the USACE Campaign Plan Priority Actions, districts have been given targets to provide the outreach to students and build interest in the STEM fields. The Kansas City District has participated with a variety of roles to provide support to area schools, colleges and universities to develop relationships and promote the STEM fields.

“The STEM program is a great way to get students of all ages interested in math and science. The employees at Fort Leonard Wood, who volunteer their time with the Tomorrow’s Engineers group, love making every experience fun and hands on for the students. We want to cultivate a desire for children to learn more about engineering and the world that surrounds them,” said Capt. Mary Ann Kearny.

The district has already met our goals for fiscal year 15 STEM outreach by conducting formal visits at seven Engineering Colleges including one Historically Black College/University. The district has also established seven cooperative agreements with universities including one HBCU with three specific research projects awarded. The universities in our cooperative agreement include: Missouri University of Science and Technology, Colorado State, University of Missouri, University of Kansas, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Lincoln University, and Missouri State University.

“Participating in STEM outreach is a great way to inspire future Kansas City scientists while giving back to the great city we work in,” said Molly Boughan, geologist and STEM volunteer for the district.

The Kansas City District recognizes the need for continued partnerships among area schools to increase their interest in the STEM fields. Through continued support of outreach programs USACE can facilitate the dissemination and adoption of effective STEM instructional practices nationwide and promote STEM education experiences that promotes hands-on learning to increase student engagement, interest, and achievement in the STEM fields. The Kansas City District has the tools and the means to promote such outreach programs and invest in the future of our country through the education of our youth.

*By Capt. Joshua Poling*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Kansas City District recognizes the critical role that Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education plays in enabling the country to remain the economic and technological leaders of the global marketplace, and enabling the Department of Defense and Army in the security of our nation. The district is committed to teaming with others to strengthen STEM-related programs that inspire current and future generations of young people to pursue careers in STEM fields.

# National Dam Safety Awareness Day

*Dam Safety is a Shared Responsibility*

## Promote Dam Safety within our Community

By Amy Phillips

Every year, the Kansas City District takes part in recognizing National Dam Safety Awareness Day on May 31. The federal government has been working for the past 30 years to protect Americans from dam failure through the National Dam Safety Program.

“National Dam Safety Awareness Day is on May 31, the anniversary of the worst dam failure in our nation’s history, and the cause of the Johnstown flood,” said John Benson, Dam Safety Program Manager.

The program was set to commemorate the failure of the South Fork Dam in Johnstown, Pa., in 1889. The dam failure resulted in the loss of more than 2,200 lives, leaving thousands homeless. The Johnstown disaster was the worst dam failure in the history of the United States.

The NDSP, which is led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is a partnership of the states, federal agencies, and other stakeholders to encourage individual and community responsibility for dam safety. The focus is to sustain the public’s interest in becoming active partners in local emergency management.

Dams provide many benefits to American’s around the nation. While dams provide many benefits to communities, such as storage of drinking water and improvement of wildlife habitats, they can also pose a significant flood risk if they fail.

There are approximately 80,000 dams in the United States according to the 2007 update to the National Inventory of Dams. Approximately one-third of these pose a “high” or “significant” hazard to life and property if failure occurs. Even

smaller agricultural dams in your area could be considered high hazard dams.

It is important that we learn from disasters of the past and take pre-disaster planning measures. If you live downstream of dams and understand the risks associated with dams keep an effective evacuation plan in place.

“NWK is committed to dam safety and the authorized benefits of dams, and we look to National Dam Safety Awareness Day to remind the public about our role and the public’s role in dam safety,” said Benson.

Dam safety is a shared responsibility and everyone is encouraged to know their risk, know the benefits of dams, know their role and take action.

(Editor’s note: Information for this article supplied by the National Dam Safety Awareness Day fact sheet.)

### Key things to keep in mind:

- Dams require maintenance and monitoring. This effort is dependent on the dam condition and downstream hazards.
- Dams have many benefits, such as water supply storage, recreation, fish & wildlife habitat, agriculture, hydropower and navigation. Flood control dams reduce risks for downstream flooding.
- Dam Safety is a shared responsibility. Know your risk, know your role and take action. Encourage dam owners and elected officials to make sound flood risk management decisions.
- Dams and levees are potentially hazardous. There are many historic dam failures where downstream flooding was catastrophic.

