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Accidents in two counties claim lives of two men

Staff Report

According to a press release issued from Illinois State Police (ISP) District 22, at approximately 5:29 a.m. Friday July 27, a 2012 Kia Sedan, driven by Michael D. LaBelle, 45, of Grantsburg, was traveling on New Columbia Road, west bound, .29 miles west of Walnut Ridge Road.

The vehicle left the roadway on the left and struck a wooden fence with the front of the vehicle.

LaBelle was struck by a piece of the fence and pronounced dead at the scene. Authorities say LaBelle was the sole occupant of the vehicle.

On Friday night, one man was injured and one killed following a single utility vehicle (UTV) crash near Glendale.

According to ISP, at approximately 9:40 p.m. emergency personnel responded to a UTV crash on Glendale Road, one mile east of Bull Pen Road in Pope County.

A 2016 Polaris Ranger side-by-side was driven by Weston D. Adams, 28, of Golconda, who was traveling with passenger Austin Walquist, 22, also of Golconda.

The UTV was traveling

westbound on Glendale Road, when the vehicle ran off the left shoulder of the roadway. The vehicle traveled through a shallow ditch, striking a tree before coming to rest.

ISP says passersby spotted the crashed UTV and went to a nearby residence to call authorities.

An air ambulance flew Adams to Deaconess Hospital in Evansville, where he remains in very critical condition. According to his family, he remains sedated on medications and on a ventilator.

An account has been set up at City National Bank in Metropolis to assist the family with medical expenses while Adams is in the hospital. The family says he is expected to spend several weeks there.

Walquist was pronounced deceased on the scene. A friend of the Walquist family has established a GoFundMe account to help with expenses: <http://www.gofundme.com/2ry38-funeral-expenses>.

According to ISP, the investigation into the crash continues. Neither Adams nor Walquist were wearing seatbelts.

Obituaries for LaBelle and Walquist can be found on Page 2A.



Above: The template construction workers used in 1993 to begin constructing the cells of the cofferdam.

— Photo by Richard Berry

Olmsted Locks & Dam

A look at the history of the largest Army Corps of Engineers project in the United States

Editor's Note: This is the first article in a series of four, focusing on the Olmsted Locks and Dam project and the various aspects involved with it.

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Olmsted Locks and Dam has been described by some as, "an engineering marvel," while others, including Kentucky Senator Rand Paul in 2013 have called it a "boomdoggle."

Call it what you want, but after 30 years and six presidential administrations, the Olmsted Dam is closer than ever to being completed — and that cannot come soon enough for the river industry.

The project dates back to 1988, during the late President Ronald Reagan's administration, when \$775 million was designated through the Water Resources and Development Act of 1988 to create a new lock and dam on the Ohio River between Illinois and Kentucky. Initially, when the project was funded, the completion date was set for 1998.

When the locks and dam is complete and operational, the project could go down in history as the United States Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) largest and costliest civil works project in the history of the Corps of Engineers. What started with funding of \$775 million, will end with a price tag of over \$3 billion, but according to the most recent cost estimates, it will still be under budget.

The Olmsted Dam project consists of two 110' by 1200' lock chambers adjacent to the Illinois bank of the river and a dam made up of five Tainter gates, 1400' of boat-operated wickets and a fixed weir. The new Olmsted Locks and Dam



Above: A pile driver or vibro hammer is lowered by crane and placed on top of the steel in order to drive it into the riverbed, a job Richard Berry, of Metropolis knows all about as he was a pile driver foreman when he first began in 1993. He worked on the Olmsted project for a total of eight years.

— Photo by Richard Berry

will eliminate Ohio River Locks and Dam 52 and 53.

The Corps said at its peak — about three seasons ago — there were 675 craftsmen, 100 staff with contractors, 50 Army Corps staff members involved in the project. By the time it is operational, there will have been about 45 million man hours put in during the construction of the new dam.

According to the Corps,

there have been over 15,000 dives performed without incident. In fact, during the entire project there has been only one fatality in 2012 when a Vienna man, Robert R. Billingsley, 54, died at the scene while securing barges.

Dam 52 is located at Brookport and 53 is at Grand Chain, just upstream from the new dam.

See **DAM**, page 2A

Ice Cream time



Above: Cherylann Easley, left, places a dollop of homemade chocolate sauce on Retha Rustin's, right, bowl of homemade ice cream on July 26 during the annual St. John Lutheran Ice Cream Social. Below: Mauri Fiorentini is all smiles as he mans the grill cooking burgers. The proceeds from his year's event will help two local families.

— Michele Longworth | Metropolis Planet



County's unpaid bills mounting, property tax money coming in

By Michele Longworth
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With three payrolls in the month of July, Massac County

ity funds.

"I think we should live within our means," said Commission Chair Jerel Childers, who seemed reluctant for the commissioners to make an inter-fund

the first of the month.

Farmer suggested since the three payrolls were covered, the commissioners should wait for a week or two to see if some money comes in that could be ap-

tax bills is also Friday, Nov. 2.

