

# ***BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SNY ISLAND LEVEE DRAINAGE DISTRICT***

## ***2001 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER***

### ***A YEAR IN REVIEW***

It seems like last week that we finished the 2000 Newsletter. And now, here we are again looking back on our efforts to continue a tradition that started in 1871 of providing the landowners, residents and owner/operators of *THE SNY* (the first drainage district in the State of Illinois) with a drainage system that creates a setting for those that choose to raise a family, educate their children, make a living and pursue their lifelong dreams. It's an awesome challenge; one that your Commissioners and staff have readily accepted. Let's reflect on 2001, and then move on to the future.

#### ***The River***

##### **And Yet Another Flood!**

For the 8<sup>th</sup> time in the past 13 years, the river stage in Hannibal, Missouri exceeded 20'. Flood stage in Hannibal is 16'. It seemed like '93 all over again. Our winter wasn't bad at all. We were concerned about dry conditions that carried over from the fall of 2000 into the spring when much-needed rainfall began. Long-range flood forecasts provided by the Corps of Engineers at the annual meeting of the Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association annual meeting in February called for only moderate flooding conditions. Spring fieldwork began. Crops were going in the ground. However, drenching rainfall coupled with late season snowmelt runoff in the upper valley raised river stages throughout the upper Mississippi valley. Flooding conditions from the Rock River created havoc in the Quad Cities area. River stages continued to rise. Levee patrols by the Sny staff began in mid April. We were concerned because the stages reached 20' and slowly kept climbing to around 22' by early May. Additional levee patrols were begun.

In and of itself, a 20' river stage is no problem. But, as we all know from past experience, it can set the stage for disaster given the right conditions north of us. The onset of extremely wet conditions throughout the state of Iowa and in extreme northeast Missouri in May sent river stages to 24' and 25'. The Rock Island District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers set up a field office in Quincy.



***U.S. 54 at Pike Station***

F.E.M.A. representatives arrived in the Sny to provide assistance. Whatever was needed was made available to us. Volunteers assisted Sny staff with 24 hr./day levee patrols. Seepage problems were monitored. By mid May some drainage districts north of Quincy had to push up their levees to keep from overtopping. After considering data detailing the elevation of the top of the levee throughout the Sny, along with continually monitoring the river conditions north of Quincy and reviewing long-range weather forecasts and crest predictions for our area, we decided not to push up. Finally, the third highest river crest in the history of Hannibal, Missouri, 26.83', passed on May 16. At that elevation, the river was less than two feet from the top of our main stem levee in some places. On June 28, the river finally fell below the 16' flood stage for the rest of the year. Sny flood expenses for the 2001 flood event exceeded \$250,000.00. Of that amount, 75% was reimbursed to the District.



When the floodwaters finally receded, a segment of shoreline north and another south of Pump Station 4 showed significant erosion. District and Corps officials have closely watched these areas for three years. The Rock Island District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers immediately took action to initiate repairs. Bid documents were prepared, the bidding process executed, the bid awarded and repairs

completed by November 15. In addition, turf repair for parts of all diversion channel levees killed by this year's flood event is to be completed next spring. Corps estimates place the total cost of both projects at nearly \$900,000.00. Funding for the riprap repairs and levee seeding will come from federally sponsored PL 84-99 emergency funding.



Improvements made to the north closure levee and the main stem river levee over the last few years paid off. The north closure levee, site of the infamous "board fence" in 1993, was no problem. That 4000' section was raised more than 5' in 1996. Levee strengthening projects along the '93 break site in 1995 & 96 reduced seepage problems in that area. The dredge material placement site along several thousand feet of levee near Lock & Dam 24 not only eliminated seepage and overtopping concerns, it provided many truck loads of sand that was hauled to various staging areas throughout Reach I. The 3.5 miles of improvements in 1998 in the East Hannibal area provided dramatically stronger levees in that area. Each one of the four specific improvement sites noted above pales in comparison to the 54 miles of river levee that the Sny maintains. Yet when all are combined, their length totals nearly seven miles of river levee improvements since 1995. It made a difference this year, and will continue to do the same in the future.

All in all, we dodged another flood bullet in 2001. We have many to thank; from federal, state and local government officials to the many volunteers who patrolled the levees, directed traffic and laid pickets, sandbags and straw. Without your help, the situation could have been much more serious.

To all of you, and you know who you are, ***THANK YOU!!!*** To those landowners unable to help this year, please contact the drainage office during future flood events. We can always use an extra hand. If you are unable to assist, please encourage your tenants to provide whatever assistance they can.

