



Welcome to the summer 2018 Edition of the Corps Foundation Newsletter.

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Corps Foundation is the recipient of the 2018 Public Lands Alliance PUBLIC LANDS PARTNER AWARD! By Heather Burke, National Partnership Program Manager

Please join me in congratulating our Corps Foundation as the recipient of the 2018 Public Lands Alliance Public Lands Partner Award!

More than 370 people attended the awards ceremony during the Public Lands Alliance Convention and Trade Show in Palm Springs, CA on February 28. The Public Lands Partner Award recognizes an exemplary partnership for its stunning achievements to protect and preserve public lands and enhance the experiences of visitors. The award is presented to both the nonprofit organization and its agency partner for their shared achievements. Accepting the award on behalf of the Corps Foundation was Nancy Rogers, retired Corps employee and Foundation board member.

Since the inception of the Corps Foundation in 2006, the organization has been steadily increasing its capacity and successes during a decade of dedicated service. The achievements over the past three years in particular exhibit a significant rise in the Foundation's abilities to gain new funding sources, create products for the public, develop tools for Corps of Engineers natural resource management staff to help them engage partners, and an enhanced role in advocacy efforts.

When you cumulatively add up all that the Corps Foundation has done in 10 years for the public lands and waters managed by the Corps of Engineers and for our visitors, it is even more astounding to note that everything accomplished has been done through a 100% volunteer, unpaid board and advisory council. Their passion for providing healthy, sustainable natural resources for the public is paramount to the success of the Corps Foundation. Each of these dedicated individuals are truly deserving of the Public Lands Partner Award.



Right: National Partnership Program Manager Heather Burke with Nancy Rogers of the Corps Foundation Board of Directors

For more information about the Corps Foundation, check out their website: www.corpsfoundation.org and their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/corpsfoundation>

CONGRATULATIONS to the Corps Foundation and Thank You for all that you do!
Heather Burke

Corps Foundation Announces Enduring Service Award Winners

We are pleased to announce the 2018 Corps Foundation “Enduring Service” award winners, selected from an impressive group of individuals nominated for their continued service and accomplishments at US Army Corps of Engineers lakes, lands and waterways. The Corps Foundation established the Enduring Service Volunteer Award in January 2016. It honors long-term service and outstanding accomplishments by individuals and families of volunteers at Corps lakes and waterways. Each year the Corps Foundation presents the award to two individuals or families who display exceptional voluntary leadership, and have made or are making a positive difference in Corps lakes, waterways and the communities they serve. We are happy to have the generous support of the Bass Pro Shops for this very special and meaningful award program. The award recipients receive a plaque and recognition package consisting of a gift certificate and cash award sponsored by Bass Pro Shops.

This year’s two award winners include:

- **The Mullins family (Phillip, Corbett, Keith and Stevie), 42 years of distinguished service at Carr Creek Lake at Sassafras, Kentucky**
- **Jerry Shields, 15 years of dedicated service at Lake Ouachita at Royal, Arkansas**

While their years and hours of service are notable, it is the exceptional quality and impact of each of these outstanding volunteers that is central to their selection as the 2018 recipients of this award.

The Mullins Family (Keith, Phillip, Corbett, and Stevie) have provided volunteer leadership in support the annual Carr Creek Lake Cleanup from its inception in 1976 through today. During their 42 years of distinguished service at Carr Creek Lake in Sassafras, Kentucky they contributed over 2,000 hours of hours of volunteer service attending lake cleanup meetings, fundraising, and working during the actual event. The Mullins family embodies the true spirit of volunteerism and their long-standing commitment to Carr Creek Lake is an outstanding example of what one family can do to make a difference in their environment!

Jerry Shields has served over 15 years as a volunteer at Lake Ouachita, Arkansas, serving on the Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee (LOCFC) since its inception in 2001, and currently as Chairman of the committee. His participation and leadership of the LOCFC has greatly benefited Lake Ouachita and its visitors by enhancing its facilities and natural resources. Mr. Shield's dedication to the planning, funding, construction and maintenance of the LOViT hiking and biking trail along the southern shore of the lake is an outstanding example of how his leadership and service has made a difference.

We look forward to personally presenting these awards this fall at a location in or near the awardees' communities.

Nominations for the 2019 awards will be accepted between January 15 and April 30, 2019. Go to www.CorpsFoundation.org in January for more information on how to nominate your most exceptional volunteers.

