

# MVD

SEPTEMBER 2024

FORTH QUARTER

# WATER SAFETY INITIATIVES

Prepared By :

**ERICA NABERS**  
**MVD NATIONAL WATER**  
**SAFETY TEAM**  
**REPRESENTATIVE**



*Catching all the safe visitors  
on weekend boat patrols.*

 [erica.l.nabers@usace.army.mil](mailto:erica.l.nabers@usace.army.mil)

 217-774-3951 x 7004

 [National Water Safety Program Gateway](#)

Carlyle Lake Park Rangers are catching all the safe visitors.



## National Water Safety Team

Pam Doty - *Program Manager*

Toby Isbell - *Program Graphic Designer*

Julie Franco - *Safety Rep*

Romanda Walker - *Public Affairs Rep*

Robert Moreno - *Bilingual Sub-Committee Chair*

Amanda Kruse - *Special Projects Coordinator*

Chelsea Jones - *LRD Rep*

Erica Nabers - *MVD Rep*

Jenna Conner - *NAD Rep*

Tana Wilson - *POD & NWD Rep*

Emily Jones - *SAD Rep*

Pam Bowie - *SPD Rep*

Abby Jones - *SWD Rep*

### This issue:

MVK - PG3-PG7

MVN - PG8-PG9

MVP - PG10-PG11

MVR - PG12-PG17

MVS - PG18-PG23





# VICKSBURG DISTRICT (MVK)



## Lake Greeson

Natural Resource Specialist Diane Golden presented a Water Safety Program to the Pike County 4-H. The group consisted of 6 children and 2 adults. Prior to the water safety program, the children made boats from a cardboard box and were instructed to attempt to make a floating boat with supplies the instructors had provided. After the Water Safety programs, we went to down to the boat ramp at Kirby Landing Marina and tested the boats, and both boats floated. One team placed rocks inside the boat and the boat continued to float. Golden discussed boating safety and the number of people or weight capacity a boat was capable of safely holding. The boat held big rocks!



## DeGray Lake

DeGray Lake hosted the “DeGray Lake Tri Fest on 5-8 September 2024 at the DeGray Spillway. The event was a success with 400 people participating.



NRM Specialist Jeffrey Arthur speaking on Corps Mission and Water Safety at the Magnolia Rotary Club meeting on 18 July 2024 with approximately 20 members present.



Lake Ouachita and DeGray Lake - Lake Ouachita NRM Specialist, Amy Shultz along with DeGray Lake NRM Specialist, Jeffrey Arthur presented three water and boating safety programs to 556 kindergartens, first, and fourth grade students on June 5th, prior to the student’s summer vacation





# VICKSBURG DISTRICT (MVK)

Lake Ouachita NRM specialist Amy Shultz presented water safety and snake program on July 9th to a group of 189 children and adults at the Garland County Library as part of their summer learning programs.



Even when not working at Lake Ouachita, NRM Specialists, Pam Herrin took time to promote water safety during a mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Herrin presented water safety to approximately 216 children and handed out coloring books to each child from 4 different churches located in Barahona, Dominican Republic during the week of July 15-19.



*I got caught*  
*on Lake Greeson*  
*& Lake Ouachita*  
**16 total**



# Teamwork

## VICKSBURG DISTRICT (MVK)

The MVK District Water Safety Team hosted a 6-week photo contest from Memorial Weekend through the end of the 4th of July Holiday. The Contest was “Wear It To Win It”. The last week of the contest 54 photos were sent for their last chance to win in the contest. Each week’s winner had their choice of 2 nights free camping at any MVK campgrounds or a day-use facility for a day. After the 6-week contest was over the Grand Prize Winner was selected, which was the best picture of the 6-week contest. The winner had their choice of 4-night free camping at any MVK campgrounds or a Corps of Engineers Annual Pass. The winner of week 6 was also selected as the Grand Prize winner. The picture was sent in by Sherry Hamilton



