

THE ROCK



LIVING MEMORIAL HONORS
FALLEN FROM ILLINOIS, IOWA --
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Serving the employees and residents of Rock Island Arsenal.

Throughout the flood---

Rock Island Arsenal never stopped



Flood waters encroached Rock Island Arsenal in some areas, as seen here requiring emergency operations. The flood of 2008 did not close the Arsenal.

By
ERIC CRAMER
Garrison Public Affairs

In some ways, a military installation is a process more than a physical entity.

Rock Island Arsenal's process doesn't stop.

More than 7,000 people go on and off the island every day.

The island takes in 115 semi trucks and 8,500 cars on an average day.

It uses 225 megawatt hours of electricity every day.

It serves 1,600 meals every day from its cafeterias, grills and snack mobiles.

Its Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center makes 30 Forward Repair Systems and 70 Shop Equipment Contact Maintenance vehicles each month.

And it never stops, not even when record flooding occurs as it did in June, 2008.

Rock Island Arsenal responded to the flooding rapidly and seriously by standing up its Flood Operations Center, meeting twice daily to plan each day's response to the changing conditions.

Public Works Director Jerry Sechser said the goal of the operation was to ensure the safety of all who live and work at Rock Island Arsenal, while allowing the installations essential functions and worldwide missions to continue.

"About the first thing we did was to put a lot of

observation on the levees, especially on the island's north shore," Sechser said. "We wanted to make certain that we were prepared in case the flood started to overtop the levees."

Two man teams walked the levees every night to make certain there were no "boils," the scars on a levee's back side that show that it is beginning to break down internally.

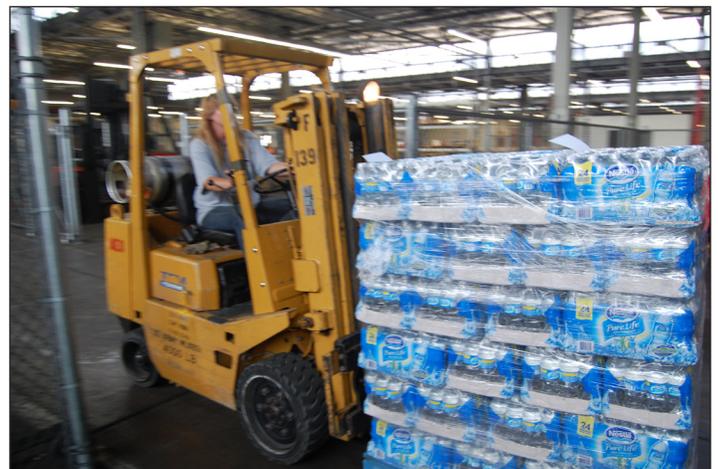
David Melendez, flood control program manager for Rock Island Arsenal, said the effort used three teams, and put observation on the Arsenal's levees 24 hours a day during the peak of the flooding.

"We had six contractors and some government employees on each shift," he said.

Two levees on the island were overtopped by the flood, according to Melendez. One protects the posts Morale Welfare and Recreation golf driving range, in which ducks were swimming at the flood's peak. The second overtopped levee protects a wooded area behind the Rock Island Arsenal National Cemetery. Melendez said large efforts were not expended to protect these areas as they are not critical to the Arsenal's everyday mission.

To prepare in case water levels went even higher, the Arsenal pre-positioned sandbags in strategic areas,

(see "flood" page 8)



Bottled water, slated to be distributed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is stored in Rock Island Arsenal's Building 299 during the 2008 flood. The Arsenal served as staging area for FEMA operations. The Arsenal's fire department also offered showers and other assistance to Keithsburg, Ill., during the crisis.

Summers difficulties met with success

Summer should be an enjoyable time for most people, with winter's cold long forgotten and autumn's chills not yet on the horizon.

This year shows, however, that weather can be very dangerous even in summer.

The summer of 2008 has brought dangerous floods and storms to Rock Island Arsenal and our Quad City communities. In all, 18 counties Illinois in and 62 counties in Iowa have been declared disaster areas.

The floods and storms brought damages from which the area will take months or years to recover.

This has made important impacts on operations for the U.S. Army Garrison at Rock Island Arsenal. Flooding in the early summer forced the Garrison to stand up an emergency operation center, and set round-the-clock watches on the island's levees and fill thousands of sandbags. To be absolutely safe, two families were moved out of quarters we considered to be too exposed to dangerous water.

While dealing with our own concerns, we also were able to provide aid to some surrounding

communities. Rock Island Arsenal's fire department is a member of Division 43 of the Mutual Alarm Box Aid System, and our MABAS team deployed to Kiethsburg, Ill., to provide showers and decontamination for the victims of the severe flooding in that community. It was an outstanding effort. We also provided pumps to local communities to assist their flood fighting efforts.

The Arsenal also served as a staging area for the Federal Emergency Management Agency throughout the flood, by providing parking for trucks loaded with water and generators.