Although phase one of the courthouse renovation process is still ongoing and phase two has not even been put out to bid, Childers asked Farmer if the

determined some of the frames for the new windows have been put in, but the actual new windows have not. Farmer placed a call to the person overseeing the Massac County courthouse project and was informed he and

Deaths

Austin Walquist



Church and also a member of UBC Millwrights Local 716 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Survivors include his mother, Shannon Marcus and husband Keith of Temple Hill; his father, Matthew Walquist of Karnak; one sister, Gracie Marcus of Temple Hill; one brother, Logan Marcus of Temple Hill; his grandparents, Jerry Parr and wife Carol of Temple Hill, Howard Walquist and wife Carolyn of Karnak and Chris Marcus and wife Susie of Metropolis; two aunts, Tammy Stevens and husband Mark of Kentucky and Melissa Stier and husband David of Springfield; one uncle, Phillip Walquist of Belknap; and several great-aunts, great-uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his sister, Krysten Walquist; and one uncle, Kevin Parr.

Memorials may be made to: FFA, c/o Wade Swinford, 125 State Highway 146W., Golconda, IL 62938.

Austin Walquist, 22, of Temple Hill, died Friday, July 27, 2018 in Pope County.

Funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday at Aly Funeral Home in Edyville with Bro. Kevin Richerson officiating.

Burial will follow at Temple Hill Cemetery in Temple Hill.

Visitation will be from 6-9 p.m. Friday at the funeral home.

Born March 22, 1996 to Matthew Walquist and Shannon Parr Markus in Paducah, Mr. Walquist was a member of Temple Hill

Michael LaBelle



Michael D. LaBelle, 45, of Grantsburg, died Friday, July 27, 2018 as a result of an automobile accident.

Mr. LaBelle was a boilermaker with Local 363, of Belleville.

Survivors include his wife, Dawn LaBelle of Grantsburg; his parents,

Ray and Leslie LaBelle of Grantsburg; three daughters, Chassity LaBelle of Vienna, Haley LaBelle of Grantsburg and Britnie LaBelle of Metropolis; one son, Michael LaBelle of Metropolis; two grandsons, Breagan McCoy of Vienna and Chance Lee LaBelle of Metropolis; one sister, Lisa Burnham of Grantsburg; one brother, Jimmy LaBelle of Grantsburg; and several nieces and nephews.

Services will be held at a later date.

Visitation was held Tuesday at Aikins-Farmer-Loftus-McManus Funeral Home in Metropolis.

Memorials may be made to a charity of the donor's choice.

Vivian McPeak

Vivian McPeak, 46, of Metropolis, died Monday, July 30, 2018.

A memorial service will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, at Community of Christ Church, located at 1309 Commercial Park Rd. in Metropolis, with Ivan Woods officiating.

Born June 22, 1972 in Paducah, Mrs. McPeak attended the Community of Christ Church in Metropolis.

Survivors include her husband, Tony McPeak; one son, Sam Godman and wife Maegan; two stepchildren, Joseph and Samantha McPeak; her parents, Don

and Darlene Melcher; one sister, Monica Whalen and husband Ricky; one brother, Michael Melcher and companion Jen Judycki Schmidt; three grandchildren, Jack Sullivan, Scarlet Sullivan and Claire Godman; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her grandparents, Vera and Francis "Dude" Smith and M.W. and Hazel Melcher; and one sister-in-law, Laura Cross Melcher.

Aikins-Farmer-Loftus-McManus Funeral Home in Metropolis is in charge of arrangements.

Naomi Wittig

Naomi A. Wittig, 90, of Metropolis, died Tuesday, July 31, 2018 at Southgate Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Metropolis.

Funeral service will be held at 3 p.m. on Saturday at St. John Lutheran Church in Metropolis with Pastor Kent Hollis officiating.

Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

Visitation will be held

from 1 p.m. until the funeral hour Saturday at the church.

Memorials may be made to St. John Lutheran Church's Youth Center fund.

Miller, Loftus, McManus Funeral Home of Metropolis is in charge of arrangements.

The full announcement will appear in next week's *Planet*.

DAM

Continued from front

dam. Both dams were built in 1929, 89 years ago. At the time they were constructed their life expectancy was for 15 years.

In 1969, a 1200' long lock chamber was added to Dam 52 and in 1979, one was added to Dam 53. According to the Corps, the antiquated design of Dams 52 and 53 make it hard to meet current river traffic demands without significant delays.

One of the most significant delays came late in the summer of 2017 with an eight day closure of Dam 52 because wickets were down.

The new Olmsted Dam will have fewer wickets than Dams 52 and 53, but the time to raise the wickets is estimated to take about 24 hours, whereas with the problematic wickets at the older dams, the process of raising and lowering the dam could take 36 or even 72 hours.

The two lock chambers at the new Olmsted Locks and Dam will be able to keep barges moving up and down the river by allowing tow boats to lock through simultaneously.

According to USACE, construction work began as early as 1993, when the contract was awarded to build a cofferdam.

For one former worker at the dam, he knows exactly when construction began because the dam project was why Richard Berry moved his family to Metropolis in 1993. At the time he first heard about the Olmsted Dam project he and his family were living in Ohio.