**Grand Prize Winner of the “Wear It To Win It Contest”**



# VICKSBURG DISTRICT (MVK)

## Mississippi Project Areas



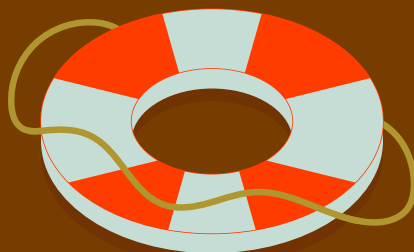
Jake McGregor  
from Grenada



Lake Manager  
Alton Pollan and  
NRS Chris Gurner

On 4 September 2024, donated life jackets were delivered to Grenada Lake and Sardis Lake in the Vicksburg District. Each lake received over 100 life jackets that will be used to stock life jacket loaner stations at swimming areas and boat ramps around the beaches. We appreciate the donation and will use these life jackets to help reduce water-related fatalities at these lakes. Progressive Insurance donated them through a partnership with the American Park Network and The Corps Foundation in cooperation with the USACE National Water Safety Program.

On July 27-28, 2024, Pathways student Coby Williams helped with a Water Safety booth at the Bill Dance Mississippi River Monsters Mega Bucs Pro Series Catfish Tournament in Vicksburg MS. They were able to reach approximately 1000 people with a water safety message.



NRM Specialists at Enid Lake provided water safety and interpretive information for 75 teachers during teacher workshops at the Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery on July 9,10, and 16, 2024.



# VICKSBURG DISTRICT (MVK)



## Bayou Bodcau

Bass Pro Fall Hunting Classic – 375 contacts – Natural Resource Specialists Gary Johnson and Jacob Osborne held a Water Safety Booth at the Bass pro event. They spoke with the public about general water safety and gave away water safety materials.

National Hunting and Fishing Day – September 28th, 2024. This event is put on by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and hosted by the Bayou Bodcau Field Office at Tom Merrill Campground. An estimated 1500 – 2000 people come to this annual family friendly event to enjoy the start of Fall and to learn about natural resources, water safety, and hunting safety. Natural Resource Specialist Gary Johnson has been coordinating with LDWF to put on this year’s event.

## Red River

Shreveport Aquarium Summer Camp – 60 Contacts – A visit to our J. Bennett Johnston Regional Waterway Visitor Center is one of the activities the aquarium summer camp has had on their itinerary for the past three summers. Park Ranger Amanda Mauel taught the group about water safety and the use of the phrase ‘Reach, Throw, Row, Don’t Go’.

Nature of Art Summer Camp – 40 Contacts – The Caddo Parks and Rec Department held their two week long summer camp at our J. Bennett Johnston Regional Waterway Visitor Center. Natural Resource Specialist Destiny Garcia has developed a partnership with Caddo Parks and Rec, increasing visitation at the visitor center and water safety contacts. For the summer camp Garcia spoke about environmental stewardship and water safety.

Cane River Children’s Services – 6 Contacts – The Cane River Children’s Services requested a tour of Grand Ecore Visitor Center and a water safety presentation for a group of teenagers. Natural Resource Specialist Heidi Goldsmith taught the group about local cultural resources, locks and dams, and water safety.

Cornerstone Christian Homeschool – 58 Contacts – Cornerstone Christian Homeschool requested a tour of Grand Ecore Visitor Center. Park Ranger Nicole Cahill and Natural Resource Specialist Destiny Garcia taught the group about local cultural resources, USACE missions, and water safety.

YMCA Swim For Life – Swim for Life is a YMCA program to teach every Caddo Parish 2nd grader water safety. The program was created in response to six teenagers drowning in the Red River in 2010.



# NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT (MVN)



## Holiday Report

All projects provided Water Safety Banners at entrances, recently checked/cleaned loaner stations, life ring cabinets inspected and working properly.

At the Bonnet Carre Spillway, park rangers passed out various water safety items and spoke to 10 children and 22 adults. Park Rangers contacted 36 visitors.

Approximately 200 contacts were made in Atchafalaya Basin.



Water Safety banner at Butte LaRose boat launch.



Ranger Soileau conducting water safety instruction with family at Butte LaRose.



Ranger Soileau distributing water safety towels to fishermen on Henderson Lake



Boys Scouts were very appreciative of the Park Ranger's success in clearing the obstructions in Bayou Fordoche



Park rangers assisting boater stranded on submerged log.



# NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT (MVN)



## Bonnet Carre Spillway King Kat Fishing Rodeo

The annual King Kat Fishing Rodeo took place in the River Parishes for the second time on September 20-21 2024. The anglers were able to utilize the boat launch near the Mississippi River within the Bonnet Carré Spillway. There were 35 teams consisting of 82



anglers representing 18 different states. The agencies involved in the event included St. Charles Parish Department of Recreation, Louisiana River Parishes Tourist Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. King Kat Tournament Trail hosted the tournament. The event went from 7 teams in 2023 to 35 teams in 2024. The annual event has continued to be a success and is showing a surge in popularity. Listening to some of the anglers, they say that this area is one of a kind and some of the best catfishing in the country. St. Charles Parish Council has officially proclaimed September 20-21 2024 as “King Kat Fishing Tournament Weekend” in LARiverParishes. On Saturday September 21 2024, there was also a FREE children's fishing event. The children were given opportunities to catch fish and take home a brand new fishing pole along with other items. There were 37 children that registered for the event. Each child will be entered into a drawing for a \$1,000.00 scholarship to any trade school/college of their choice. Approximately 6 of those children will be selected. USACE received a lot of positive feedback from anglers and the event host, everyone said they are ready to come back next year. The only recommendation was more boat launches in the surrounding River Parish areas or some improvements to the boat ramp at the Mississippi River in Bonnet Carré Spillway. All anglers and tournament host really enjoyed the event, and were extremely grateful the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allowed it to take place at Bonnet Carré Spillway.

Throughout the event Park Rangers Paige Zeringue and Austin LeRay made approximately 77 interpretive contacts with members of the public. They were able to discuss water safety and the importance of wearing life jackets and safe practices while boating. They were also able to pass out various water safety items to the public. A number of the visitors showed interest in hunting and fishing, which was another opportunity for the Rangers to hand out hunting and fishing brochures, and discuss the different types of recreational opportunities within the Bonnet Carré Spillway. The annual King Kat fishing rodeo continues to be a great opportunity for outreach to members of the public and generates a positive image for USACE and Bonnet Carré Spillway.

# ST. PAUL DISTRICT (MVP)



Park staff at Eau Galle Recreation Area have been very busy participating in “I Got Caught” Initiatives and re-painted stencils on their boat landings.



Students from the Big Sandy Water Institute, a local environmental education summer program, visited the Sandy Lake Recreation Area to participate in numerous different water related activities such as kayaking, paddleboarding, dam building, and driving the water safety boats. The importance of water safety and wearing your life jacket was a major talking point prior to the activities.



Staff at the Mississippi Headwaters Project's participated in several parades throughout the summer months at local town festivals to highlight water safety and wearing your life jackets. Parades often featured Bobber, water safety banners, USACE vessels, and rangers and volunteers wearing life jackets and passing out water safety give away items.





# ST. PAUL DISTRICT (MVP)

Cross Lake Recreation Area hosted a water safety sidewalk art contest over the 4th of July weekend. 20 entrants participated in decorating a park sidewalk with water safety messages



Park ranger staff made the best of reduced staffing over Labor Day Weekend by performing water safety patrols in conjunction with regular park patrols, utilized volunteers, and passive programming such as coloring contests (many of our summer rangers returned to school mid-late August).





# ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT (MVR)

## Lake Red Rock Project



Saylorville Lake and Lake Red Rock joined forces again this year to share a booth representing the Des Moines River Area at the Iowa State Fair. The booth was located under the grandstands in the Hall of Law & Flame and has talked with many people stopping by for various lake and water safety information.



Bobber visited with beachgoers during the summer on three different dates to encourage life jacket wear, remind swimmers to always swim with a buddy, and other water safety messages.

Interpretive staff and volunteers presented a Junior Rangers camp for area 8-10-year-old kids. Participants received water safety messages during their dam tour about staying away from the restricted area below the dam and also took part in a "Sink Fast" activity showing the importance of wearing a properly fitting life jacket when boating. Approximately 9 children took part in this year's day camp. Water safety messaging regarding life jacket wear and safe paddling was also provided to approximately 22 participants during two Outdoor Adventurers day camps prior to the kayaking/canoeing activity.