### ***PUMPING OPERATIONS***



The high water of 2001 created interesting challenges at all three District pump plants. 24 hour a day, seven day a week operations were common place at all three pump stations this year due mainly to excessive seep water from the river. During the peak of our pumping operations, we were using more than 4000 gallons of diesel fuel each day at a price of as much as \$1.04/gallon. What made this year's pumping operations even more of a challenge was that in late May, mechanical problems developed at Pump Station 1 at Hull and Pump Station 4 south of Pleasant Hill. The flooding conditions on the river coupled with extremely low water conditions in the Sny led to a gearbox failure at Pump Station 1. Repairs included new ring and pinion gears, a new vertical output shaft and new bearings for gearbox #1 at a cost of \$50,000.00. The propeller on pump #1 at Pump Station 4 south of Pleasant Hill also failed. Investigation into the condition of the prop led to the decision to replace the cast steel propellers with new stainless steel props on all three pumps at Station 4. The stainless steel composition of the new props should lengthen their life by many years over the previous cast steel props that were last re-conditioned 18 years ago. The props were recast and manufactured in the country of Mexico by Fairbanks Morse. The pump that failed, #3, was repaired first. As of this report, the other two new props are at Fairbanks Morse's Kansas City plant. They are to be shipped here in the coming weeks in time for repairs to be complete by spring. The estimated total cost for repairs on all three pumps is \$70,000.00. Operations at Pump Station 3A west of Pleasant Hill were basically normal, with no major mechanical problems. We are fortunate to have dedicated, full and part time pump station operators at all of our pump plants. Bryan Chapman continues to manage Pump Station 1, and along with those duties also manages the District's projects involving daily work camp crews from the Pittsfield Work Camp. These crews are responsible for debris and brush removal on the miles of riprap on the main stem and diversion channel levees and general brush removal on selected District ditches including the Sny. Lewis Wells controls the operations at Pump Station 3A plus provides support work in all other aspects of the District including heavy equipment operation, mowing, mechanics and machine work. Warren "Butch" Sturtevant leads the activities at Pump Station 4 and supervises the mowing of thousands of acres of levees, creek channels and basins. All are veteran staff members determined to run a well-maintained, efficient District. And as a whole, the District is dedicated to managing all District facilities and waterways to provide the most efficient, district wide drainage system possible.

## ***FIELD OPERATIONS***



**Cat D6R and D5M Shaping River Levee**



**Cat 350L Trackhoe Cleaning Collins Pond Ditch**

Long time Sny employee Willard Lynch of Kinderhook and Scott McKee of Pleasant Hill, now in his second year of employment with the District, form an experienced team of heavy equipment operators working on river and diversion channel levees, sedimentation basins and District ditches. They also routinely jump in to provide valuable support in major pump station projects such as gearbox and pump repairs. In other words, there isn't much they can't do. Almost all of their fieldwork was concentrated along the river until late July. With the spring flooding conditions came almost continual levee patrol from mid April until the end of June. Once the floodwaters receded, they were responsible for debris removal on 54 miles of main stem river levee. In the midst of all that, they managed to find time to install a new outlet tube from Austin Creek basin since the original (installed in the 1960's) deteriorated causing a Fall Creek Township road to collapse. Willard and Scott also found time to clean out nearly 15 miles of District ditches as well as re-shape the inlet channel to Shewhart Basin. We are fortunate to have two individuals on our staff as dedicated as Scott and Willard are to the overall well being of the District



**John Deere 7710 Tractors**



**District Staff Installing New Outlet In Austin Creek Basin**

Two new John Deere 7710 tractors were purchased this year to facilitate the mowing of more than three thousand acres of river, creek and diversion channel levees as well as several hundred acres of sedimentation basins. We have also purchased a new Machete Brush Axe to be mounted on one of the 7710s for brush removal along District right of way.

### ***BRUSH CONTROL PROGRAM***

The District's annual program of brush control continues to pay dividends throughout the system. Our ditches seem cleaner, with a better stand of turf on the ditch banks to allay erosion and facilitate the efficient drainage capabilities of the ditch. Please note that our brush control program is for **District Ditches Only**. Vouchers authorizing you to pick up the herbicide for you to apply will again be issued at the District Business Office or faxed to the District approved herbicide vendor. Your cooperation with this program is greatly appreciated since it would be impossible for the Sny staff to spray these ditches as needed.

### ***DRAINAGE SUPPLIES***

We continue to stock a good inventory of both galvanized as well as plastic drainage tubes at our New Canton facility. We also have a good supply of flap gates for our plastic tubes. Additionally, our suppliers are very good about timely shipments of various other supplies to meet your drainage needs. We also think you'll find all of our equipment competitively priced. Don't forget, we will install your drainage tubes for you if our Cat 350L is in the immediate area. We will also offer advice on the installation of your tubes upon request. The Sny staff is always willing to pass along our assistance to improve drainage in your area. However, we cannot guarantee any installation for proper flow and will not be responsible for future damage that occurs to the tube or area crops resulting from the installation. If you are using plastic tubes for your installation, be especially careful if you are burning debris from your ditches in the immediate area of the tubes. They will burn!