Berry said his father worked for Balfour-Beatty, the company hired to work on the first portion of the dam project. The Olmsted Dam project was expected to be a 10 year job, when it was first announced.

That first phase of construction, Berry said was to drive the piling for 49 peanuts and 50 cells that would make up the cofferdam for the locks.

The cells are the round structures that make up the cofferdam and the "peanuts," are the half-round structures used to connect the cells.

They get their nickname because when looking down on them, they look like peanuts.

When Berry first began at Olmsted, there was nothing but water. Typically when construction work is done in water a cofferdam is built. A cofferdam is an enclosure built within or across a body of water to allow the water to be pumped out.

That was the case with Olmsted. The process of building the cofferdam took about three to three and a half years, according to Berry, who worked at different times during all of the various phases of construction. His position while there was mainly as pile driving foreman.

A template for a peanut would be placed in the river and from there workers would drive the piles one by one.

Berry said the 190-foot-long pieces of steel were the biggest pieces Bethlehem Steel has ever rolled.

Berry described how he would be in the bucket of a lift anywhere from 75 to 85 feet in the air with a 190-foot piece of steel coming toward him.

The steel beam would be lowered into the water and then with the assistance of a crane, which would hold the vibro hammer, or sheet pile driver, overhead, would lower it over the piling and the hammer would vibrate and in the process drive the steel into the riverbed.

While the cofferdam was being built and after it was constructed, towboat traffic was routed to the other side of the river.

After the cofferdam was up, then the Corps was able to have the water pumped out so the engineers could survey and workers could pour concrete footers, foundation pile and concrete.

Berry said phase two was taken over by Atkinson, Dillingham, Lane (ADL).

Also during this portion of the construction the floating guide walls that were constructed at James Marine in Paducah and floated down river to the dam, were put into place.

Throughout the entire project, there were numerous obstacles along the way. Some of the problems the Olmsted project has faced include:

- Delays in funding and lack of availability of appropriations
- Low initial budget proposal for the project by engineers
- Cost increases of material over time
- In the wet construction
- Cost-reimbursable contracts
- Unforeseen engineering problems
- Stretching of the USACE budget that took money to other projects
- Inflation
- Changes to the design of the project
- Unpredictable river conditions

Berry has a personal collection of memorabilia from his eight years of employment at the dam, including a news photo showing the cofferdam constructed, but flooded. Berry recalls the river had risen so high it was spilling over the top of the cofferdam and got to the point where the Corps made the decision to intentionally flood the cofferdam, which set the construction back.

Another significant impact was the inefficient funding. According to a chart from USACE, for nearly 20 years the project did not receive enough funding. It was not until the mid 2000s that the Olmsted project began receiving the proper amount of funding it needed.

The Corps timeline of events shows in 2004 the contract for the dam was awarded and from 2004

to 2009, the dam pre-cast yard was constructed and the site was mobilized for dam work to begin. At that point, the cost projections totaled about \$1.9 billion.

After the cofferdam came down, an innovative design of constructing portions of the dam "in the wet," was devised.

This process used a concrete casting yard that transported the pieces of the dam into the river for placement on the bottom of the river, without disruption to the river traffic.

In 2009, shells for the dam began being fabricated and 2010 marked the first season of in the wet dam construction and setting of shells.

Also in 2010 cost estimates were re-done and construction continued.

In 2012 a Post Authorization Change Report was completed, which indicated the project cost estimate reaching \$3.1 billion, coming after \$1.4 billion had already been invested into the project.

The Corps says from 2016 through 2018, the dam construction surged with 93 percent of the dam completed.

"It was a good job," said Berry, who said he never thought the dam would get to this point — to where it's almost operational. He says on ribbon cutting day, he and his wife, Tracie, will likely be there to see it in person.

As the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Olmsted Locks and Dam approaches on Thursday, Aug. 30, many components of the dam have been completed. But, the Corps' current schedule for the dam is for it to be operational in October and to complete the project, which includes removal of Dams 52 and 53 by December 2020.

According to the Corps timeline, as of Jan. 31, 2018, all 18 Tainter gate shells had been set and all

five Tainter gates had been erected.

But, why hold a ribbon cutting two months before the dam is operational?

As Louisville District Commander Col. Antoinette Gant explained,

"We were looking for the best opportune time to be able to do it as close to when we felt we would be operational as possible. Selecting and August date ensured we'd have Congress that would be out of session

"Olmsted Locks and Dam will ensure the viability of this commercial waterway so important to our nation's economic security. The project's operational achievement represents generations of innovation excellence, more than 45 million labor hours and stands as an example of the benefits provided from work done by the Corps on our nation's critical inland waterways," said Gant.

The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. at Olmsted Locks and Dam, located at 567 New Dam Road, Olmsted.

The event is open to the public and will include a keynote address by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, R.D. James and will feature the dedication of the Wicket Lifter Keen and the first commercial tow lockage.

Shuttle service to transport attendees to the ceremony site location will be provided from the designated parking locations. The shuttle loop will run continuously from 8 to 9:55 a.m. on Aug. 29.