Staff from Red Rock and Saylorville partnered again in July to promote water safety at the Iowa Cubs game on 30 JULY. Andy Jones and Tracy Spry along with Volunteer Natalie Mong spread the water safety message to baseball fans attending the game. Bobber met fans as they entered the stadium to hand out water safety items and was able to stand on the field as the National Anthem was sung before the start of the game! The two lakes also have a partnership in place allowing USACE to have a water safety banner on the outfield wall and picnic tables that are wrapped in water safety messages around the stadium.

During the last day of the Knoxville Nationals, Sprint Car driver Dan Henning also joined Bobber and Ranger Tracy Spry at the Whitebreast Beach to showcase Dan's sprint car and share the "Wear Your Gear" water safety message with beachgoers. Dan has partnered with USACE for several years to promote life jacket wear among race fans.





# ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT (MVR)

## Coralville Lake Project

Coralville Lake took part in the National “I Got Caught” Water Safety Campaign by handing out t-shirts and insulated coolers to individuals caught adhering to life jacket safety protocols. This is the first year that the t-shirts have been utilized at Coralville Lake for this program and were obtained by partnering with the Friends of Coralville Lake. 135 total contacts have been made so far this summer.



Bobber and Park Rangers attended the Solon, IA annual Beef Days Parade, an annual community celebration dating back to 1971. Thousands of people attend this parade every year and is a great opportunity to promote water safety to the project’s surrounding community. Park Rangers and Bobber were able to distribute over 800 water safety frisbees during the parade.



Park Rangers attended (3) community events; Herbert Hoover Days, Safety Village, and Pelican Fest to promote water safety by handing out water safety giveaways, teaching kids how to properly wear life jackets and use throw rings/bags, and by utilizing the project’s water safety trailer. 1614 contacts were made from all 3 events.



Coralville Lake hosted a local high school women’s swim team for their annual swim across the lake event. 42 swim team athletes swam across a shallow area of the lake while wearing life jackets and were accompanied by multiple kayaks if any emergency assistance was needed. Park Rangers quizzed the team on life jacket facts and water safety reminders before the swimming occurred.

Campfire programs occurred every Saturday at Sugar Bottom Campground from May to October. Each program began with a short water safety message and accompanied with water safety giveaways at the end of every program. Currently, there have been 697 program attendees.





# ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT (MVR)

## Mississippi River Project

On August 17, Mississippi River Project staff at Locks and Dam 15 participated in the 15th annual Floatzilla event. This Quad Cities event sees paddlers launching from different points on the Mississippi River and eventually gather up at Lake Potter in Rock Island, IL for a world record attempt at the largest flotilla of paddlers in one area. When paddlers reached the lock, operators had lines down in the lock for paddlers to hang on to while natural resource staff were in and around the lock in safety vessels. This event had 1,300 total participants in which approximately 600 paddlers locked through safely. A joint training day between USACE and US Coast Guard Auxiliary took place the day prior to practice rescue techniques and scenarios.



Park Rangers and Bobber presented two water safety programs at facilities operated by the ARC of the Quad Cities. This is a nonprofit organization that provides services and opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Bobber was especially popular with the 55 people who attended.



Park Rangers participated on two Celebration Belle Education Cruises on the Mississippi in the Quad Cities area. During the cruise participants learn local river history while on the outside decks. Inside the Corps gives a few interpretive programs such as life on a towboat and water safety. School groups are the primary audience for these cruises and there were 370 total participants.

Park Rangers participated in a summer reading kickoff event open to the public at the Quad Cities Botanical Center. Rangers had a table setup showcasing mammals along the Mississippi River as well as some water safety activities and giveaways. This was a partnership event between the Rock Island Public Library and other area agencies and organizations. 340 people attended.



# ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT (MVR)

## Illinois Waterway Project

Ranger Fisher assisted with an emergency lockage for the US Coast Guard and Chicago Fire Department.