Later, a severe storm caused major power outages and wind damage throughout the region. Many were without power for more than a week after 90-plus mile-per-hour winds from a thunderstorm swept through the area in a matter of minutes. That storm dropped trees on homes, downed power lines, and interfered with operations at the Quad Cities Airport.

Throughout all of these emergency operations, the Arsenal and its tenants continued to accomplish their missions. This speaks volumes about the work ethic, pride and teamwork of the entire Arsenal team. Floods may mean a longer road to work. Storms may mean your power is out. The Soldiers and employees who work at Rock Island Arsenal still showed up for work and still did their jobs, which are critical to the U.S. Army both here and worldwide.

So far, this summer has not provided Rock Island Arsenal with a long period of days of uninterrupted and lazy bliss. We can hope that the remainder of the summer is more cooperative. Even if it is not, I'm confident that the Garrison and all who serve our nation will continue to carry the load – to accomplish the mission, to care for communities and our families and excel at the challenges before us. Thank you all for a spectacular performance through a difficult time. Rock Island Arsenal sets the standard for our Army – all should be rightfully proud to serve here.



Joel Himsl
Garrison Manager



JOEL HIMSL
Garrison Manager

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**THE
ROCK**

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On the Cover: *Soldiers from Army Sustainment Command unveil Rock Island Arsenal's Living Memorial. The Memorial honors the fallen military and civilians from Illinois and Iowa. It was dedicated in a ceremony July 17.*

LIVING MEMORIAL HONOR



photos by Ted Cavanaugh

Above: A color guard from Army Sustainment Command salutes in honor of the Living Memorial at Rock Island Arsenal. The Memorial honors the fallen Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, Sailors, Civilians and Contractors from Iowa and Illinois who have fallen in the ongoing conflict in Southwest Asia. The Memorial was unveiled in a ceremony July 17.

By
ERIC CRAMER
Garrison Public Affairs

On July 17 at 9 a.m., The U.S. Army Garrison, Rock Island Arsenal, dedicated a living memorial, honoring the 283 Illinoisans and Iowans who have lost their lives as a result of combat operations in Southwest Asia.

“As a Humvee passes, a respectful salute, not a word is spoken, just honors to our brothers who have fallen,” Command Sgt. Major Stephen Blake said, describing the ceremony done for the departing dead who died in Afghanistan while he was serving there.

“These were my brothers and sisters,” he said.

Blake said those the memorial not only honored the fallen, but served as an aid to their families.

“They knew what the cost could be, they accepted that, but the families are not always ready and can’t

just say ‘it happened,’” he said.

“I will never leave a fallen comrade, nor forget. That’s the warrior ethos. Nor forget, that’s the important part,” Blake said.

“This memorial is a living one in several ways,” said Rock Island Arsenal Garrison Manager Joel Himsl. “It lives in the trees that surround it, but more than that it lives in the hearts and memories of the families of these fallen Warriors. We extend our own heartfelt thanks to the survivors of those Warriors who honor us with their presence today.”

This memorial will remain here to honor the fallen,” he continued. “We hope it will be a place of comfort for their families and a place of reflection for all.”

Himsl said the memorial also mirrors the Army Family and Community covenants.

“This memorial reflects the deepest meanings of those covenants. The Army cares for its own, cares

HONORS AREA FALLEN



for its fallen, cares for the Families and cares for its communities, who in turn support us,” he said.

John Curry, Deputy Garrison Manager for Rock Island Arsenal, said the idea for the memorial was initiated by Major. General. Robert Radin, Commander of the Army Sustainment Command and Senior Commander of Rock Island Arsenal.

“The goal was to honor all the Iowa and Illinois war dead, from all branches of the service, active duty, National Guard, Reserve, Government Civilians and Government Contractors who have given their lives in support of the war in Southwest Asia,” Curry said. “We wanted the site to be visible, and in a place where it can easily be accessed by family and friends.”

The memorial is specifically for those from Illinois and Iowa who served during operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism.

The memorial is located on the north side of Rock Island Arsenal’s Rodman Avenue, across from the Memorial Park. The site is outlined by 15 trees, eight

Left: Bagpiper Steve Layton plays “Amazing Grace during the dedication of the Living Memorial at Rock Island Arsenal July 17. Above: Army Sustainment Command Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Blake speaks during the dedication ceremony. Blake, recently returned from Afghanistan, said the memorial stands in dedication to his “brothers and sisters” who have fallen. Bottom: Garrison Manager Joel Himsl dedicates the Living Memorial, noting that it reflects the value of the Army Family and Community covenants

emerald green arborvitae, contrasted by seven sun kissed arborvitae.

At the center of the circular memorial is a limestone monument with an engraved message honoring those from Illinois and Iowa who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

HAZ-MAT--

Arsenal firefighters train with MABAS partners



By

ERIC CRAMER

Rock Island Garrison Public Affairs

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. -- Three members of the Rock Island Arsenal Fire Department traveled to Champaign, Ill., June 11, to take part in a drill with other members of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System.