More information can be obtained at:  
<http://www.fema.gov/about-national-dam-safety-program>.

# District conducts flood fight training

*Story and Photos by Amy Phillips*

The Kansas City District Emergency Management office conducted Federal Flood Fight Training on April 29 in St. Joseph, Mo. The training was attended by federal, state and local partners to include federal levee sponsors, as well as Corps personnel.

“The Kansas City District is trained and ready for the spring flood fight season,” said Josh Marx, Natural Disaster Program Manager, during a briefing to the Corps’ Crisis Action Team.

Each year, the EM office conducts a series of training sessions to include the Flood Fight Training to prepare Corps personnel and stakeholders for any emergency flood situation that may arise.

“Stakeholder outreach and coordination is critical to the success of the Corps’ assistance to impacted communities,” said Marx. “Outreach occurs throughout the year with specific events targeted to the pre-flood timeframe.”

The training consisted of four hours of classroom training which included briefings on recognizing the different issues that can exist on a levee system during a flood event. Some of those include; sink holes, scours, sand boils and erosion and how to recognize these issues early.



Jud Kneuvean, EM chief, encouraged the levee sponsors to inspect their levee systems during a flood event and be aware of any changes in the system.

“We offer this training at no charge to the levee sponsors because preparing them before a flood ultimately reduces federal expenditures during a future flood response,” said Kneuvean.

The flood fighting techniques workshop also included study on topics such as: types of levee systems and design, levee maintenance and inspections, disaster preparedness, flood response, and levee rehabilitation. Participants gained insight into the types of assistance the district can provide and how to request it.

The classroom portion was followed by two hours of hands on training of filling, passing and positioning sandbags for the optimal sandbag levee. In an actual flood event, having the flood fight knowledge and abilities will be critical to saving the levee system and protecting life.

Kneuvean said flood fighting can be difficult to execute because there is not a one-size-fits-all solution. However, the Kansas City District has taken a proactive approach and has prepared federal, state, and local counterparts on how to apply proven emergency management and flood fighting techniques. Reacting to disasters in a timely manner is essential in protecting the life, safety and property of the public.

Background: Jud Kneuvean, Emergency Management chief, demonstrates the proper way to stack sandbags during flood fight training in St. Joseph, Mo., on April 29.

Top: Capt. Joshua Poling receives instruction on how to use the sandbag filling machine during the annual district flood fight training on April 29.

# Conducting reviews of Structures and Needs

*Provided by the Missouri River Recovery Program*

The Missouri River Bank Stabilization and Navigation Project is a system of dikes and revetments (structures) along the lower 735 miles of the river from Sioux City, Iowa to the mouth near St. Louis, Mo. These structures are maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Omaha District inspects and maintains the structures from Sioux City, Iowa to Rulo, Neb., while the Kansas City District does the same for the structures from Rulo, Neb., to the mouth. At least annually, all structures are inspected to ensure they are at the required height and configuration standards and the project is performing as authorized.

The structures of the Corps' BSNP were authorized and designed to provide for a reliable, self-scouring navigation channel. Completed in 1981, the project consists of approximately 7,500 individual structures and is maintained using annual appropriations from Congress. Under the Endangered Species Act, the Corps is required to operate and maintain the BSNP in a way that does not jeopardize the continued existence of any federally listed threatened or endangered species.

Annual inspections of the structures are intended to provide an overall assessment of maintenance needs for the BSNP. This effort begins after the water levels drop in late fall and continues through the winter as ice and weather conditions allow.

During the inspections, structures showing signs of deterioration are evaluated and recorded. Structures with the greatest damage and posing a risk to the BSNP's authorized purposes are given the highest priority for repair. All structures are evaluated every year and an updated priority repair list is composed yearly.

