

**Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence
Award Nomination 2016**

Martha Renea Guin, Natural Resources Specialist

Nominee: Martha Renea Guin

Position, title, series, and Grade: Natural Resources Specialist, 0401, GS-11, 17+ years of service

Organization, Location and Mailing Address: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District, DeGray Lake Field Office, 729 Channel Road, Arkadelphia, Arkansas 71923

Point of Contact/Nominated By: Scott J. Corbitt, Natural Resources Manager, DeGray Lake Field Office, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, Telephone: 870-246-5501 extension 6-4041
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Creativity and Originality

Natural Resources Specialist/Park Ranger, Renea Guin, coordinated the DeGray Lake Interpretive Outreach Program in 2015. Ms. Guin guided subordinate park rangers in making both direct and indirect interpretive contacts for approximately 3,000,000 visitors, area residents and organizations. Ranger Guin utilized the Corps of Engineers Interpretive Services and Outreach program guidelines to interface with visitors and stakeholders in the DeGray Lake vicinity.

Programming topics included boating and water safety, Hispanic water safety public service announcements, recreation and resource management, forestry, environmental education, snakes, history, Corps of Engineers mission/history, trail hikes, geology, birds, and fishing programs. Her versatility and enthusiasm for the DeGray project allowed her to prepare and present a majority of these programs.

Ranger Guin prepared and recorded water safety and environmental education public service announcements (PSA's) on local and regional radio stations. These spots were broadcast during National Safe Boating Week, holiday weekends, and during the annual Earth Day celebration.



Renea and the interpretive staff presented water safety programs by trailering and utilizing a patrol vessel as an interpretive prop to reach diverse audiences. She promoted National Safe Boating Week in the DeGray region by conducting water safety newspaper interviews, rescue bag demonstrations and school programs.

Ranger Guin participated in DeGray Lake Resort State Park's "School Days" to present interpretative programs to over 800 local school children, personally engaging the children in hands-on participation. Topics included snakes, forest management, water safety, and many other sessions that kept children inspired the entire day!

Ms. Guin is commended for her diverse interpretive talents. She exhibits superb ability and adaptability in coordinating special assignments, combining varied functions, and addressing a wide and diverse spectrum of audiences.

Made a Positive Experience for Visitors



One of Ms. Guin's many responsibilities is the volunteer program for DeGray Lake. In 2015, she coordinated the services of **411 volunteers** that donated **8,710 volunteer hours**. These dedicated volunteers **saved the United States Government over \$200,000.00 in services rendered**.

Ranger Guin prepared and submitted an Every Kid in the Park (EKIP) grant proposal through the National Park Foundation for implementation of the DeGray Lake Every Kid in the Park program. Her package was **one of only two packages that were funded** in USACE. Her submitted event will take place in May.

In addition, Ranger Guin prepared and submitted a *Hand Shake Grant* to obtain funding to pave an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible trail and to build a watchable wildlife pier on the Lower Lake Area on DeGray Lake.

Ms. Guin served as the Chairperson for the Vicksburg District water safety Project Delivery Team (PDT) and is currently serving Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) on the Corps National Water Safety PDT. The Arkansas Lakes, of which DeGray is one, achieved the second year in a row of ZERO water-related fatalities, despite hosting nearly 10 million visitors. Recreating and going back home safely greatly contributes to a positive experience for visitors!

Ranger Guin's professionalism and enthusiasm garners respect from fellow workers and instills competency in support of the Corps Missions. Ms. Guin exhibits an untiring desire to support all aspects of Corps of Engineers safety program and instills a sense of duty to excel in the most difficult of tasks. Ms. Guin leads by example in selfless service to the Corps of Engineers and the Nation

Enhancement of the Public's Understanding of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Site

Natural Resource Specialist Guin coordinated a multi-agency water safety partnership meeting to include local law enforcement, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission personnel and emergency response personnel prior to the 2015 recreation season. The purpose of the meeting was to establish water safety education and enforcement logistics with the goal of zero water related accidents and fatalities. In 2015, this goal was achieved; zero water related fatalities occurred on DeGray Lake. In large part, this goal was achieved due to Ranger Guin's passion for water safety education.

Ms. Guin provided wildlife programs and careers programs for various schools in the region. These S.T.E.M. programs are designed to interest students in math and science related career fields, and were given at grade schools, high schools and colleges. Ms. Guin has a unique ability to relate to all these age groups in a manner that keeps them engaged. Ultimately, future stewards of public lands are developed through interpretative goals.

Ranger Guin served in a lead role for replacing a boating and water safety billboard adjacent to the Scenic 7 Byway, adjacent to the lake. She worked in partnership with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and others to provide a quality billboard that is viewed by over 30,000 motorists each day.



Ms. Guin has been the driving force in fostering dedicated partnerships with Keep Arkansas and Keep America Beautiful. This longstanding environmental public awareness program exemplifies the National Public Lands Day ethic. Volunteers that cleaned up DeGray Lake as children are now bringing their children back to DeGray to lend a hand and take pride in project lands. Each year more volunteers are picking up less trash on DeGray Lake. In 2015, DeGray Lake was a National Public Lands Day participant for the 15th consecutive year. Ms. Guin passionately coordinated the annual DeGray Lake Shoreline Cleanup. **In 2015, 280 volunteers contributed 1960 volunteer hours, and collected 1.8 tons of litter from project lands.** This represents savings to the Government of approximately \$21,000.00. Local merchants donated approximately \$5,000.00 in merchandise for volunteer door prizes. Public Understanding equates to Public Commitment!

Executive Summary

Ms. Martha Renea Guin is proudly nominated for the Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence. Ms. Guin is a dedicated professional, highly regarded and respected by her coworkers and peers. For nearly two decades, Ms. Guin has implemented the Outreach Program for the Corps of Engineers at DeGray Lake. Her outreach efforts have saved lives, literally and figuratively. She has trained numerous rangers in interpretive techniques. Safe use of the projects by visitors permeates her message. She demonstrates great versatility, customizing her message for a group of children in a pre-school class, a angler's club, or an Audubon Group visiting the project. Her level of dedication and professionalism is unsurpassed.

In 2015, Ms. Guin went well above and beyond what is expected of her. Her actions and selfless service reflects great credit to DeGray Lake, Vicksburg District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Ms. Guin is deserving of high recommendation for this award. She is truly worthy of this award and recognition. She is a tremendous ambassador for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Citation

Martha Renea Guin, Natural Resource Specialist
Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence
2015 Nomination

Ms. Guin is commended for her diverse interpretive talents. She exhibits superb ability and adaptability in coordinating special assignments, combining varied functions, and addressing a wide spectrum of audiences. Natural Resource Specialist Guin's professionalism and enthusiasm assures respect from fellow workers and instills competency to support the Corps mission. Ms. Guin exhibits an untiring desire to support all aspects of Corps of Engineers safety program and instills a sense of duty to excel in the most difficult of tasks. Ms. Guin leads by example in selfless service to the Corps of Engineers and the Nation.