What's New? Advocacy and Outreach Update: August 2018

By Nancy Rogers, Corps Foundation Board Member

I'm pleased to provide this update on the Foundation's initiative to increase its advocacy and outreach. I share this duty with several members of the board who have pitched in to spread the word to both internal U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and external audiences in the recreation industry and public lands communities.

Winter and spring are typically the seasons for park ranger and park manager trainings, orientations and meetings. The dispersed locations of board members, Greg Miller, Marilyn Jones, Nancy Rogers, Rich Deline and Pat Barry, and Special Programs

Director, Rachel Garren, worked to the advantage of reaching out to Districts and Divisions hosting their annual meetings. We also presented at several Visitor Assistance courses and the Prospect partnership classes. We continue to meet USACE natural resource management staffs who don't know much about the Corps Foundation, so our message is constantly expanding into new territory.

Rachel Garren, Special Programs Director for the Foundation, and Pam Doty, USACE National Water Safety Program Manager, continue to work diligently on our partnership to expand the scope of the Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns campaign. They both promoted the campaign in 2018 at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit and the National Drowning Prevention Alliance conferences.



National Association of Interpretation (NAI) Certified Interpretive Trainers, Pat Barry and Rachel Garren continue to teach the NAI Certified Interpretive Guide training that includes information on the Foundation's role in supporting the Corps Natural Resources Management Program.

The Foundation continues to help the field with reviewing and submitting grants for local projects. A successful Handshake proposal was awarded to St. Mary's Ship Canal (Detroit District) for \$20,000 with the help of Foundation review and coaching. We were also able to fund the production of Jr. Ranger Badges for the Tulsa District in support of their Jr. Ranger Program.

Heather Burke, the USACE Program Manager for Partnerships and Volunteers, is a great champion for the Corps Foundation. In July, Heather attended the annual Outdoor Retailers Market in Denver, Colorado. The Market hosts 1,800 vendors from around the world who provide products to the outdoor retail industry. It's also a place for Federal public land and water agencies to interface with outdoor retailers. The outdoor industry is in a unique position to influence their customers, our visitors and public lands and water-policy makers.

Heather shared duties with representatives from six other Federal land management agencies and recreation.gov to host the Public Lands and Waters exhibit. This year's exhibit was better located than in past years, with each day focused on different themes including inspiration, encouragement and stewardship regarding public lands. The activities were interactive with a special place to post your own "graffiti" on what inspires you for public lands.



Each agency provided information and “swag” to entice visitors to the booth for one-to-one engagement with federal agency representatives. Heather provided compelling facts about the Corps’ recreation program and partnering with the Corps, while rewarding their visit with water safety items.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Recreation Program

RECREATION STRONG

We are enhancing quality of life

more than **90%** of our lakes are within 50 miles of a metropolitan area

more than **250 MILLION** water-related jobs

more than **93K** campsites

more than **7.8K** miles of trails

visitors contribute **BILLION \$10.7** to the local economy

approximately **180K** jobs supported by visitor spending

more than **36K** picnic areas

nearly **45K** volunteers working **1.6 MILLION** hours

We are one of the nation's leading federal providers of outdoor recreation

- **403 lake and river projects in 43 states**
- **12 million acres of public lands and waters**
- **5,041 recreation sites**

For more on USACE recreation sites and opportunities, visit us at www.Corpslakes.us

What’s Next? Currently, we are developing a plan to hire a grant writer with the goal of hiring a paid Administrator to help us with fundraising. This means the Foundation is growing, getting recognized and ready to jump to the next level of involvement and influence.

Secondly, several members of the board will be traveling to Washington, DC in December to meet with and orient the new Corps leadership in the NRM program and Operations. They need to know who we are and what we can do together to make the

Corps' Natural Resources Management Program better and stronger. Further, we are scheduling meetings with a number of potential partners in the outdoor industry and public lands and waters community for discussions on joint efforts.

There's a lot on our plate for the rest of 2018. As always, you are invited to be a part of this exciting, passionate and productive organization! If you are not a member, consider putting your money to work for public lands and waters managed by the Corps. Visit our website at www.corpsfoundation.org for more information!

Interpreting Death to Save Lives: A Matter of Life and Vest By Amber Tilton, park ranger, The Dalles Lock & Dam

The Fear Factor

I remember the conversation clearly. A colleague and I sat debating the latest water safety campaign messaging developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). "Are You Next?" was the slogan. As in, are you the next drowning victim?