The detailed information regarding scheduled events, directions and parking locations are available on the Louisville District website at: <https://www.frl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Navigation/Locks-and-Dams/Olmsted-Locks-and-Dam/>

Do you enjoy reading Yesterday's News?

Do you remember Massac County as it was years ago, or want to know what it was like?

Then you'll enjoy reading *Family and Pictorial History of Massac County, Illinois*. Available at *The Metropolis Planet* office, 111 E. 5th St. \$45, plus \$4 for mailing.

THANK YOU

The family of Edward Cole would like to thank everyone that brought food, flowers, gifts, fellowship, and prayers to them as they mourned the loss of this amazing man. Many thanks to the friends and neighbors that came and mowed the lawn and offered their time and hard work in preparation for the wake and funeral. Randy Cole and Penny Emery, your heartfelt thoughts, prayers, and words gave comfort beyond measure as you ministered at the funeral. The emergency room staff at Massac Memorial Hospital, your hard work, your heartfelt words, and how you gave love to our family when we needed it the most, we are forever thankful.

Wanda, Connie, Remdu,
Lisa and Family



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The Gerald Majors towboat, operated by Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel, locks through Dam 52 at Brookport with a load of gravel on July 20.

— Michele Longworth | Metropolis Planet

Olmsted Locks & Dam A closer look at the economic impacts to the southern Illinois region

Editor's Note: This is the second article in a series of four, focusing on the Olmsted Locks and Dam project and the various aspects involved with it.

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Living in a river town has its perks.

What better places to have a weekend picnic than at Dorothy Miller Park or Fort Massac State Park — watching the barges pass by. But how many people have actually stopped to think how the Ohio River and the inland waterways system of the U.S. support their lives and drives the economy.

This region provides a pivotal connection between four major rivers: Ohio, Mississippi, Tennessee and the Cumberland. More barges pass along the riverfronts in Massac County than any other place in America's inland navigation system.

According to the National Waterways Foundation, hundreds of thousands of American jobs are created and sustained across a variety of industries as a result of the transportation option the waterways offer. These industries include ag-

riculture, chemical, construction, energy, petroleum and steel. The inland waterways system provides vast opportunities for shippers to move their products from the farm, quarry, oil field or industrial plant to the world's markets in the safest, most fuel-efficient, environmentally responsible and economically viable manner.

At the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Brookport Dam 52 alone, in 2011, 91 million tons of goods passed through the locking system, with a large percentage being coal and agricultural.

River Industry

Brookport Dam 52 was completed in 1928 and Grand Chain Dam 53 was completed in 1929. They both had a 15-year design life and — after almost 90 years — both structures have deteriorated tremendously due to current traffic demands on the Ohio River.

"The antiquated design and age of these structures are causing significant delays for the barge line industries," stated a press release from the Corps. "Existing wicket dams have missing sections and wickets that will not raise, making it very difficult to maintain pool during low water."

Marty Hettel, vice president of government affairs for American Commercial Barge Line and chairman of Inland Waterways Users Board, stated at a recent Waterways Council media event in Paducah. "The importance of Olmsted Dam will be reliability. In July 2018 alone, 190 tons of commodities have been delayed because of problems at Brookport Dam 52, including the dam shutting down for three days to make repairs with 51 vessels waiting until repairs were made.

"Currently, 13 percent of the wickets are inoperable at Dam 52, which has been in a failing state for two and one-half years. We are expecting delays at both Dam 52 and Dam 53 to cost approximately \$65 million from November 2017 until September 2018. These costs are not only from barge lines but from plants shutting down because products being transported by barges were delayed," added Hettel. "Delays that sometime lead to layoff of employees at these plants."

Delays at Brookport and Grand Chain are also causing a bigger problem because barge lines have tight schedules to meet. Matt Ricketts, president and CEO of Crouse Corp. of

See DAM, page 5A

Families invited to free Last Splash event

By Linda Kennedy
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The City of Metropolis and the Metropolis Police Department (MPD) are wanting to end the summer in a splash with the third annual Last Splash event, set from 1-5 p.m. Sunday at the Metropolis City Pool, located at 312 E. Fourth St.

As part of the police department's 'SAFE' — Special Activities Fun and Education — fund, officers have been providing extra projects to keep kids entertained this summer, from the bicycle rodeo at Metropolis Elementary School in May to the Pool Pass Sponsorship program throughout the summer.

The Last Splash will feature free admission to the city pool and free food on the last pool day of the season.

Bear on the Air Shane Parker will be on site grilling hamburgers and hot dogs. Chips, drinks and popsicles will also be provided.

But the fun doesn't stop on

Sunday. The most popular and largest event the MPD sponsors is the popular Trunk or Treat, which is held at Fort Massac State Park in October and draws thousands of trick-or-treaters.

And, the department's van will be heading out to the schools this fall as part of the Stuff the Van program. All food or monetary donations to the Stuff the Van are given to the Weekend Blessings program, which is operated through First United Methodist Church and aimed at providing meals to children in the community.

Donations of food or money may also be dropped off at the police station, located at 1020 Broadway, throughout the year.