### ***THE BUSINESS OFFICE***

We noted to all of you in last year's report the ongoing effort to modernize the computer technology in the business office. This year, we re-modeled the front entrance and installed all new energy efficient windows throughout the building and purchased computer friendly office furnishings for the front office. Work is underway in re-mapping the entire District by parcel utilizing the Sny's GIS digital computer technology. Parcels in Adams County are nearing completion. Work will continue throughout the District in an effort to provide the most accurate documentation of assessment data relative to land parcels as is technologically possible. We are also finalizing the completion of a new assessment program that will replace assessment programming and technology dating back to 1987. The District entered into a contract with Devnet, Inc. of Dekalb, Illinois, to develop this program. It is our goal to produce the 2002 assessment utilizing this new program. The District's Administrative Assistant, Yvonne Billings, is wrapping up her second year of service in February. Since coming to the District, the Sny has implemented a new bookkeeping program, moved forward with Computer Aided Design programming to provide accurate map parceling and is now moving forward on providing a new drainage assessment program. All of this has been accomplished while Yvonne manages the day-to-day business operations of the District as well as maintained accounting records for the 2001 flood event. We are indeed fortunate to have someone of Yvonne's professional expertise and dedication managing the day-to-day office operations of the District. The

Sny is also fortunate to have support staff like Kevin Keithly and Jane Guthrie assisting Yvonne with these office operations. Kevin's expertise has made it possible for the District to advance light years with computer technology. In fact, he put the system together and installed it. We would not be where we are today without Kevin's dedication and perseverance. Jane Guthrie continues to provide timely assistance with daily office operations while balancing her responsibilities with her family and their farming operation. They are a very special office team.



Sny Island Levee District Business Office – New Canton



District Office Staff Yvonne Billings & Jane Guthrie

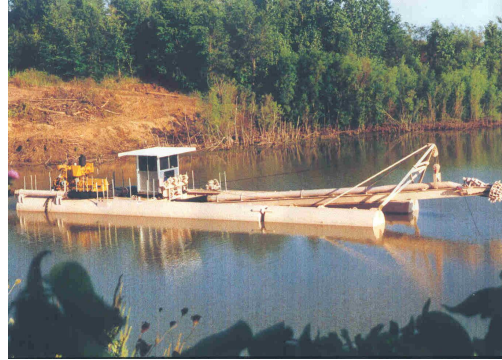
The Staff of the District makes every effort to track land sales throughout the District through legal publications in an effort to keep our assessment records as up-to-date as possible. **However, it is the responsibility of the buyer or seller of the real estate, or their representative, to notify the District business office when a land transaction takes place.** Prompt notification would help insure that annual assessment records are as accurate and up-to-date as possible. In any event, responsibility for payment of the annual drainage assessment lies with the owner of record at the time assessments are mailed annually unless otherwise stipulated in a transaction agreement.

We anticipate mailing out the 2002 annual drainage assessment notices by Friday, December 14, 2001. The first installment will become delinquent on June 1. The final installment becomes delinquent on September 1. Please understand that we are bound by state law to follow very specific, legal guidelines when dealing with delinquent assessments. Timely payment of your annual assessment helps insure an efficient, professional drainage operation as well as avoids the need to deal with the consequences of unyielding state law.

### ***UP AND COMING***

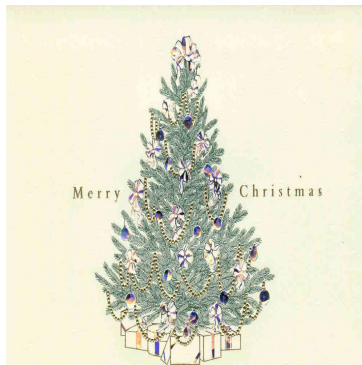
The coming year promises to provide new challenges that if met will have a positive impact on the future of the Sny and perhaps the entire area for generations to come. We are currently moving through a process known as 100-year certification. The Sny has been working with Klingner & Associates and the Rock Island District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for several months to secure certification of the Sny for 100-year flood frequency protection. (Our District was developed with 50-year protection) If approved, restrictions on flood plain development will be eased somewhat plus flood insurance premiums should decrease.

In addition, the District is finalizing a plan to purchase and operate its own hydraulic dredge. Upon completing the purchase and securing the necessary permits, the District plans to initiate a 10-year program to hydraulically dredge sand for placement on the landside slopes of the river levees throughout the entire District to dramatically improve flood protection as well as decrease through seepage. Our goal is to implement the dredging program in the spring of 2002.



### ***THE HOLIDAYS***

In observance of the upcoming holiday season, the Sny Business Office will be closed December 24 & 25; open 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. on December 26 & 27; open 8:00 A.M. – 12:00 noon on December 28; closed December 31 & January 1; open 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M., Monday thru Friday from January 2 on.



***The Commissioners and staff of your Sny Island Levee Drainage District wish all of you and your families a happy and safe holiday season and a most prosperous new year!!!***

### ***FINANCIAL STATEMENT***

The financial report included with this year's newsletter reflects audited figures for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2000. Audited figures for our new fiscal year period ending October 31, 2001 are not available at the time of this printing.

  
George D. Borrowman – President

  
Russell E. Koeller – Secretary

  
Jack L. Borrowman – Commissioner