

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SNY ISLAND LEVEE DRAINAGE DISTRICT

2002 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

WHERE WE'VE BEEN / WHERE WE'RE GOING

It's that time of year again. Traditionally, we take this opportunity to reflect with our fellow landowners and owner/operators on what has transpired over the past 12 months in the life of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District, then look forward to a new year of activity. 2002 has indeed presented its challenges; heavy rainfall resulting in spring flooding on the river combined with interior flooding within the District, another disaster declaration, drought-like conditions over much of the District throughout the growing season and the historic beginning of a 10-year levee strengthening project. Sandwiched in among all of this were the daily, routine workings of the largest "levee & drainage district" in Illinois. We'll take just a few moments to reflect, then look ahead to the promise that the new year brings.

WHAT A SPRING!

After experiencing an extremely mild winter, fieldwork started early. Very little moisture fell until late April. However, from late April to the mid June it was a nightmare. With reports varying from throughout the length of the 60-mile District, rainfall amounts ranged from 14.5" to more than 18" from April 21 to June 13. Interior flooding was significant combined with a June 14th river crest of nearly 20' on the Hannibal gauge. All District pump stations ran 24 hours/day, seven days/week for weeks. River levee patrols were initiated on May 13 and continued daily through late June. Governor Ryan issued a disaster declaration for west-central Illinois, including the Sny, on May 19. This was the fourth such declaration that included the Sny in the past 8 years. All routine fieldwork by the Staff ceased for nearly three months as our crews battled both interior flooding from the Sny



along with the flooding conditions from the Mississippi. When floodwaters finally subsided, field maintenance crews were busy cleaning up flood



debris left on the river and diversion channel levees along with repairing wave wash damage on the Hadley/McCraney diversion channel's west levee. We also found that severe levee erosion had occurred once again on the riverside slope of a 700' stretch of river levee just north of Pump Station 4. The staff of the Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers immediately assessed the damage and recommended needed repairs. The Corps' bidding process was initiated including preparation of specifications and advertisement. Luhr Brothers Construction Company was awarded the bid and completed the repairs on the \$700,000.00 project in November. With the completion of this year's repair project, since 1998 nearly \$8,000,000.00 worth of riprap has been placed on the riverside slopes of Sny river levees. This work was 100% funded by the Federal Government through the St. Louis & Rock Island Corps Districts.

PUMPING OPERATIONS

The heavy rains from late April to mid June created quite a challenge for the District's three resident pump station operators, Bryan Chapman of Hull, Lewis Wells of Pleasant Hill and Butch Sturtevant of Pleasant Hill. They, along with their 12 part time pumpers, ran 24 hours/day, 7 days/week from late April to early July. The high river stages at that time complicated our pumping operations because they increased the amount of seep water coming into the District where Sny stages were already extremely high from record rainfall, and more importantly reduced pumping efficiency due to the increased head pressure the pumps had to work against. At peak operation, the diesel engines powering the District's 2 – 78" pumps at Hull, 3 – 72" pumps at Pleasant Hill and 3 – 36" pumps south of Pleasant Hill were using more than 7,000 gallons of diesel fuel every 3 days.



Pump Station 1 - Hull

As was noted in our 2001 report, the three pumps at Pump Station 4 south of



Pump Station 3A - Pleasant Hill



Pump Station 4 - South of Pleasant Hill

Pleasant Hill were replaced with new stainless props and stainless steel bowl inserts. The \$70,000.00 project, paid for entirely with Sny revenue, was completed in early March, insuring the efficiency of pump operations in Reach IV for many years to come. Pumping operations at Pump Stations 3A in Pleasant Hill and Pump Station 1 in Hull were normal, with no interruptions due to mechanical failures. Once pumping operations began to wind down in the summer, Klingner & Associates from Quincy were retained to conduct efficiency tests at all three stations. Testing indicated adequate

operations at all three plants. However, in an effort to insure maximum pumping efficiency, pumps at Pump Station 3A will be raised this winter for a visual inspection. Any repairs that may be indicated will be concluded in such a time frame that the station will be fully operational by late February. Bryan, Butch and Lewis have more than 36 years of combined experience in operating the District's three pump plants. They, along with their part time staff, are invaluable assets to the efficient operation of our pumping stations. We truly appreciate their dedication.