During inspections, engineers use detailed information about

the structures including design height and design length, type of structure (dike or revetment), contents of structure (piling or piling with stone fill), construction type (standard revetment or toe trench revetment, etc.), year the structure was built, height each segment of each structure was built to or last repaired to, location and size of notches, density of structure spacing, presence or absence of infrastructure on the over bank, history of navigation problems in the area, etc.

Stakeholders, such as the navigation industry, levee districts and adjacent landowners often provide input to the Corps' Missouri River Office on structures they feel need attention. Engineers also take that information into account during inspections and deficient structures determined to be in an area with a navigation channel concern are given the highest priority.

In addition to the navigation features, another component of the Corps work on the river consists of developing aquatic habitat to meet the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Biological Opinion metrics for threatened and endangered species. This habitat also helps mitigate for environmental damages caused by the construction of the BSNP. The Corps has constructed side channel chutes, modified existing BSNP rock structures, and completed river widening projects to create habitat. Maintenance of these structures is accomplished using Missouri River Recovery Program funds. The annual inspection also looks at these structures to ensure they are within their design dimensions, are diverting the proper amount of flow into side channel chutes, are not causing any adverse impacts to the navigation channel or private property and ensure they are functioning as designed or intended.

In a parallel effort, the Corps' Habitat Assessment and Monitoring Program collects biological

information on the MRRP projects to evaluate if they are providing the intended biological response. HAMP biologists use the best available scientific information to provide feedback to river engineers concerning site adjustments to improve habitat. This is done to ensure they continue to provide biological outputs for species.

A prime example of where the annual Missouri River inspections have identified the need for further work is at the MRRP Tadpole Island Chute. This project is located on the right descending bank near river mile 180 and was constructed in 2006 by cutting through the existing revetment. Initially, the chute appeared to be developing as expected. Through the Corps' Missouri River annual inspections and stakeholder observations, crews noticed that shoaling was beginning to occur immediately upstream from the chute exit. Thanks to these inspections, plans were put into place to modify existing structures near the entrance of the chute and to construct a new flow control structure to limit the amount of water flowing into the chute. Currently, engineers and biologists are evaluating whether the aquatic habitat within the chute can be improved with additional modification of the existing structure or the construction of new structures.

The annual Missouri River inspection, along with congressional funding to support needed repairs, are two key components that allow the Corps to operate and maintain the Missouri River BSNP consistent with the project authority and in a manner that does not jeopardize the continued existence of any federally-listed threatened or endangered species while meeting all other authorized purposes.

The Tadpole Island Chute is just one of the projects that has benefited from the annual Missouri River inspections. The project was constructed in 2006 by cutting through the existing revetment. Photo by Trisha Dorsey





## Topeka secures \$7M federal funding for levee improvements

*By Aly Van Dyke, city of Topeka  
David S. Kolarik contributed to this article*

The federal government has allocated to the city of Topeka \$7 million to reconstruct its Oakland floodwall – effectively kickstarting a three-year, \$29 million project to improve the city’s levee system that protects more than \$1 billion in Topeka assets.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 2016 has budgeted \$7 million to fund fixing the city’s aging levee system. Corps officials indicate the initial phase of the project – about \$2 million of work – will be under contract before Sept. 30. The city’s local match for the federal funding is \$2.45 million – funding the city already has set aside.

“The city of Topeka is delighted that this vital project will soon be getting underway,” said Topeka Mayor Larry Wolgast. “The levee repairs are a necessity to provide protection for our city and its residents. They also are the first steps in developing the entire riverfront area.”

Kent Myers, Project Manager, conducts an interview with Channel 13 News from Topeka during a ceremony on April 21 with the city of Topeka. Photo by David S. Kolarik

The first levee segment to be addressed is known as the Oakland Unit, which was completed in 1969 and consists of 10 miles of levee along the Kansas River and Shunganunga Creek. It protects several neighborhoods with about 2,900 homes and 89 businesses.

The purpose of the levee project is to increase the overall reliability of the levee system. The scope of work includes addressing aging floodwalls, underseepage, foundation and pump station modifications. In addition to protecting lives, the \$29 million in improvements will protect some 6,500 residences, 790 businesses, numerous public utility facilities as well as regional air and rail infrastructure, with an aggregate value of more than \$1 billion.