Any individual or civic organization wanting to make a donation to help the police department help provide activities for the youth in the community may bring cash or checks to the police department during business hours. Individuals should note on the donation if they want it to be designated for the SAFE fund account.



Gearing up for school

Employees of Harrah's Metropolis, along with other local businesses and organizations, once again distributed school supplies to area students on Friday at the Metropolis Community Center. Dental Safari Company, a mobile dentistry company, provided on site dental exams, cleanings, fluoride treatments and sealants, and local hair stylists were donating free haircuts. Almost 500 were in attendance.

—Linda Kennedy | Metropolis Planet

Shimkus tours progress at Massac Theatre

By Michele Longworth
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Congressman John Shimkus got a first-hand look at the progress that has been made at the former Massac Theatre building Tuesday, Aug. 7. Lisa Gower, president of Save the Massac Theatre (STM) organization began Shimkus' tour in Metropolis Mayor Billy McDaniel's office, where she had many photos of

when STM revealed its grand plan and the architectural floor plan designs done by Borgognoni Architects.

Their goal is to fully renovate the Massac featuring a working stage and a movie screen. Changes include a green room, which can be used for private/public parties, an elevator to make the balcony handicap accessible, male and female dressing rooms, bathrooms upstairs and downstairs, and a state of



DAM

Continued from front

Paducah, stated, "We primarily ship coal. It is estimated that 150 million tons of coal is used through the U.S. each year, with an estimated 110 million tons of coal being moved on the rivers. With delays such as these we have experienced at Dam 52, it is hard to meet an ocean-going shipper who is carrying the coal overseas in a timely matter."

"Inefficiency is a killer for us, and the replacement of Dams 52 and 53 will hopefully stop the delays," Dan Mecklenborg, senior vice president and chief legal officer of Ingram Barge Co., headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee explained.

"On a good day, it takes one hour to lock through Dam 52. It takes one and one-half hours to lock

through Dam 53. Once Olmsted is operational, it will take only 30 minutes. Agricultural, chemical and the manufacturing industry is seeking the reliability that the barge industry can provide once the dam is complete with no expected delays."

Locally, these delays have hurt the bottom line at Big John Supermarket in Metropolis.

Big John once provided grocery needs to MidSouth Towing and TECO Barge Line, which were located in Metropolis, before they were sold to Ingram Barge Line.

"Up to just a eight years ago, MidSouth Towing generated 5 percent of their overall sales for the past 20 years," said Mike Pool, Big John owner, "However, due to mergers

and Ingram moving their vessels to the south and not using the Ohio due to delays at the locks and dams, we haven't placed an order for them in eight months to a year."

Pool hopes with the opening of Olmsted Dam, river traffic will increase along the Ohio, and barge companies will be contacting the store for their grocery needs.

With completion of Olmsted Dam this year, over a half-million inland waterway system-related jobs will not be in jeopardy, and, in fact, according to the National Waterways Foundation, more jobs are expected.

"Nationally, the economic impact of expediting construction to complete a group of Congressionally-authorized lock modernization projects in 10 years versus the current estimate of over 20 years would be the creation of 15,000 new jobs with an annual economic return of \$800 million."

Olmsted Construction

When the Olmsted Locks and Dam project was authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 1988, the region was buzzing with excitement with the promise of well-paying construction jobs coming to the region. And, for the most part, the prediction was right.

Congress authorized the project for a cost of \$775 million and a completion date of 2013. It was later reassessed with a total completion date of 2026 and a cost of \$3.1 billion.

However, at a media tour provided by the Corps on July 25, U.S. Army Col. Antoinette Gant, district commander for U.S. Corps of Engineers Louisville District, stated the project was "under budget and ahead of schedule."

Olmsted Dam is scheduled to open by October, with the possibility of Dam 52 and 53 being removed as early as next year, under budget by \$325 million.

"This is the most important project in the nation right now," stated Gant. "It is truly a partnership to get this project done, with construction intensified over the last five years to get the dam completed."

But from 1988 until 2013, the project came

more and more complicated, due to change in construction design and funding.

Mick Awbrey, Army Corps deputy chief for the Olmsted division, said, "It was decided in the late 1990s to do 'wet or in-the-wet' construction, which was an innovative method of constructing a dam because of minimal impact to the river. This process was the preferred design instead of a cofferdam method, which could cause problems with dangerous water levels for barge traffic along the river."

Similar to Legos, Awbrey explained, wet construction meant constructing massive concrete building components or shells and lowering them into place in the Ohio River, using GPS and sonar to place them within a quarter of an inch of their target location, 30-feet into the Ohio River. Forty-three shells were built, taking six to eight months to build. They weigh between 400 and 500 tons.

"This new innovative method of constructing a dam in the wet is what increased the price of the dam," said Awbrey. "We tried to be transparent with everything we did. We realized the funding stream of a 50-50 split from the General Treasury and the Inland Waterways Trust Fund that Congress had approved for the project was not adequate and very limited. The split was later changed to 75-25 in 2014 only, and later to 85-15, which opened up the funding ability to greatly accelerate the project."

