

Bill Barron Named New Chief of H&H

by Dave Treadway

Bill Barron was recently selected for promotion to Chief of the Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch, the position vacated by Dennis Williams upon his retirement.

In that role, he will oversee water management and water resources, something to which he is looking forward.

"This job is extremely challenging and interesting," said the native of Lewisburg, Tenn. "My role in this position will be to oversee water management and water resources. My former role was to oversee only water resources. One of the key things we will do is get the Corps' Water Management System up and running which is a system model for the Cumberland River."

The new chief feels that one area under his purview will get more attention in the near future.

"The Corps already has Water Supply as one of its business lines," Barron explained, "and I think sources for supply are going to become more and more of an issue as the nation grows and the population increases. It will come to the forefront during the next few years," Barron predicted.



Bill Barron

"Nashville is becoming much more like Atlanta, spreading out and going into surrounding counties. Of course, Nashville has a good source of water supply in the Cumberland River, but there are other communities which are not fortunate to be in good pipeline distance of a major river. Portland, Tenn., comes to mind, as does the counties of Cumberland, Giles, Wayne, Lawrence, and Lewis."

Barron first earned a degree in English Literature from the University of the South at Sewanee, Tenn., then a master of arts in teaching with an emphasis in English Literature before teaching at Olive Branch High School in Mississippi and Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis.

He even had aspirations of becoming a lawyer before doing a stint in the Army as a military police officer and discovering something he didn't enjoy.

"In that role I spent all of my time dealing with 'the bad element of society' and found it 'less than pleasant.'"

He decided then to pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering at Tennessee State University and worked for 12 years for the U.S. Geological Survey Office before joining the Nashville District in 1993.

"It would have been easier," said Barron, "to go back and get my PH.D. in English than to go on and get my degree in Engineering," but he admitted that the pay is now much better.

In his spare time, the Goodlettsville resident enjoys watching his youngest daughter play softball for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She will graduate next year.

Overlook at J. Percy Priest Given Major Facelift

Story and photo by Steven Foshee

J. Percy Priest Lake is taking on a new look as part of the Recreation Excellence at Army Lakes (REAL) Program.

Improvements already made at the J. Percy Priest overlook area include new sidewalks, planting of selected vegetation, and the addition of access for handicapped patrons to several fishing areas. The REAL Program permitted the use of funds to continue the development of this pristine site.

The renovation of the overlook is an opportunity to improve safety and security, as well as the appearance of the area, according to Facility Manager Greg Thomas. He said design plans include a one-way traffic loop to improve traffic flow and provide a safe entrance to and

exit from the area. A large portion of the paved area was removed, replaced with topsoil and seeded with grass. Trees will be planted throughout the area, which will provide shade for additional features such as park benches.

Visitors to J. Percy Priest Dam will also notice some other improvements within the next year, according to Resource Manager Todd Yann.

"We have received quite a bit of public interest," said Yann, "in the work going on below the dam, and Metro Parks will soon have a quality facility available that will allow visitors to access the Stones River Greenway." Both the Greenway and the renovations to the overlook will provide numerous recreation opportunities to the public.

The Flood Control Act of 1946 authorized what was then called Stewarts Ferry Reservoir. On July 2, 1958, Public Law 85-496 changed the name to J. Percy Priest in honor of the late Congressman from Tennessee.

Construction of the dam began in June 1963 and was completed in 1968. The overlook area was designed for the dedication as a staging area. On June 29, 1968 President Lyndon B. Johnson dedicated Stewarts Ferry Reservoir.



The new parking lot at J. Percy Priest Lake.