DRAINAGE SUPPLIES

Sny Island is rapidly becoming an economical source for drainage supplies such as double-walled plastic tubes, galvanized and polycoat tubes, bands, flap gates, waterman gates and angled pipe joints. In 2002, the District sold more than 1 ½ miles of plastic



tube and nearly ½ mile of galvanized tubes to area landowners, owner/operators and local governmental agencies. The staff works to keep a good supply of drainage items readily available at a competitive price. For those specialty items that may not be on hand, our suppliers provide timely shipment of equipment to satisfy your drainage needs. What's even better is that if the District's 350L is in the immediate area where you might need a tube installed, the District staff will do the installation.

However, the staff cannot guarantee any installation for proper flow and will not be responsible for damage that occurs to the tube or area crops resulting from the installation. Also, as a special reminder, when burning off your ditches, the Hancor plastic tubes will burn if left unattended.

FIELD OPERATIONS

When looking at the field operations of the District in 2002, they were almost a mirror image of 2001. Willard Lynch of Kinderhook and Scott McKee of Pleasant Hill provide the bulk of all heavy equipment operations in the field. Both are proficient in the operation of the District's Cat 350L track hoe with a 57' reach and the D6R and D5M bulldozers. Even though much of their time was taken up last year in assisting with the installation of the three new pumps at Pump Station 4 late in the winter and fighting the flooding both inside the District and along the river through late June as well as cleaning up the debris leftover, they were still able to clean out almost 18 miles of District ditches last year. They also installed a new outlet in Grubb Branch Basin, prepared for the District's dredging operation in the fall and fully participated daily in the dredging operation to date. What tremendous assets both Scott and Willard are to the overall operation of the Sny.



BRUSH CONTROL PROGRAM

The purchase of a new, Alamo Machete Brush Axe with a 21' reach was reported in last year's newsletter. Pictured below is a photo of the brush axe mounted on one of the



District's John Deere 7710 tractors purchased in 2001. This new brush cutter has 6' more reach than the District's old unit. With its January delivery, Butch Sturtevant was able to cut brush along many of the more than 300 miles of District ditches and 38 miles of creek channels during the winter. The Machete, along with the herbicide Crossbow, are the key components in the District's brush control program throughout the 125,000 acre Sny. And make no mistake about it;

brush control is essential to an efficient drainage operation. As has been the practice for several years, the District will again in 2003 issue vouchers at the Sny office or fax them to local herbicide dealers allowing landowners or owner/operators to pickup Crossbow at District expense for application on **District Ditches** for brush control. It is emphasized that this program is offered for **District Ditches only**. Your cooperation is essential in the continuation of this program in the future.

BUSINESS OFFICE

We reported last year of the re-modeling done on the interior of the District's New Canton Business Office. New office furnishings more compatible with the Sny's computer and mapping equipment were installed in the front office area. Interior re-modeling included installation of energy efficient windows, installation of a handicapped accessible ramp and re-location of the front door. Work continued this year with new landscaping and the painting of the



exterior wood on the building. Administrative Assistant Yvonne Billings continues to lead the office staff with fine-tuning of a new assessment program developed by DevNet of Dekalb, Illinois, last year. The District also moved to a new accounting program last year to better detail the District's financial standing on a day-to-day basis. Yvonne is also making great progress on re-mapping the entire District with the ultimate

goal of tying together the District's assessment database with GIS mapping throughout the entire 125,000 acre District. Yvonne's expertise in this specific, highly technical area has been invaluable in bringing the Sny into the 21st century from a technological standpoint. And we couldn't continue with the progress we've made without the technical expertise of Kevin Keithly. We continue to make great strides in improving

our computer capabilities through the leadership of both Yvonne and Kevin. Jane Guthrie provides important support work that keeps the Business Office functioning as efficiently and accurately as possible. Your office team is a dedicated group of professionals who take a personal stake in the effective functioning of a professional, business operation.