This involved clearing all traffic out of the lock chamber and waiting areas to allow emergency access. Also providing instructions to Coast Guard of where to position boats in lock chamber, as the Coast Guard was also there for DNC and had no prior knowledge of emergency lockage procedures. Emergency lockage involves opening the headgates without equalizing the water levels, causing a 4 foot waterfall to spill into the lock chamber at once. Boats need to be far enough back (300') and take special precaution due to the current and turbulence of the waterfall in the small lock chamber (600' x 80').

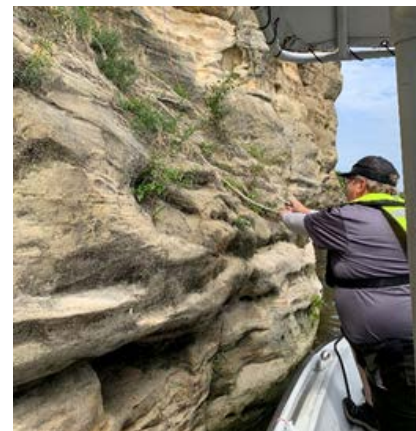


In August rangers Ewbank and Fisher provided a Ranger presence at the busy Chicago Harbor Lock. Due to the DNC happening in Chicago, the lock identified a need for a ranger presence to help monitor lock traffic and ensure safety of boats and patrons. Chicago Harbor Lock is the 2nd busiest lock for recreational traffic in the US. While there, rangers performed visual inspections of watercraft for compliance with state and federal regulations. The most common violations were standing on bow or swim deck while in the lock chamber, failure to wear a lifejacket in lock chamber, disobeying lock staff direct instructions, and improper lighting at night.



From May through October Illinois Waterway rangers participate in guiding tour groups through the Starved Rock Lock. Interpretive tours are held aboard the antique paddle-wheeler on both downstream and upstream voyages, between Ottawa, IL and Starved Rock State Park Boat Ramp. Approximately 120 guests per day attend this tour, and rangers talk about waterway history, water safety, operation of locks and dams, and natural resources.

Water Safety Patrol continued when possible, providing a ranger presence on the Illinois Waterway in the Starved Rock, Peoria, and Marseilles pools. Rangers attempted to patrol every Saturday and Sunday, but extensive repairs to the patrol boat on a weekly basis hindered the efforts. Land patrols to area marinas, harbors, boat clubs, and boat launches were conducted other days. Rangers continued their push to remove unsafe rope swings from public and corps property observed up and down the waterway.





# ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT (MVR)

## Saylorville Lake

On June 15th rangers and volunteers attended the Johnston Green Days parade in Johnston, Iowa. During the parade a patrol vehicle was driving through the parade route with a water safety message on the tailgate, and rangers and volunteers handed out water safety items to children attending the parade. Indirect contacts were around 1,200 people.

On June 18th park rangers at Saylorville Lake hosted a water safety lesson for Childs View Daycare out of Ankeny, Iowa. There were 25 students in attendance that ranged from kindergarten to 5th grade. Rangers took the time to teach the children lessons in water safety such as "Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go", life jacket fittings, and how to toss a throw bag. Rangers demonstrated life jacket fitting by getting kids from the audience involved and asking them to determine which life jacket fit best!



On June 20th Rangers hosted 15 students from the Boys and Girls Club of Des Moines for a water safety lesson as well as a walk in our butterfly garden. The children in attendance were from the inner city of Des Moines and had little exposure to the outdoors and water safety. Rangers took the time to teach how to properly fit a life jacket, why life jackets are important to wear while in, on, and around the water, and how to spot someone who may be in trouble. After this lesson, they were also taught "Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go" and the kinds of things they can use to help someone in distress.



On August 6th Park Rangers attended the annual Polk County Sheriff's Office National Night Out. During this event, a water safety table was set up with giveaways and informational brochures about water safety. Additionally, the Patrol Boat was brought along to the event to display to the public so Rangers could educate visitors on the required equipment on vessels. Around 250 water safety contacts were made.



Over the Labor Day holiday weekend, rangers performed vessel safety checks to make sure visitors were being safe in, on and around the water. Rangers handed out water safety items such as frisbees and coolers for the "I Got Caught" campaign. Around 100 water safety contacts were made over the weekend.



# ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT (MVR)

## Rock Island District Office

The Rock Island District Water Safety Team worked together to create 2 new Water Safety Stickers that will be used throughout the district to promote Water Safety. These stickers remind our visitor's "Don't Leave Shore Without It!" One of the stickers features the help from our District from "Bud" the Goat!



# ST. LOUIS DISTRICT (MVS)

## Carlyle Lake

Every Fourth of July weekend, the Dam West Recreation Area at Carlyle Lake transforms into a bustling hub of celebration, drawing thousands of visitors for Independence Day festivities. A highlight of the weekend is Beach Blast, an event organized by park rangers, which offers a variety of family-friendly activities designed to promote safety both on and around the water. This year, Walmart of Carlyle, IL generously sponsored the event, contributing a “day at the beach” raffle basket filled with essentials like sunscreen and beach toys, among other items.

The 33rd Annual Cruz-In the Dam Car Show was held on August 9, 2024, at Mariners Village Resort, featuring over 500 classic vehicles. Park rangers staffed a water safety booth, while Bobber the Water Safety Dog mingled with attendees among the cars. The booth engaged 425 visitors, offering insights on water safety and recreational opportunities.



Park rangers from Carlyle Lake, along with Bobber the Water Safety Dog, made a splash in July at both the 2024 Clinton County Fair Parade and the Albers Blast Off Parade. With large crowds in attendance at each event, it was the perfect opportunity to highlight the essential need for wearing life jackets.



On July 12, the Leisure at the Lake Summer Series hosted an Outdoor Movie Night for both campers and local residents. Prior to the main feature, attendees enjoyed a Bobber the Water Safety Dog cartoon, which served as a friendly reminder to always swim with a buddy.



In May, the “I Got Caught at Carlyle Lake” Campaign began its 12th year, with 36 local businesses partnering to promote life jacket use. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, park rangers rewarded 246 people with t-shirts, insulated lunch bags, and beach towels. Lunch bags and towels for adults were provided by the Corps Foundation.



# ST. LOUIS DISTRICT (MVS)

## Lake Shelbyville

Lake Shelbyville Paddle Day – The second annual Lake Shelbyville Paddle Day took place at the Dam West High Water Boat Ramp on Sunday, September 8TH. This event was in partnership with Youth Ambassadors and Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. 33 people participated and received a water safety message and buckled their life jackets before taking off.



Throughout the summer, several adults and children were caught at Lake Shelbyville wearing their life jackets. The individuals were rewarded with t-shirts.

The annual Kid's Fishing Tournament took place at the Opossum Creek Pond on June 15, 2024. 87 kids participated and each child was required to wear their life jackets while fishing.

Labor Day Vessel Safety Checks – Over Labor Day weekend from August 28 – September 2, The U.S. Coastguard Auxiliary performed vessel safety checks and discussed water safety at Dam West Boat Ramp. 27 vessel checks were completed and 493 direct contacts were made.



On September 6, 2024, Christopher Ware with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary was awarded a Public Service Commendation Medal - an award granted in recognition of achievement or service that significantly impacts the agency. His remarkable contributions and unwavering support have made a significant impact on the USACE, St. Louis District and the lives of countless individuals of the boating community at Lake Shelbyville. Mr. Ware supervised operations of the USCGA Vessel Examiner Team at Lake Shelbyville that conducted 7768 vessel examinations over a 10-year period resulting in boats meeting federal, state, and local safety requirements.





# ST. LOUIS DISTRICT (MVS)

## Clarence Cannon Dam and Mark Twain Lake Project

WGEM Commercial – Mark Twain Lake partnered with a local news station to prerecord a water safety PSA that was broadcasted on local television for the main recreation season. WGEM and USACE each committed \$2,500.00 for a total of \$5,000.00 towards water safety advertisement.



Beach Booth – Park Rangers provided a water safety booth over the course of the Holiday Weekend to encourage beach goers to wear their life jacket when on, or around water. This effort continued to grow each holiday, with local partners from the Regional Council of Govts attending and promoting highway safety awareness.



July 4th, Park Rangers attended local parades (Perry, Monroe City) to promote Water Safety.





