

“2000 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER”

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SNY ISLAND LEVEE DRAINAGE DISTRICT

“I know we could have done a better job on that project. We made great progress in that area of the operation. If only I’d done it this way. Perhaps we should go in another direction, rather than pursue this course of action.” And so it goes, another year gone by. The phrases above represent comments most of us probably make, or at the very least, are parts of thought processes we all experience many times throughout the course of the year. Yet, here we are. Another year has passed. Another year of life’s experiences are behind us that hopefully, we have all learned from and will thus lead to even better times ahead throughout the Sny Island Levee Drainage District.

PUMP STATIONS

Our pumping operations were just about the opposite of what we experienced last year. Even though locally, we suffered through extremely dry conditions throughout most of the year, our pump stations operated all summer. This was due to the river being up all summer, increasing the amount of seep water coming into the District. This year, we had timely rain throughout the District almost all year. Yet, our pumping operations were down about 60% because the river was down all summer. When the river stages are normal or below, we can open our gravity gates and let the Sny flow out. When the river stages are slightly above normal, we must close our gravity gates and pump the water out. We experienced no major mechanical problems at any of our pumping plants, but we did make a major improvement at Pump Station 3A by constructing a new office for that location. The continued efficient operation of all of our Pump Stations is a credit to the leadership of our fulltime operators, Bryan Chapman, Lewis Wells and Butch Sturtevant, as well as their experienced part time operators.

In addition to the pumping plants themselves, we have been remiss over the past two years to keep you abreast of improvements made at additional District assets at each of our pump station locations, the residences. After the flood waters of 1993 receded, the residence at Pump Station #1 was completely re-modeled. Last year, the bathroom was completely re-modeled, new windows were installed as well as new carpeting throughout most of the house at Pump Station #3. This past year, a new septic system, new windows and a new garage door were installed at the residence at Pump Station #4. All of this work is being done to insure that the Sny’s assets are maintained in an optimum manner.

FIELD WORK

As was the case last year, much of our fieldwork this year concentrated on the creeks and diversion channel levees. This past year we have also concentrated on continued maintenance work of the slopes and elevations of our main stem river levees. We also completed rehabilitating about 1½ miles of the top of the Reach III side of the Six Mile/Bay Creek Diversion Channel levee, as well as the south side of Six Mile Creek Basin. Major channel work in Atlas Creek began last summer as well as the re-grading and sloping of the Atlas Creek levees. Work on the Atlas/Two Mile Creek complex is scheduled to continue next summer. Currently we are working on improving the banks of the Sny in Reach III, with efforts in this area scheduled to continue for several weeks. We have a new employee on staff running heavy equipment this year. Scott McKee came to us in July, replacing John Walker. Scott brings a wealth of experience to our staff. We're extremely happy to welcome him to the Sny family. Scott, his wife Kim and daughter Kaylyn live in Pleasant Hill. The main stay of our heavy equipment operators is Willard Lynch. Always willing to go the extra mile, Willard has been with us for 13 years.

BUSINESS OFFICE

For the last couple of years, a concerted effort has been made to upgrade the computer technology in the office to insure that the District's landowners have the most accurate, up-to-date information available on their assessments. The District is also moving toward utilizing state of the art programming so that the entire Drainage District can be mapped into our computer system. In this way, we can readily tie the assessment information to a visual depiction of the land involved. The programming is known as CAD, Computer Aided Design. The Sny was extremely fortunate to have been able to secure the services of Yvonne Billings as our Administrative Assistant in the Business Office. Yvonne came to us with seven years of experience working with Geographic Information System technology. She also has a vast array of knowledge in working with parceling of land, researching of deeds and working with real estate transactions. Since coming to us in February, she has been able to bring up to date a backlog of parcel splits, install a new accounting system on our computer system and bring our assessment program up to date. We are indeed fortunate to have someone with Yvonne's expertise on staff. Yvonne, her husband Donnie and her two boys, Trevor and Tyler, live south of New Canton. Jane Guthrie continues to give the District outstanding assistance in the office on a part time basis with Kevin Keithly assisting as with our computer technology.

In discussing the operations of the Business Office, it would be extremely helpful if either the buyer or seller of real estate in the District would alert the Business Office of the transaction. In this way, we can provide the most accurate assessment information available on a daily basis. In the past, we have tried to keep up with these transactions through publications from the Pike County Courthouse. However, it is the responsibility of the buyer and seller, or their representatives, to notify the District of changes in ownership.

This year, we expect to send out our assessment notices on or about December 10. The total assessment is due January 1. However, please note that the first installment becomes delinquent on June 1 with the final installment becoming delinquent on September 1. We ask for your assistance in completing these payments in a timely manner.

During the year 2000 we have incorporated a new accounting system in the business operation. The new system allows for the implementation of mailing out invoices and statements for items noted as accounts receivable. This mainly involves the sale of drainage tubes. In fairness to all the landowners of the District, effective January 1, 2001, the District will be assessing a 1%/month finance charge on all accounts 30 days past due.