“This is a very important project for the City of Topeka. It will ensure the reliability and performance of the levee system that has provided protection to the city for so many years. Strong support from the City of Topeka and the Kansas congressional delegation helped earn authorization for construction in 2014/last summer and critical funding to initiate the construction this year,” said Kent Myers, Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District.

The start of the levee reconstruction project also means work can begin to make the Kansas River a destination location for the city of Topeka. The Topeka-Shawnee County Riverfront Authority in 2005 commissioned a study that recommended adding pedestrian and bicycle trails, boating access points, constructing a county park on the river’s north bank and installing an additional downstream weir to create a permanent river-lake through the downtown stretch of the river. Any of these improvements would be in addition to the \$29 million project cost.

“As we consider riverfront development, safety is of paramount importance, and this commitment will ensure that our levees continue to protect the core of our community from destructive flooding,” said Riverfront chairperson Beth Fager. “Once the levee system is brought up to standard, we can begin to implement recreational, educational and economic components

The Topeka levee system consists of five levee units: North Topeka levee Unit, Oakland Levee Unit, South Topeka Levee Unit, Waterworks Levee Unit and Auburndale Levee Unit. The first four will be reconstructed as part of this project. The preliminary schedule for the project has the Oakland Unit under contract by September 2015, the North Topeka Unit starting in fiscal year 2016 and the South Topeka Unit starting in fiscal year 2017.

The system includes more than 40 miles of levee, 3,600 feet of floodwall, 10 pump stations and numerous flood control structures operated and maintained by the city of Topeka. More than \$1 billion in investment, including residential, commercial, industrial, public utilities and transportation infrastructure, are protected by the levee system. The levee system has prevented

an estimated \$229 million in flood damages through December 1994, with an estimated \$57.8 million in July and August 1993.

The total project cost estimate is more than \$29 million, with the non-federal sponsor (the city of Topeka) providing a minimum of 35 percent of the total project costs, or more than \$10 million. The federal government will pick up the remaining 65 percent, or about \$19 million. The city approved the project budget for initial design for \$650,000 in 2013.

The city has a Project Partnership Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which describes the project and the responsibilities of the government and the city to share the cost of the work. The city has been reserving \$800,000 annually, specifically to provide the matching funds for this project.

“These improvements are critical to public safety and I look forward to seeing the work begin. The Kansas River is a source of commerce and enjoyment for many Kansans. This work will protect residents and businesses while also preserving future opportunities for people to enjoy its beauty as they walk, bike or take to the river in boats.” – Gov. Sam Brownback

“I am pleased to see that the Army Corps has placed a priority on the Topeka Flood Risk Management Project. The city of Topeka is committed to working with the Corps to see the project is completed without delay to protect the homes and businesses at risk.” – U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas.

“It is encouraging to see the City of Topeka and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers working together to upgrade the aging Topeka Levee system. This long awaited project is very promising news for the Topeka community and local economy. The city has done great work in clearing numerous hurdles in order to get this important project to this stage, and I was proud to support the passage of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act to help these repairs move forward. Of greatest importance, the people, homes and businesses on both sides of the Kansas River in Topeka will be better protected from flooding. But these repairs will also provide an opportunity for the community to improve and revitalize the waterfront for future generations of Topekans. I will continue to work with the City of Topeka and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to see this project through.” – U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kansas.

“I was pleased to learn from US Army Corps officials that the initial \$7 million in funding is included in the FY2016 budget request. I, along with the City of Topeka, have communicated the need for these repairs for many years. The valuable residential and commercial infrastructure protected by this levee system is critically important to Topeka and the region, and will be safer and better protected because of this project.” – U.S. Rep. Lynn Jenkins, R-Kansas.