Talking about our own mortality is not something people like to do, let alone be reminded of it while relaxing on a sun-filled beach with a cool drink and a smile on their face. There is no sugarcoating in that kind of message.



As a park ranger for the Corps, I enforce rules and regulations for visitor and resource protection, when I have to. Threats of rules and consequences is a last resort. I would much rather help visitors make better decisions through understanding the 'whys'. Why do we have this rule and why should you care, and when it comes to visitor safety on the water, why should you wear a life jacket? That last 'why' seems obvious but our statistics show it is not. Every year, an average of 164 people drown on Corps managed waterways and most (89%) were not wearing a life jacket.

I often feel like a parent, concerned and responsible for my visitor's safety, pointing out the blind spots and hidden dangers of recreation. Sometimes it's as simple as a 'did you

know' talk. Like, "Did you know it is tick season? Ticks can transmit disease so please check yourself and your dog for ticks after hiking today." or "Did you know poison oak is common along this trail? It can cause severe allergic reactions in people. Let me show you what it looks like so you can avoid it."

In both of these examples, people may perceive the consequences as ones they can live with and not necessarily as a life or death matter. It is a subtle appeal to fear compared to "Did you know that X number of people have drowned here this year? Don't let this be your watery grave. Don't go home in a body bag; wear a life jacket."



So should we use fear as a motivator to change behavior? Is it effective? Just because people don't want to hear or talk about the elephant in the room, does that mean we shouldn't? Should we only focus on positive messages? Does messaging need to be optimistic in order to achieve a desired outcome?

This was the debate.

Shock Value – To Shock or Not to Shock?

I recall the scare tactics of my childhood. For example, the ever-popular myth "don't swim after you eat or you could be seized with cramps and drown", forever changed my behavior. I still will not swim after eating.

Scare tactics are one tool parent's use along with positive reinforcement, redirecting, modeling good behavior, and education. Therefore, it's not surprising that shocker messages are used in interpretation because people remember them. They provoke. But do they also provoke people into staying inside where it is safe; scared to death to recreate, to play, and to be outdoors?...that is food for thought.

Love – Till Death Do Us Part

Like fear, love is a powerful emotional influence. No one wants to part from their loved ones or watch them suffer from loss. People will protect what they love. The authority of our hearts is tied directly to the people we love and when we are reminded of this we take more care to protect ourselves.

This is exactly what the Corps found when it conducted focus groups with adult men (63% of drownings are adult men ages 20-60), to develop new water safety campaign messaging. The majority of the men in the focus groups said that trying to scare them into wearing a life jacket does not work. What does work, are positive messages that clearly connect to why they should wear a life jacket.

In 2015, based on the results of this study - the Corps, in cooperation with the Corps Foundation - launched a new adult water safety campaign, "Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns".

"A positive approach combined with a pull on a person's heart strings can be more effective than the shock value of scare tactics" said Pam Doty, Corps of Engineers National Water Safety Program Manager. "The 'Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns' slogan combines a call to action with a positive outcome, which according to our focus groups had an emotional impact that changed their perspective and ultimately their behavior" said Doty.

Regardless of which side of the debate you are on, it does not change the bottom line: Life Jackets Save Lives. NOTE: Photo credit belongs to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"The 'Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns' campaign resources such as video and audio PSAs, posters, social media and publication ads are available for public use at www.PleaseWearIt.com These resources can be combined with interpretive programs and events to help promote water safety.



Amber Tilton, Park Ranger, The Dalles Lock and Dam
Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
NWD/POD Water Safety Representative

The Corps Foundation congratulates Park Ranger Amber Tilton for having the above article published in two publications of the interpretive profession. It was published in the March/April 2018 issue of Legacy, the magazine of the National Association for Interpretation and in John Veverka's InterpNews, which goes to 250,000 people! Since published, this article has brought praises from legendary interpreter and author Sam H. Ham for the current campaign's potential to create behavioral change and how it relates to his studies in Protection Motivational Theory.