DRAINAGE TUBES

As always, we continue to stock a good supply of plastic as well as galvanized drainage tubes. We also have the capability to order about any type of drainage accessory you might need. As a reminder, the Sny will install your drainage tubes at no charge if the 350L is in the immediate area where the installation is required. However, the Sny will not guarantee the installation for proper flow and will not be responsible for future damage that may occur to the tube or area crops resulting from the installation. In addition, if you periodically burn your ditches and there are plastic tubes in the vicinity, make a special effort to stay with the fire so the tubes do not catch fire. **They will burn.**

SNY BRUSH CONTROL PROGRAM

The Sny continues to offer its annual brush control program in an ongoing effort to improve the efficiency of the waterways throughout the District. If you have "District Ditches" on your land, the Sny will furnish an appropriate amount of herbicide to control the brush on those ditches, with the landowner furnishing the application of it. Vouchers will be furnished at the District Business office to the landowners or their operators to pick up the herbicide at the District approved dealer.

SNY RIGHT OF WAY

In last year's newsletter, we made all of you aware of an increasing problem with vehicular traffic on District right of way; specifically, the main stem river levee and the diversion channel levees. This problem continues to persist. We continue to experience damage to the levees from four wheelers and pickup trucks. If you see this happening, please don't hesitate to call the Sny office as well as the appropriate County Sheriff's department. This is Your Drainage District. These vehicles are damaging Your Drainage Facilities. Please help us to clean up this problem. If notified, we will prosecute the offending party.

RIVER LEVEES

It was in the spring of 1997 that we in the Sny began a journey that brought us to the final completion of repairs on July 25, 2000, to about 3.5 miles of main stem Mississippi River levee immediately north of Lock & Dam 24 in Reach III. Just short of \$7,000,000.00 was ultimately needed to correct severe shoreline erosion that, if left unchecked, would have spelled disaster for the Sny and would have stopped barge traffic on the Mississippi River north of Clarksville, thus severely hampering the economy of middle America. Make no mistake about it; it is nearly unheard of to have a Federal project of this magnitude completed less than 3 1/2 years from when the problem is initially brought to the attention of the appropriate agency. This project was completed in what Col. Jim Mudd, former Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with more than 25 years of experience with the federal government, termed to be in a manner “like a lightning bolt”. That being the case, how could a section of Mississippi River levee at the south end of Pike County and the north end of Calhoun County draw such attention? Two words could best describe it; **COOPERATION & COMMITMENT.**



On site view of the 3.5 mile river levee riprap repair north of Lock & Dam 24 in Reach III.



3.5 mile river levee riprap repair north of Lock & Dam 24 in Reach III as seen from the Missouri shore.

As was noted in our 1999 newsletter, the Commissioners of the Sny put together a coalition of support covering the entire mid west. Support for this project was secured from the County Boards of Adams, Pike and Calhoun Counties; the City of Quincy; the Boards of the Upper Mississippi, Illinois & Missouri Rivers Association and the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association, both of which brings support from northern Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico; representatives from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development and numerous township officials from throughout the area. In Washington, D.C., the push for the project was led in the House of Representatives by Congressman John Shimkus, with support from Congressman Leonard Boswell - co-chair of the Mississippi River caucus representing southeast Iowa, Congressman Kenny Hulshof – co-chair of the Mississippi River caucus representing northeast Missouri, Congressman Lane Evans representing western Illinois from the Quad Cities to Quincy, and Congressman Jerry Costello, representing western Illinois from the Belleville area south. In the Senate, Senator Dick Durbin led the effort with the assistance of Senators “Kit” Bond and John Ashcroft in Missouri and Senator Peter Fitzgerald of Illinois.

This group, working cooperatively and committed to getting the job done, realized the Sny's goal. Yes, it was a great accomplishment. Yes, we should be proud of what we were all able to get done when we set our minds to it. But, we must not be complacent and rest on the laurels of past deeds. So much more lies ahead. There are challenges to be met. However, we can all rest assured that success can be achieved if we in the Sny stand together as one with the commitment to continually improve our District so that the next generation will have the same foundation of excellence on which to build that past generations left to us.

THE HOLIDAYS

In observance of the Christmas holiday season, the District's Business Office will be closed all day on Friday, December 24. In observance of New Year's Day, the office will be closed all day on Friday, December 31. Otherwise, the Business Office will be open during regular weekday hours, 8:00 A.M. – 5: P.M., December 27 – 30 and from January 3 on.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The financial report noted in this newsletter is for our fiscal year ending August 31, 1999. An additional sheet reflects the income and expense figures for the river levee work done in the East Hannibal area when thousands of cubic yards of sand were dredged from the river and placed on the landside slope of the levee for more than three miles. Audited figures for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2000, are not available at the time of this printing.

The Commissioners and staff of your Sny Island Levee Drainage District wish all of you and your families the happiest and safest of holiday seasons, and extend to you the very best that the coming year has to offer.

Jack L. Borrowman – President

George D. Borrowman – Secretary

Russell E. Koeller – Commissioner



Residence-Pump Station #4



Pittsfield Work Camp Crew Clearing Riprap – Reach III



“Butch” Sturtevant Operating Roanoke Brush Axe In Pleasant Hill “V”.



State Of The Art Computer Network System Facilitating District Accounting, Annual Assessment and Geographic Information System (GIS) Applications.