Each year there seems to be an ever-increasing number of land transactions throughout the District. Yvonne works very hard to keep up with the changes in the database brought about by these transactions. ***It would be extremely helpful if you would inform her of land transactions you are involved with at the time of the closing. This type of communication would go a long way to insuring the accuracy of your annual assessment. Please keep her informed.***

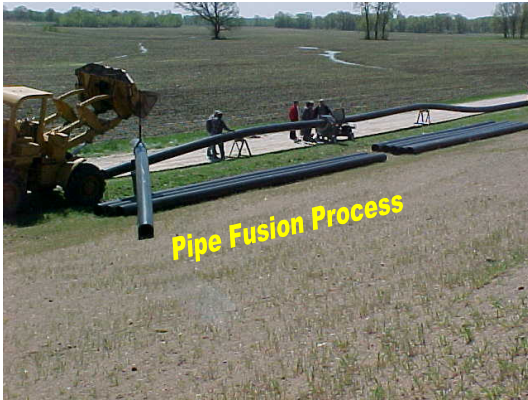
We expect the 2003 annual assessment notices to be mailed no later than Friday, December 13, 2002. The first installment will become delinquent on June 1, 2003. The final installment becomes delinquent on September 1, 2003. There are very specific legal requirements we must follow in the Business Office in order to comply with State drainage law when working with past due assessments. The timely payment of your annual assessment will better avoid the consequences of the rigid legal guidelines we must follow. Please don't hesitate to contact the Business Office if you have questions about your annual assessment.

THE DREDGE!

We reported in the 2001 newsletter on the purchase of a 12"x14" hydraulic dredge to be used over an estimated 10-year period for strengthening the land side slope of the Sny's 54-mile main stem river levee to not only enhance flood protection but to also decrease through seepage. On June 5th the dredge and booster pump were delivered on four flatbed trucks. The dredge was assembled in two days and launched in the pump discharge bay at Pump Station 1 on June 28th.



Sand hydraulically dredged from the river would be moved through 14" polyethylene discharge pipe to the landside slope of the levee. The 6,000' of pipe, delivered in 50' sections, were fused together in 200' sections with a \$29,000.00 fusion machine



purchased by the District. The fusion process involved heating the opposing ends of the two pieces of pipe, then hydraulically force them together allowing the melted polyethylene from each piece of pipe to mix together or fuse to each other.

As efforts moved forward to assemble all the necessary equipment to begin the dredging project, work continued on securing the necessary permits from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Hannibal Testing Labs performed required environmental studies on borings taken from each of the five dredge sites throughout the 6.2-mile length of Reach II. State mandated mussel surveys were also required at each dredge site. Ecological Associates of St. Peters, Missouri did this work. The efforts of many finally paid off with the receipt of all necessary permits at the Sny office



in early October. With Virgil Epley and Lewis Wells at the controls, history was made at 4:30 P.M on Thursday, October 13, 2002, when the dredge first placed sand on the landside slope of the main stem Mississippi River levee just south of Mallard Drake Crossing in Reach II. Virgil and Lewis have taken charge in learning the operation of the dredge this fall. We are fortunate to have their expertise at the controls every day. For 10 days, the Sny staff fine-tuned its equipment and methods until Wednesday,

October 23, when the dredge moved material uninterrupted throughout the entire day and continues to do so as of this writing on, December 3, 2002. The dredge, constructed by Assemblers of West Liberty, Iowa, is powered by a Cat 3412 diesel engine generating 720 h.p. The dredge will cut to depths of 35'. To give you a perspective of the power of the dredge, by the time it removes the sand from a depth of 35' in the river and pumps it over the river levee to the land side slope, it is raising that material 60' over several thousand lineal feet. Ideally, to optimize the efficiency of the equipment, a booster pump will be added once we reach a distance of 3,000' on the discharge line. Once the booster pump is added, the dredge will be able to reach over 2 miles of river levee from a single dredge site.



This is truly an exciting time in the life of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District. To our knowledge, the Sny is the first drainage district on the Upper Mississippi, and perhaps the entire Mississippi, that has undertaken such a project. Upon its completion, the landowners, owners/operators and residents of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District will have the security of a levee system they can be proud of and can trust.