The acceleration of the project brought more and more jobs to Olmsted. "At its peak, the project employed 675 local union craftsmen, 100 administrative staff and 50 Corps of Engineers members," Kevin McLaughlin, senior project director for Olmsted contractor AECOM, said. "And, safety has always been the top priority from Day One. Currently, the project has 11 safety professionals on-site during the day shift, with seven on staff at night."

Sadly, with a project this large, one fatality was reported in 2012. A news release issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on June 2, 2012, stated Robert R. Billingsley, 54,

of Vienna, was securing barges on Friday, June 1 when he died at the scene at about 1:35 p.m. Billingsley was working construction on the project.

According to McLaughlin, employees use a "buddy system" and each one has a GPS tracking monitor on them if a worker is notified as missing.

Agriculture Industry

Tammie Obermark, manager of the Massac County Farm Bureau, and Rollo Burnett, a Massac County farmer, both agree they are excited to hear the completion is near for Olmsted Dam, but with the promise of no delays along the Ohio River may come at a cost to local farmers.

"Our concern is the new low water level," said Obermark. "We have been told the new level will hit the base of the concrete at the Fort Massac historic site."

"If that is so, we are concerned the pool will now back into tributaries and, if we experience flash floods like those that have occurred in the area over these past few weeks, how fast will our fields drain and dry out for our farmers," questioned Obermark.

Burnett, who farms 5500 total acres, with 1500 of those acres being low-lying farmland, shares Obermark's concerns.

"The completion of the dam is certainly a plus for the river industry and will be a great thing to get commodities down the river, I just hope it [Olmsted Dam] does not fail. I feel the completion of Olmsted Dam and the removal of Dam 52 and 53 is going to have a negative impact on agriculture production in the region," Burnett stated.

A former commissioner for the Cache River Drainage District, Burnett feels area farmers who farm in low-lying areas and who are members of the drainage district, will be impacted on the new low water levels due to restrictions in the water flow. "By this increase in the pool, farmland along U.S. 45 near Mermet to the Reevesville/Big Bay area, which is part of the Cache River Watershed, will be more prone to flooding following flash floods because the waters will not

be able to drain as fast from the farm land, causing more crop damage."

Ken Lamkin, chief of the hydrology and hydraulic design section for the Louisville Regional District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, feels the levels will have minimal impact to the Metropolis riverfront.

"When flows get low enough in the Ohio River, normally Brookport Dam 52 is raised first to maintain minimum water elevation 302 upstream of that dam. If flows continue to decrease, the dam at Grand Chain Dam 53 is raised in order to maintain a minimum water level of 290 between Dams 53 and 52," explained Lamkin. "The process works in reverse such that when flows are sufficient to sustain or exceed the elevations above, the respective dams are lowered to facilitate navigation on the river, avoiding delays associated with using the locks to get past the dam."

"The difference you will notice at Metropolis once Olmsted Lock and Dam is fully operational is that river levels will not be allowed to fall to the minimum level maintained by Grand Chain Dam 53 during very low flows. The new dam at Olmsted will be raised to prevent water levels from dropping below elevation 300 at Paducah and elevation 302 immediately downstream of Smithland Lock and Dam."

"As Metropolis is very close to Paducah, it should be expected that during low flows when the dam at Olmsted is in the raised position, the minimum water level will be only be slightly lower than the minimum target elevation of 300 at Paducah, and not be allowed to drop to the 290 elevation previously maintained by Dam 53," added Lamkin.

Business owners and farmers alike will be eyeing the riverfront over the next 12 to 24 months to see if the new Olmsted Dam has been a blessing — bringing in more jobs and heavier traffic along the Ohio River; or a curse — destroying valuable farmland in southernmost Illinois.

Only time will tell.

Carrying the Load

One Barge Tow Carries the Load of Hundreds of Rail Cars and More Than a Thousand Trucks

- One 15' Barge Tow
- 216 Rail Cars + 6 Locomotives
- 1,050 Large Semi Tractor Trailers

County building permits announced

Staff Report

Gary Hamm, Massac County Supervisor of Assessment, recently released July's building permits.

- They are:
- July 16 — Marvin Riepe of Midway Road

for the purpose of a 48x22 grain bin.

- July 23 — Carl and Louis Blanchard of 4061 Joppa Bypass for the purpose of pole barn with concrete.

- July 25 — Adam Leshoo of Boaz Road for the purpose of pole barn with

concrete.

- July 26 — Rick Waddell of 3220 Driftwood for the purpose of a pole barn.

- July 31 — Billy Neihoff of 26 Neihoff Lane for the purpose of pole barn.

Remember, children are in school...

DRIVE CAFE

NOTICE OF SALE
Of Property Owned by the City of Metropolis
And Invitation to Bid Thereon

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT the City Council of the City of Metropolis will receive sealed bids for the purchase, under the successful bid, of the fee simple interest in the following real property: Lot A of Block 7 of McBane's Addition to the City of Metropolis, Illinois per Plat recorded on May 21, 2018 at Hanger 590 in the Office of the Recorder for Massac County, Illinois (commonly known as 1811 and 1815 Baynes Street, Metropolis, Illinois). PIN 08-02-207-006 and 08-02-207-007, which property is generally located in the at 1811 and 1815 Baynes in the City of Metropolis and is currently improved with a single-family residence.