The firefighters were accompanied by fellow MABAS firefighters from Moline and East Moline, Ill., and from Bettendorf, Iowa.

Attending from Rock Island Arsenal were Jim Mitchell, assistant fire chief; Seth Goode, fire captain; and David Liske, firefighter – they were accompanied by nine team members from the other Quad Cities fire departments participating in MABAS. Each MABAS team has 12 HAZMAT technicians.

MABAS is comprised of more than 50 agencies from throughout the state of Illinois. Among those agencies, 36 have a true hazardous materials response capability. The Rock Island Arsenal is part of the MABAS 43 HAZMAT Team and Technical

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Firefighters from the Rock Island Arsenal Fire Department simulate decontamination of firefighters contaminated in an hazardous materials incident. The action took place as part of three-day certification training for the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System.

Rescue Team. That team also includes the fire departments from Moline, East Moline, Bettendorf and the Quad Cities Airport.

Terry McMaster, Rock Island Arsenal fire chief, said the purpose of the exercise is to validate the training and equipment provided through MABAS and ensure that the teams can work together following the National Incident Management System. The validation is a 30-hour exercise to mitigate real life hazardous materials incidents from start to finish following national policy and regulations.

“Once the drill starts, it’s non-stop for 30 hours,” McMaster said. “It’s a real test of the equipment and the communications equipment – it makes certain we can all work together in a real emergency situation.”

“What they did was three scenarios – the first was a tornado had gone through a semi parking area. There were two tanker cars leaking, and a

55 gallon drum had fallen off a flatbed trailer and was leaking. They told us to look at it and go from there. We sent a recon team in and they reported that they found three leaks. From there they tried to get any information they could off tanks and barrels to determine what they were. We plugged into our science area and they were able to tell me what it was and we used all our equipment to solve the problem,” Mitchell said..

Mitchell explained that RIA’s HAZMAT trailer contains computers and reference books – the “science area” that helps emergency responders identify hazardous material and find ways to counter its effects or contain it safely.

“On any HAZMAT you have three things that tell you what to do and you match all three of them up.” Mitchell said.

“The science guys get in the manuals and computer and go by the Emergency Response Guide guides and tell you what to do, what kind of DECON you’ll need and what kind suit to wear – it’s all in the computers and books.”

He said that in the second scenario, the team decontaminated those who had been involved in a hazardous-materials incident.

In the third, the team assisted with entry on a suspected methamphetamine laboratory.

Eight teams with ten Hazmat Technicians from across the State of Illinois assembled at a staging area near the Illinois Fire Service Institute, Champaign, Ill., to fill out required paperwork and receive an incident briefing.

“It was probably the best HAZ-MAT training I’ve ever had. Made sure we could actually work together. The Illinois Fire Service Institute person who was embedded with us said that MABAS 43 was ‘ahead of the curve’ as far as HAZMAT teams go, and our training was a success,” Mitchell said.

At the staging area the teams set up their living quarters and head out to mitigate what ever incident IFSI can concoct.

MABAS is listed as a best practice in the National Response Framework.



HAZ-MAT response --

Rock Island Arsenal Firefighters deployed to Champaign, Ill., to train with hazardous materials specialists from throughout the state of Illinois in a live action drill as part of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System. Three Arsenal firefighters took part in the 30-hour exercise along with firefighters from Moline, East Moline, Rock Island and Bettendorf. The firefighters took this trailer of equipment which contains the supplies, references and other material they would need in the event of an actual hazardous materials emergency.

2008 Employee Appreciation Day



photos by Rhonda Brunning and Drew Bodeeen

Sights from around Employee Appreciation Day, 2008, clockwise from top left: Hula hoops were among the many games available for children at this year's event; Jeff McCrery displays his adult tricycling trophy; Garrison Manager Joel Himsl distributes trophies from the annual car show event; Lon Lukavsky gets wet in the "silly shower," the inflatable slide is always a popular attraction.

Flood

(continued from page 2)

especially along its vulnerable north shore. Two families were pulled out of senior noncommissioned officers housing because of basement flooding, but there were no other dislocations on the island.

In addition to its usual mission, Rock Island Arsenal also served as a staging area for Federal Emergency Management Agency staff and supplies, especially potable water and generators to be used in flood-damaged sections of Illinois and Iowa. Sandy Jasmund, spokesperson for the FEMA operation, said the Arsenal's support was excellent.

"The installation couldn't be a more perfect

place for our operation," she said. "We have a secure and safe location for our people and we're centrally located here – once we get our requests from the states, we can begin to provide service immediately."

After about a week of emergency status, the flood waters began to recede at Rock Island Arsenal. The range markers on the driving range became visible again, and the sandbags removed from their emergency locations. Throughout the flood, the island's thousands of employees, contractors and tenants were able to access the island and do their jobs. They never stopped.