# ST. LOUIS DISTRICT (MVS)

## Wappapello Lake

On 1 June Jack Miller's Memorial Kid's FunDay was held at the Blue Hole Fishing Pond. This event was open to children 14 years old and younger. Missouri Department of Conservation provided and manned an archery range. They also previously stocked the pond. Plenty of fish were caught. Afterwards a cookout was held at shelter #6 and prizes and awards were given out. 122 folks attended this event. Trophies and medals were provided by Ann Miller (Jack's widow), bait donated by Millie Rogers, prizes and food donated by Wal Mart and Wappapello Lake Area Association.



## I Got Caught Images of Summer 2024 at Wappapello Lake



On 22 June Ranger Willie's Wet and Wild Water Safety Festival was held at the Redman Creek Beach. The goal of this event is to promote water safety for the entire family. Activities included PFD Fashion show, Water Balloon Volley, Sand Sculpturing Contest, Water Wheel of Fortune, Inner Tube Races, and Cardboard Boat Construction and Races. Approximately 125 folks from southeast Missouri and Arkansas participated.



# ST. LOUIS DISTRICT (MVS)

## Rend Lake

The Rend Lake ISOP team facilitated many water safety programs at the Rend Lake campgrounds and beaches throughout the recreation season making 2,231 direct water safety contacts.

The Rend Lake ISOP team participated in 618 Fix My RV's (local business) open house with a water safety booth and special appearance by Bobber the Water Safety Dog making 76 direct water safety contacts while engaging with the local community.



The Rend Lake ISOP team and Visitor Assistance team conducted boat patrols throughout the recreation season. During these patrols several visitors were “caught” wearing their life jacket while enjoying the lake.

Each month Rend Lake hosts the “Small World Program” series at the Visitor Center. Programs are designed for children 5 years old and younger and explores a different theme each month through a craft, activity, and story. The August program was “Sink or Float.” 42 participants learned about buoyancy and being safe in and near the water.



The Rend Lake ISOP team hosted a mini “Beach Blast” water safety program designed for children 5 years old and younger. While the weather did not cooperate for the intended outdoor beach program, the team brought the beach indoors and still served participants that were willing to brave the weather.



# ST. LOUIS DISTRICT (MVS)

## Rivers Project Office

Rivers Project Park Rangers have participated in a variety of regional summer camp programs throughout the summer of 2024 providing water safety programming, paddling instruction, and life jacket fitting for 380 campers. Summer camp partners include the St. Louis YMCA, Audubon Center at Riverlands, Ferguson-Florissant School District, The Nature Institute, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Rangers participated in safety demo Mondays, aided in weekly canoeing sessions, properly fit life jackets, and engaged campers in H2Olympics, a water safety relay course reinforcing important water safety practices.

Rivers Project Park Rangers assisted with a variety of paddling events and outreach programs throughout the summer recreation season. Notably assisting with paddling and water safety at Drost Park on 29 June with partners from the Mississippi River Water Trail Association. Over 200 paddlers of all ages and skills levels were provided the opportunity to paddle the lake in a safe manner. Riverlands Wellness Paddling also reached approximately 40 paddlers as introductions to kayaking were offered in Ellis Bay of the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary throughout June and July. Lastly, a lock-thru paddle was held to demonstrate safe Mississippi River paddling and the lockage process at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam. This special paddling event was cohosted on 31 August through the MRWTA and Audubon Center at Riverlands with support from Rivers Projects Rangers reaching about 20 public paddlers.



Rivers Project Rangers attended a variety of community events within the region to promote water safety through tabling outreach. On the 11 July, 250+ youth and adults were engaged with build-a-PFD at Lewis and Clark Community College's Summerfest. Participants utilized buoyant supplies to craft a life jacket with to make an action figure float above water. Rangers also promoted the Rivers Project and water safety/recreation at Alton's Formula One Power Boat Races on 21-23 June reaching 100 boat race spectators. Rivers Project also teamed up with the St. Louis District to attend the Illinois State Fair the weekend of 17-18 August in Springfield, IL. Rangers connected with over 1,000 visitors to share river engineering, locks and dams, water safety, and recreational opportunities within the St. Louis District.