# Staying the Course

Team members Andy Marske and Angela Loewen were presented a scale for their office area as their award for winning the Highest Body Weight Percentage lost as a team (13.99 percent) during the district's Biggest Loser Competition.  
Photo by Amy Phillips

By Capt. Joshua Poling

How many times have you started into a workout or diet routine and then life throws you a curve ball? One of the most challenging aspects to a healthy lifestyle in my eyes is finding a niche that works for your health goals and then sticking with it. So many times in even our daily routines we find a hurdle that instead of leaping over, we go around, changing our plans.

I have found through my military career that I have had some ups and downs in my health and fitness levels. Moving around the country, change of pace with my daily duties, extracurricular activities, all of these have led to some reason or another I either increased or decreased in my personal health and fitness standards.

Though I have always maintained standards that exceeded what the military placed upon me, there were times in my career where I wasn't meeting my personal standards. Looking back over the years I can draw one strong conclusion; the healthiest I have been was the periods of time when I set a routine and stayed the course.

I am sure in reading this you are already drawing up plans in your head of how you can better stay the course, and then on the other shoulder sits the bad angel telling you that you are too busy to find time for your health goals. Here are a few tips to that may help you explore more options into setting and maintaining a healthier you:

- Set reasonable goals- Sure we all want to look like we were sculpted from granite, but setting goals that are obtainable will be more helpful. Once you reach those goals and your confidence builds,

set new goals. If you know you have an hour before work that you read the newspaper, turn that into your workout time.

- Diet, Diet, Diet- I can say with certainty that when I was trying to reach a desired weight or physique, exercise alone wouldn't get me to that point. Each person is going to react differently from the foods they put in their mouth, finding a diet that works for you is the key. Find one that helps you meet your goals and time crunches. Prepping meals for the following week might be time consuming on Sunday evening, but will open up time for other things like exercise throughout the week.

- Keep a log- If carrying a journal around logging what you put in your mouth during lunch and watching the clock on the treadmill sounds tedious, then I recommend you close your Facebook app on your phone and open up a fitness app. With so many apps for phones/tablets out there these days, finding one to help you keep track of your goals and milestones is as easy as picking up your phone.

- Find a buddy- Working out with a partner pays major dividends. Not only are you relying on someone to be there for you, it puts a little added "pressure" on you to be there for them as well. Find someone who will motivate and push you and do them a favor and push right back. My workout buddy is my year old lab. Although I don't have kids myself, I can attest that he can act like one. I use my time walking him in the afternoon as another part of my daily exercise. If you have children, go out in the yard and play a little longer with them, teach them exercises, get them involved, it will

be rewarding for both parties and you will also be teaching them a healthy lifestyle.

- Don't give up- Quitting is easy. One of my favorite quotes comes from the book American Sniper: "Moderation is for cowards." Don't allow yourself to be satisfied with 25 minutes of working out when you had 30 minutes to exercise. Something came up at work and you had to cut into your workout routine, better take the stairs to that next meeting. You're not the only one counting on you to live a healthy life; friends, family and probably even your boss want you to be healthy so they can keep you around for years. Giving up on yourself is giving up on others.

For whatever reason you can find for not setting and maintaining health and fitness goals, there is a solution. It is your responsibility and yours alone to know what you can and cannot do to be a healthier you. I am sure you have reasonable thoughts about what you can achieve and what seems out of reach, but the results may surprise you if you just stick with your routine.

After reading this, take five minutes and write down five goals you would like to see yourself achieve; i.e. walk 30 minutes per day, drink eight glasses of water, not eat those Oreos. I would venture to guess if you set five goals for the next month that involve a healthier lifestyle and you stick with those goals, you will notice changes. I can't challenge you after reading this to transform your life, but if you decide there is a healthier you out there and you make goals, I challenge you to stay the course!

# EM Kansas City District Emergency Management

## recognized for achievement

By Diana McCoy

April 28, 2015 to Col. Andrew Sexton, Barb Graff, Chairperson, EMAP Commission wrote: "On behalf of the EMAP Commission, I am pleased to inform you that the USACE Kansas City District emergency management program has been granted full accreditation by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program. Upon recommendation by the Program Review Committee, the EMAP Commission voted on the USACE Kansas City District's accreditation at its meeting on April 24, 2015.