Bids for the purchase of the aforesaid interest in the above-described property are hereby invited and will be received by the City Clerk at 106 West 5th Street, Metropolis, Illinois between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. until August 27, 2018, at 3:30 o'clock P.M.; the date for the opening of bids. Said bids shall be addressed to: City of Metropolis, Attn: Ian Adams, City Clerk, 106 W. 5th Street, Metropolis, IL 62960

HUGHES MARKET

Sale for August 7th to 7th

270.488.3556

7-BONE STEAK	\$6.99 LB.
PORTERHOUSE STEAK	\$11.99 LB.
4-BONE BONE STEAK	\$7.99 LB.
3 PORTERHOUSE STEAK	\$11.99 LB.
WHOLE NEW YORK STIMP LOINS	\$6.99 LB.
STUFFED GARLIC STEAK	\$6.99 LB.
7-7P ROAST	\$5.49 LB.

METROPOLIS PLANET



Serving Massac County, Illinois since 1865

Vol. 154 No. 34

Thursday, August 16, 2018

\$1.25

Motion granted for special prosecutor for Williams-Watson

By Michele Longworth
Planet Reporter
reporter@metropolisplanet.com

not currently on a jury docket. Patrick Windhorst, Massac County State's Attorney, informed the court the state has filed a motion requesting a special prosecutor.

In a statement released by Windhorst's office, he says Wil-

See MOTION, page 6A

One person dead following crash south of Joppa Road

Press Release

At approximately 7:15 a.m. on Sunday Aug. 12, a two-vehicle head-on fatality crash occurred on U.S. 45 one mile south of Joppa Road in Massac County, according to Illinois State Police.

Unit one, a 2002 Dodge pickup was traveling southbound on U.S. 45 in the wrong lane and struck unit two, a 2017 Dodge pickup towing a cargo trailer

head-on, which was traveling northbound.

The driver of unit one, Katie Forney, 22, of Metropolis was pronounced deceased and the driver of unit two and one passenger were transported to an area hospital.

According to ISP, the cause of the accident is because of improper lane usage and an investigation continues. All subjects are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Three of the six houses located at Dam 52 in Brookport

Olmsted Locks & Dam

Two dams have been a bottleneck to busiest river for waterway travel

By Areia Hathcock
Planet General Manager
ahathcock@metropolisplanet.com

There is no doubt the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Locks and Dam 52 located in Brookport and Locks and Dam 53 located in Grand Chain have been a major component of the history of the Ohio River and all inland waterway navigation. The Locks and Dams have also been a staple in the landscapes of two southern Illinois towns for almost 90 years.

That landscape will change though by the end of 2019 when the dams are dismantled after Olmsted Locks and Dam down river from Dam 53 becomes operational this October.

The dams were completed in 1928 and 1929 with a lifespan of 15 years after being authorized under the provisions of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1909 and subsequent Acts of June 25 and July 18, 1918. Eighty-nine years later, they are being held together by pieces and the aged, wooden wickets passed their tenure years ago. The instability of the dams can cause barge traffic to back up on each side of the river for up to a week which results in millions of lost dollars in revenue each year for several industries.

According to a public information brochure about

"That dam is a work pit. You have to constantly stay on it. That's the only way to keep it going."

Ron Hall
Retired Lockmaster
Locks and Dams 52 & 53

navigating the lower Ohio river distributed in 1978 by USACE, the Corps took the responsibility of clearing the river by the last quarter of the 19th century to facilitate the steamboat river traffic. It quickly became apparent more than clearing brush would have to be done when the introduction of tows came at the turn of the century resulting in the creation of Locks and Dams 52 and 53.

By the end of 1929, 46 locks and dams were built on the Ohio River from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Cairo. The locks at Brookport and Grand Chain were a single 110 feet wide by 600 feet long. This brought relief to river traffic upstream, but, again, not for long when the American Barge Line in Louisville began operations with 50 steel barges and three diesel towboats moving twice the load as the steam powered ones. The Corps then began plan-

ning a modernization plan to add 19 new 100 foot wide by 1200 foot long to replace the collapsible dams that served as navigation passes. Again, the Corps began the project in Pittsburgh working it's way downstream and, in the late 1960s, Lock and Dam 52 was considered the most serious bottleneck to navigation on the river. Because water levels were low between Dams 52 and 53, Dam 53 did not have to be raised often so traffic congestion wasn't a problem at that time.

The new lock at Locks and Dam 52 was completed in late 1969. By the early 1970s, Locks and Dam 53 began experiencing the congestion problems after traffic was moving faster from Dam 52. A new lock was completed at Dam 53 in 1979.

At that time, according to the USACE brochure, "future advances in navigation will be severely limited if these facilities are not improved. The locks can not be operated as efficiently as other Ohio River locks, require more maintenance and are more susceptible to damage from accidents."