Amber also successfully worked with the Portland District of the Corps of Engineers to put up two "Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns" billboards beside interstate 84 in Oregon. (Editor)

Editor's note: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Water Safety Program and the Corps Foundation launched Social Media Channels on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for the "Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns" Campaign in April 2018 and the number of followers is growing. Please take a few to "Like" and "Follow" our accounts and "Share" campaign posts. The channels can be found below or you can simply search "Please Wear It" on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. On these channels, you will find posts that include important water safety information that can easily be shared to promote playing it safe when in, on, or near the water, so please share the content on your social media pages.

www.facebook.com/PleaseWearIt www.Twitter.com/PleaseWearIt www.Instagram.com/PleaseWearIt

American Recreation Coalition's 2018 Legends Award Announcement

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has selected Ms. Samantha Gray, Lead Interpretive Ranger at the Cape Cod Canal, New England District as the recipient of the 2018 American Recreation Coalition's Legends Award.

Over the past 21 years, Ms. Gray has been a leader in the promotion of recreational and educational opportunities at the Cape Cod Canal. Since the opening of the Canal Visitor Center in 2001, Samantha has been the force behind its transformation, making it the focal point of the Canal's interpretive mission, and a centerpiece of the New England District's Natural Resources Program. Her development of innovative programs such as Canal Kids, Sandwich Partnership for Families, and Exploring Engineering Club is helping to develop the next generation of public lands and waters stewards by reaching children from ages 1 – 17 with programs targeted to each learning level.

Ms. Gray has been a significant player in the promotion of partnerships opportunities at her project and throughout the New England District. She was instrumental in the development of the District's partnership policy and standard operating procedures. Her efforts have made it easier for other projects to cultivate relationships with outside organizations to improve the recreational opportunities at their parks. Leading by example, Samantha set up a cooperating association agreement with Eastern National to create the Canal Visitor Center Bookstore, started an Adopt-A-Shoreline program, and formed a partnership with the Sandwich Arts Alliance to display photos and

artwork featuring the Canal. Ms. Gray's leadership and passion for imparting knowledge has resulted in devoted, life-long volunteers, longstanding partnerships with key stakeholders and the public, as well as a stellar interpretive program.

Samantha continuously shows vision and effective project execution, while always taking the time to mentor and assist co-workers, volunteers and visitors. She is an asset to the Corps of Engineers and has earned the recognition offered by the American Recreation Coalition's Legends Award. Ms. Gray was honored in a ceremony during the American Recreation Coalition's Partners Outdoors annual conference held 31 May 2018 in Washington, D.C. Ms. Gray's accomplishments and efforts bring positive recognition to the Corps of Engineers and our partners.

Congratulations from the members of the Corps Foundation!

Arnold Habig received a Corps Foundation Excellence Coin and a Commander's Award for Public Service at Lake Ouachita, Arkansas



On August 2, 2018, Lake Ouachita Resource Manager, Stacy Sigman, and Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Chairman, Jerry Shields, traveled to North Little Rock, Arkansas to present Arnold Habig the Commander's Award for Public Service. Mr. Habig also received a Corps Foundation's Volunteer Excellence coin for outstanding volunteer service.

Mr. Habig served as a charter member of the Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee (LOCFC) founded in 2001. He donated his time serving as Chairman of the committee from 2001 to 2014. After he stepped down as Chairman, he continued to serve on the LOCFC until March 2018.

Mr. Habig, a very hard-working individual, donated countless hours to programs designed to enhance recreation on Lake Ouachita. Mr. Habig worked on the Marine Sanitation Advisory Committee and recommended changes to the Marine Sanitation act.

Mr. Habig also conducted studies and successfully lobbied for grant funding to assist with a non-native aquatic vegetation problem on Lake Ouachita, thereby enhancing the fisheries on Ouachita. In addition, Mr. Habig worked tirelessly while serving on the LOCFC to coordinate annual volunteer Lake Ouachita cleanup days. He garnered donations for the prizes and luncheons following the events, and also cleaned the shoreline and cooked lunch for the other volunteers during the events.

As an avid Lake Ouachita camper and recreation user on Lake Ouachita, Mr. Habig demonstrated his love for the lake through his volunteer work. He continuously searched for ways to improve recreation and natural resource management. He served on various LOCFC sub-committees in these program areas. Additionally, Mr. Habig volunteered his services by working on construction of the Lake Ouachita Vista Trail, a 44-mile long hiking/biking trail connecting the recreation areas on Ouachita.