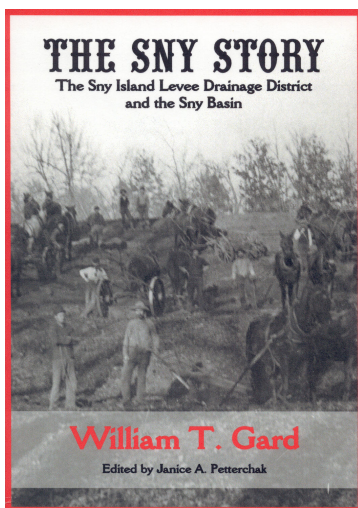


100 YEAR CERTIFICATION

This phrase has been used quite frequently over the past year in the Sny. The District has been working for more than a year to achieve certification from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and F.E.M.A. that we have what is known as 100-year flood frequency protection. The Sny was designed, as we know it today with 50-year flood frequency protection. The process involves a total review of the engineering and design of the Sny's river levees, diversion channel levees, interior drainage and pumping capabilities. The benefits of achieving this certification can be a lessening of flood insurance premiums paid by District residents and landowners, an easing of restrictions on local landowners in further developing facilities on their farms and the potential of increased economic development activity in the District. To date, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has signed off on approving the 100-year status for the District. The process is currently in the hands of a private consultant working for F.E.M.A. The consultant will report the findings of their review of the engineering of the District to F.E.M.A. within the next couple of months. The process has dragged on for more than a year due to the size of the Sny. The certification, for which we hope to gain what is called a LOMAR (Letter of Map Revision), has never been done on a drainage district the size of the Sny. Therefore, the process has become tedious at best as officials work to insure the accuracy of the data provided.

The Commissioners want to congratulate Superintendent Mike Reed for the success of these many projects that our District has been involved in this past year. His leadership is the primary reason that our District has been so successful.

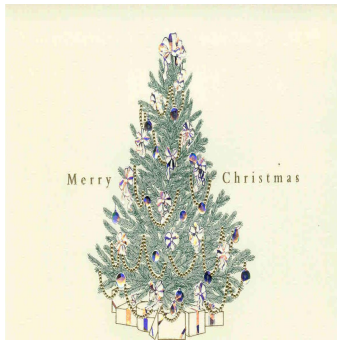
THE SNY STORY



While living and working in the Sny on a daily basis, we forget the illustrious history of our drainage district. The Sny *is* drainage law in the State of Illinois. The Sny was the first and is the largest levee and drainage district in the State of Illinois, originally organized in 1871. It was 1872 when a court ordered special assessment was levied for \$500,000.00 to help construct our first river levee. Some historical data noted in a speech by Commissioner Russell Koeller to the Mississippi River Commission includes the following: there were but 37 states in the Union in 1871; the Sny pre-dates Mark Twain's book, Tom Sawyer, by five years and Huckleberry Finn by 13 years and pre-dates the electric light bulb and the telephone. At the time of his sudden passing, former District Superintendent Bill Gard

was busy detailing the history of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District in a book. Fortunately for all of us, his wife Betty and daughter Mary Elaine Gard Leeper collaborated with Janice Petterchak to complete **THE SNY STORY**.

On September 13, the book was made available to the public at a book signing reception at the Sny Island Levee Drainage District Business Office. Because of its popularity, **THE SNY STORY** is in its second printing. If you haven't already picked up your edition or need additional copies, they are available at the Sny's Business Office at a cost of \$28.00. What a perfect Christmas gift for your family or friends. They can then enjoy the rich and illustrious tradition that is the Sny.



THE HOLIDAYS

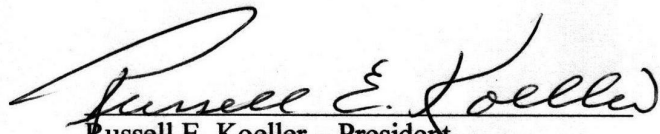
In observance of the upcoming holiday season, the Sny Business Office will be closed December 24, 25 & 31 and January 1.

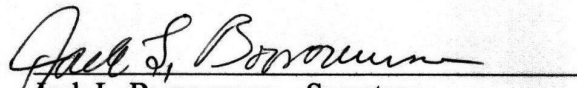
The Commissioners and staff of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District wish to extend to all of you, your families and friends a very merry Christmas and the best that the coming New Year has to offer!!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The financial report included with this year's newsletter reflects audited figures for the fiscal year ending October 31, 2001.

If you would like to receive this year's or future newsletters electronically, please inform the Sny office as to your e-mail address.


Russell E. Koeller – President


Jack L. Borrowman – Secretary


George D. Borrowman - Commissioner