Emergency management accreditation represents a significant achievement. The USACE Kansas City District is commended for the work accomplished to achieve compliance with industry standards. To achieve accreditation, your program, which includes agencies and individuals within the program, took steps to document compliance with sixty-four industry recognized standards and a peer-review on-site assessment by a team of EMAP trained assessors.

Accreditation recognizes the ability of programs to bring together personnel, resources, and communications from a variety of agencies and organizations in preparation for and in response to a disaster of any type. We applaud the USACE Kansas City District's leadership and congratulate you on your commitment to achieve accreditation. More importantly, we recognize the dedication to the safety and security of the residents that it represents.

In the coming weeks, EMAP will provide a plaque recognizing the USACE Kansas City District accredited status."

EMAP, an independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to foster excellence and accountability in emergency management and homeland security programs, sent a team to the district to review emergency management plans and procedures. It is a voluntary assessment and accreditation process based on a national standard. The program has 64 standards that encompass 105 elements. The Kansas City District was the sixth U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District to go through the process.

The EMAP assessment team was made up of six personnel—two of them were from other USACE organizations. Three others were from state emergency management agencies from North Dakota, Maryland and Rhode Island. The sixth teammate was an EMAP project specialist who led the assessment team throughout the week-long visit.

What astounded the district's EM Branch was they were the first district to

be compliant with all of the standards and elements at the conclusion of the on-site assessment. In fact, fewer than five organizations have achieved this feat in the 15 years of EMAP existence. Organizations may normally expect to make some corrective actions following an on-site assessment.

"Although we fared better than well with the EMAP process, we learned that there are still things we can do to improve the readiness posture of the Kansas City District," said Jud Kneuvean, the district's chief of Emergency Management.

Congratulations to the Kansas City District Emergency Management team for their work in making sure that the district received this important accreditation.



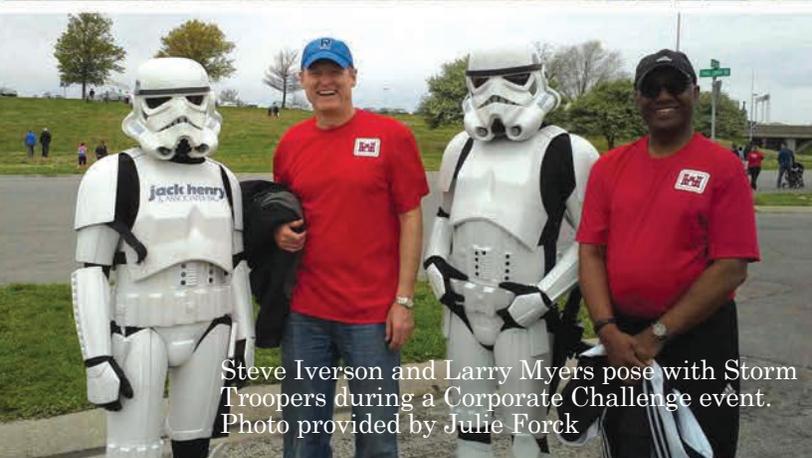
The Kansas City District Emergency Management Branch and District Commander Col. Andrew Sexton poses for a picture with the EMAP team at the conclusion of the exit briefing on September 19, 2014. Pictured from left to right: Ashley Leflore, Josh Marx, Brenda Mindermann, Marcia Nickle, Jud Kneuvean, Ray Laprad, Paul Flamm, Doug Friez, Scott Gauvin, Diana McCoy and Col. Andrew Sexton. Photo by Jennie Wilson



The Rossum Sand Sampler test was conducted on Relief Well 404 at the East Bottoms Relief Well Project on April 13. The test shows how much sand is in the water being pumped from the well. Photo by Adam Alexander