Even though he had an hour and a half commute from North Little Rock, AR to Lake Ouachita, Mr. Habig always arrived early for the LOCFC meetings and was very prepared to discuss the topics on the agenda. He helped form the committee and facilitated meetings to ensure a positive partnership with the Corps of Engineers. We will miss his presence on the LOCFC. He is very deserving of the Volunteer Excellence Coin for his tremendous work and countless hours of service.

Mr. Habig appreciated the honor of receiving the Volunteer Excellence Coin and Commander's Award. His only request was to display the awards in the Lake Ouachita Project Office Display case because he believed the entire LOCFC deserved the awards, and he didn't want to take credit for the hard work of so many valuable volunteers.

Mr. Habig resides in North Little Rock, with his wife Jean. In addition to relaxing at Brady Mountain Recreation Area, Lake Ouachita, they enjoy traveling and spending time with their kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids.

Congratulations to Volunteer Excellence Coin Recipients Mike & Bonnie Johnson, Nimrod Lake, Arkansas

Mike and Bonnie Johnson volunteered as gate attendant fee collectors at the Nimrod Lake, Arkansas for two and a half years and contributed 17,809 hours of service during that time. Their volunteer services at River Road Park allowed park staff to eliminate one contract for park attendant services, saving the government thousands of dollars. This enabled the staff to keep this park open since it was not performing well in the park assessment reviews. Their upbeat and jolly personalities have been a great benefit to the park and its visitors. Visitors may come into the park with a frown on their face or down in the dumps, but after talking to Mike and Bonnie for a while, they leave with a big smile, laughing, and in good spirits. Mike and Bonnie put in many more hours per week than is required of them and keep the gatehouse open just like the paid

contractors. Not only do they run the gatehouse and collect camping fees, but they also keep the trash picked up in the campground and at the dam site. Since Mike and Bonnie have been running the gatehouse, visitation and fee collections have increased steadily (\$3,000 to \$4,000) each season. Much of this is attributed to the visitor's enjoyment of Mike and Bonnie and their great attitude and customer service.



Mike and Bonnie Johnson with park staff.

Congratulations to Volunteer Excellence Coin Recipients Danny & Susie Bouchard, Nimrod Lake, Arkansas

Danny and Susie Bouchard volunteered at the Nimrod Lake for four and a half years and contributed 6,816 hours of service during that time. Danny and Susie performed many different maintenance and repair duties such as repairing and installing signs, painting and staining facilities, water hydrant repairs, minor maintenance in restroom facilities, limb trimming and disposal, painting and replacing fire rings that were rusting after being inundated with flood waters, etc. They have taken on cleanup duties for the entire year of two parks, one day-use area and one class "A" campground. They also performed the winter cleanup of all four class "A" campgrounds and one day-use area at the lake. Their performance of cleanup duties at the parks has allowed us to eliminate two contracts for cleanup services saving the government thousands of dollars.

There isn't any task too big or too small for them. Not only do they complete the tasks asked of them, but they are always looking for things that might need to be done and bring those items to the park ranger's attention.



Danny and Susie Bouchard with park staff

Congratulations to Volunteer Coin Recipients Steve and Barbara Wolley, Kaw Lake, Oklahoma. Adapted from the nomination by Dakota Allison, Assistant Lake Manager

Mr. Steve Wolley at Kaw Lake accompanied by his wife Barbara, provided outstanding volunteer services at Kaw Lake beginning in October of 2016. Mr. Wolley resides at Coon Creek PUA where the majority of his work has occurred. However, Steve has occasionally assisted the staff on projects outside his assigned area including work at the Corps maintenance compound. Last year, Steve completed heavy equipment operator training for the farm tractor to further assist in recreation area and firebreak and food plot maintenance and improvement. Mr. Wolley is always willing to assist when called upon.

Steve has accomplished a wide variety of tasks. The following are examples of the type of tasks he routinely completed: dead tree cutting and removal, controlled burning of leaves and recreation areas alongside full-time staff, servicing park mowers and ATVs, mowing and weed eating, litter removal from all assigned recreation areas and project roads, campsite cleanup and debris removal, minor maintenance tasks, opening and

closing project gates, painting of recreational facilities, flood debris removal and restoration, tractor operation, distribution of water safety materials, replacement of campsite reservation posts and a plethora of other duties.

The greatest attribute of Mr. Wolley is that he routinely performs the above tasks without supervision or guidance. Steve diligently works on items he knows need to be completed to improve the recreation areas for the public. When he is assigned tasks, they are always performed in a timely and professional manner to the best of his ability. He consistently performs above all expectations and is truly an ideal volunteer for the Corps of Engineers.

Steve is truly a public servant and his service and dedication will continue to be appreciated by visitors for years to come. He shows selfless service to the nation through his work efforts. His contributions are as valuable as any full-time staff at the site in accomplishing our mission. The team is glad to include him at Kaw Lake.



Steve Wolley receiving a Corp Foundation Coin from Assistant Park Manager, Dakota Allison, at Kaw Lake in Oklahoma

Congratulations to Mr. Neal Majors, adapted from the nomination by Dakota Allison, Assistant Lake Manager

Mr. Neal Majors provided outstanding volunteer services at Kaw Lake since joining the team in April 2013. Mr. Majors resides at Bear Creek PUA, which is the most Northern recreation area operated at Kaw Lake. In addition to his volunteer duties, Mr. Majors provides excellent contract services as a sub-contractor to the service contract. Mr.

Majors is always willing to assist when called upon in all parts of the lake, even outside his assigned areas.

The duties asked of Neal are wide and varied. However, the following are examples of the type of tasks routinely completed: dead tree cutting and removal, controlled burning of leaves and recreation areas alongside full-time staff, mowing and weed eating, litter removal from all assigned recreation areas and roads, campsite cleanup and debris removal, minor maintenance tasks, opening and closing gates, painting recreational facilities, winterizing facilities for off-season, minor equipment operation, distribution of water safety materials, replacement of campsite reservation posts and posting daily reservations during the peak summer visitation months.

One of the greatest attributes of Mr. Majors is that he often performs the above tasks without supervision or guidance. Neal diligently works on items he knows need to be completed to improve the recreation areas for the visiting public and is constantly looking for ways to better our facilities through upgrades. When he is assigned tasks, they are always performed in a timely and professional manner to the best of his ability. Neal truly cares for all aspects of the Bear Creek PUA from park maintenance, restroom cleaning, trash collection, and mowing the entire recreation area.

Neal is truly a public servant. His service and dedication will continue to be appreciated by our visitors for years to come. Continually he shows selfless service to the Nation through his work efforts. His contributions are as valuable as any full-time staff in accomplishing the mission. We are glad to include him on our team at Kaw Lake.



Neal Majors receiving a Corps Foundation Coin from Assistant Park Manager, Dakota Allison, at Kaw Lake in Oklahoma

Congratulations to Volunteer Coin Recipient Mr. Larry Rueger, adapted from the nomination by Dakota Allison, Assistant Lake Manager

Mr. Larry Rueger provided outstanding volunteer services at Kaw Lake since February, 2016. Mr. Rueger, along with his wife Laura, resides at Osage Cove PUA, which is the largest recreation area at Kaw Lake. Larry is always willing to assist when called upon in all parts of the lake, even outside his assigned areas. During the Summer 2017 flood event, Larry and Laura were extremely valuable in the cleanup and eventual restoration of Osage Cove campground and day use area.

The duties asked of Larry are wide and varied. The following are examples of tasks routinely completed: dead tree cutting and removal, controlled burning of leaves, mowing and weed eating, litter removal from all assigned recreation areas, campsite clean-up and debris removal, opening and closing gates, painting recreational facilities, constructing storage buildings, minor equipment operation, distribution of water safety materials, replacement of campsite reservation posts, and serving as a general source of information for the visiting public.

One of the greatest attributes of Mr. Rueger is that he often performs the above tasks without supervision or guidance. Larry diligently works on items he knows need to be completed to improve the recreation areas for the visiting public and is constantly looking for ways to improve facilities. When assigned tasks, they are always performed in a timely and professional manner to the best of his ability. Larry truly cares for the condition of Osage Cove Park and devotes himself to continued improvement nearly every day.

Larry is a true public servant. His service and dedication will continue to be appreciated by visitors for years to come. He continually shows selfless service to the Nation through his work efforts. His contributions are as valuable as any full-time staff in accomplishing our mission. We are glad to include him on our team at Kaw Lake.