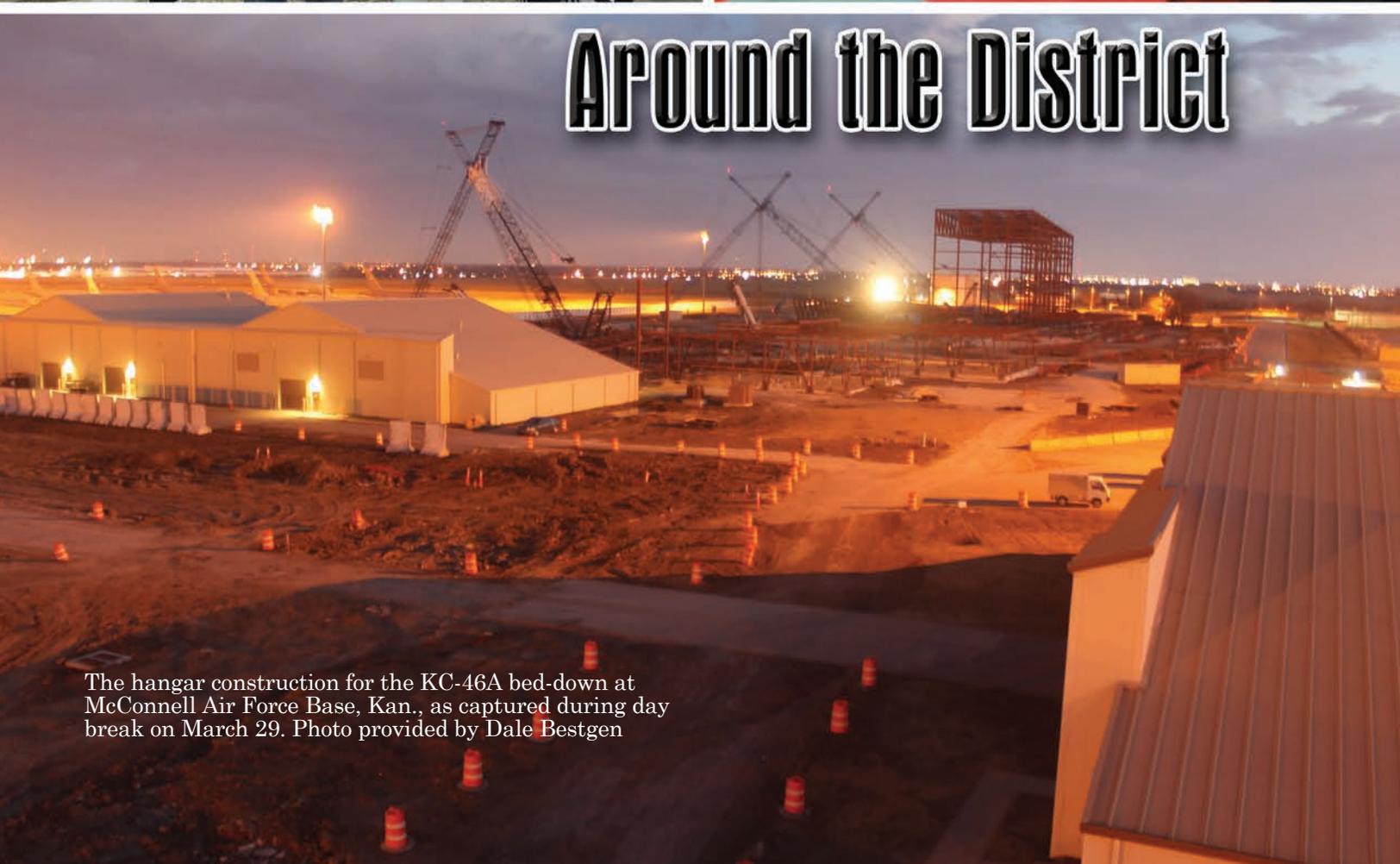


The Tomorrow's Engineers group volunteered at the Fun Fair at Fort Leonard Wood on April 4 to help kick off spring and the Month of the Military Child. Sandra Wolfe helped kids learn about liquids and solids as they made flubber! Photo by Capt. Mary Ann Kearney



Steve Iverson and Larry Myers pose with Storm Troopers during a Corporate Challenge event. Photo provided by Julie Forck

# Around the District



The hangar construction for the KC-46A bed-down at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., as captured during day break on March 29. Photo provided by Dale Bestgen