Congratulations to Volunteer Coin Recipient Mr. Larry Rueger, shown with Dakota Allison, Assistant Lake Manager

Coin Recipient Goldie Simmons, nominated by Mieko Alley

Goldie Simmons began volunteering at Council Grove Lake in 1999 and has continued to come back each summer since. She works hard to maintain the numerous flowerbeds, pick up trash at our Overlook Park, and entertain park visitors with her stories of the lake and beautiful artwork. In 2016, she put in 403 volunteer hours and is on track for

similar numbers this year. Goldie has dedicated 18 busy summers to Council Grove Lake and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Congratulations to Neil and Nelly Cole, Canton Lake, Oklahoma, nominated by Shawna Polen

Neil and Nelly Cole spent this season working on numerous projects within their campground. They both helped maintain multiple flowerbeds and basic tree maintenance. Neil and Nelly's campground holds the best flowerbeds on Canton Lake. Each one is not just a job, but tended with love and care. Many times, they've also spent their own money on flowers to fill the beds when we lost a plant.



For many years, tree maintenance was put to the side so many trees were in need of trimming. There were also numerous trees with low hanging branches that needed to be cut up to assist the mowing crews and provide a clear line of sight for safety. One tree in particular was blocking the sight line from the road to one of the playgrounds. Neil and Nelly made this tree their first focus so that drivers could see the playground and safely watch out for children. Their actions in this matter may have saved lives. Canton Lake also boasts a volunteer tool storage building. Neil and Nelly spent three hours assisting me to clean up and organize this building. These efforts helped all the other volunteers do their jobs more proficiently due to them spending less time hunting for the proper tools. Other odd jobs through the season include; painting of fire rings, picking up aluminum cans for recycling and replacing campsite utility boards. With Corps staff stretched thin, the Cole's efforts have helped ease the pressure of providing the best service possible to our customers. The Cole's have also helped recruit new volunteers to Canton Lake over the years. While doing their work or talking to friends, they bring up their volunteer work with the Corps and motivate others to lend a hand. They always have a helping hand, a nice word, a comforting hug, or a helpful prayer ready for anyone in need. Their work with Canton Lake is truly invaluable and over time, they are not just volunteers, but are members of our Canton Lake family. They ARE what it means to be a volunteer for the Corps of Engineers.

Copan Lake, Oklahoma: Danny and Karen Neal received a Volunteer Appreciation Coin from the Corps Foundation



Danny and Karen Neal have been serving as park host volunteers at Post Oak Campground on Copan Lake, Oklahoma for nine consecutive years, beginning in 2008. Their main duties are to facilitate checking in campers at all of the sites. They open and close the gates seven days a week. This requires them to coordinate with the contract gate attendant to ensure that no sites are double booked and that every camper is checked in to the correct area. Additional duties are general cleaning and maintenance of park. In 2016 the Neal's have a combined 1,285 hours of volunteer service.

Throughout the years, the Neal's have become a staple at Post Oak campground. They are a constant at the lake that seems to be ever changing with the way recreation is shifting. Any camper that has stayed at Post Oak campground will tell you Danny and Karen stopped by to check in, say hi, or even invite them over to eat some fish. Any new time campers at Post Oak will never leave without a "Tool Kit" that they developed. It includes park maps, Reserve America pamphlet, and a general rule guide based on Title 36.

Danny is knowledgeable about the areas around the lake and is always willing to talk about fishing or hunting. His involvement with the surrounding community helped the Corps office identify adjacent landowners. Karen is a true nature lover. You can ask her

about any sunset over the lake and she will likely have a picture of it. She is also the driving force behind the beautiful flowers that you will see blooming throughout the park. While she is out and about, she always makes sure that any children in the park are sure to leave with a water safety Frisbee or coloring book as well.

During the recreation season, the Neal's are reliable for campground surveillance keeping a watchful eye on not just the campground, but the campers too. They work closely with park rangers identifying and resolving issues with camper disputes or unruly guests. Their friendliness and willingness to meet new people keep the same campers coming back year after year.

Thank you to nominator, Tabitha Nixon – Park Ranger/Natural Resource Specialist Copan & Hulah Lakes

Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Education Foundation is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, tax ID #20-5545091, doing business as The Corps Foundation.

Your donation may be tax deductible for you as permitted by Federal law for nonprofit organizations. Your support helps Corps projects and Corps friends groups connect, grow, and increase their capacity to fulfill the Corps' natural resource education mission on lakes and waterways across the United States. Find out more at the Foundation's website: www.CorpsFoundation.org

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Corps Foundation Newsletter assembled by communications director and editor:
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Membership Renewal: Your Support Makes a Difference!

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