That maintenance and damage has continued to present day as the region awaits the opening of the Olmsted Locks and Dam. In October 1977, the Louisville District of USACE completed an in-

See DAM, page 5A



Sit and relax

The Hope Light Foundation purchased benches for the Hope Light Lighthouse, and they were installed by the City of Metropolis last month. "We feel they will make the site more appealing in the beautiful Dorothy Miller Park, where visitors can rest and relax in a peaceful park setting while watching the river traffic, the working tugboats, the beautiful sunsets while enjoying the lighthouse environment and reflecting on the "Hope Lights" true purpose in the fight against cancer," said Rudy Bess, founding director of The Hope Light Foundation. Bess says bricks that lay at the base of the lighthouse are still available for purchase to honor someone who has fought cancer and survived or in memory of someone who has lost their battle. For more information, contact Bess by phone at 314-323-3626, via email at coastallt@sbglobal.net or visit www.hopelightproject.com.

— Photo submitted

St. John's Church celebrating 125th anniversary Saturday

Press Release

St. John's Church, located at 6201 Waldo Church Rd., will celebrate its 125th anniversary on Saturday.

Attendees are asked to bring a covered dish and a lawn chair.

Games will begin at 4 p.m., with the meal served at 5 p.m. Carriage rides will be offered as well as a time of reminiscing.

Chapel. Rev. Westerman of Zion Evangelical Church near Round Knob was invited to address the assembly on the subject of building a church; however, nothing much resulted from this meeting.

A second meeting was called some time later at Central School. At this meeting it was decided that a church building should be built. After several other meetings, the plans and location were agreed

Henry Kipp, Chairman; William Eckenberg; Louis Moller; Conrad Schaffer; and Frank Homtrop. A 50th anniversary program of the history of the church also listed: William Brugger, Herman Busclas, Louis Moller and Henry Kipp, carpenter.

The first service in the new church was on Dec. 10, 1893.

During the early years, a white frame schoolhouse was construct-



Commissioners, Kovacs discuss transition of internet, phone service

By Michele Longworth
Planet Reporter
reporter@metropolisplanet.com

bill from DJK Link, which had a note from Kovacs stating he would cease operation of his business at the end of September.

Commissioner Jayson Farmer said the county is already getting quotes from Frontier and Comcast.

Farmer said he had a meeting scheduled with Comcast to discuss the county's needs.

"We're actively trying

to look at the options," said Farmer, who said things are more difficult at the present time with the county utilizing two buildings.

Farmer said he or the other commissioners may have to call him to ask questions, and Kovacs said he would be around to assist in the transition.

In other business:

The commissioners held a 20-minute closed

session with Massac County State's Attorney Patrick Windhorst to discuss pending litigation.

The commissioners appointed Board Chairman Jerel Childers to the Designated Zone Organization (DZO).

The DZO will be an advisory board for the Enterprise Zone Administrator Chad Murray visited the board last week saying each of the Enterprise

Zone applicants will designate one member who will serve a three-year term, and all four members will work together to appoint a fifth person to the DZO, which is required to meet once per quarter.

Massac County Treasurer Dana Angelly reported the county's general fund balance — after a payroll of \$114,614 — is \$13,417.

Commissioner Farm-

er discussed with Massac County Highway Engineer Joe Mateševac a complaint of a resident of 6152 Kommer Road concerning the gravel on the road being washboarded.

Farmer asked if the highway department could grade the road.

And, the commissioners approved a motion re-appointing Steve Korte the Cache River Drainage Board.

DAM

Continued from front

investigation of major rehabilitation of the structures outlining certain items that should be completed immediately.

Several options were presented including the creation of two new dams at 52 and 53; the creation of a new dam at Mounds City or Joppa and removal of 52 and 53; removing dams 52 and 53 and leaving the river open from Smithland, Kentucky to Cairo and dredging the river; or rehabilitating the existing dams.

Ultimately the USACE's decision was to create a new dam at Olmsted and approval by Congress was given in 1988. Construction began in 1995.

Lock and Dam 52
The average tow delay to lock through is three hours, 39 minutes and 55 seconds. But when the dam is closed to traffic due to mechanical failures at the dam, the wait to lock through can be much longer.

According to the USACE website, average amount of commodities between 2012 and 2016 that locked through Dam 52 was 65.55 million tons, valued at \$24.367 billion. The top three commod-

ities transported through the lock were chemicals, petroleum and grains. This is the second highest amount of commodities to lock through on the inland waterway in the nation.

Lock and Dam 53

Chemical, petroleum and grain are also the top three commodities transported through the lock at a value of \$24.278 trillion and 59.315 million tons between 2012 and 2016.

The average delay to lock through Dam 53 is three hours, 12 minutes and 49 seconds.

Prior to 2012, the largest amount of commodity locking through the dams was coal.

Design of Dam 52

Both dams are made of wooden wickets which are lowered to the bottom of the river during high water. When river waters are lower, the wickets at Dam 52 are raised to pool the water between Brookport and the Smithland Locks and Dam.

Raising the wickets can take 18 to 24 hours, according to retired Lockmaster Ron Hall, which, again, causes delays to the river traffic. Hall, who retired from the Corps in 2005 served as lockmaster

at Dam 53 from 1990 until 1999 when he then moved to Dam 52 until his retirement.

A crew raises the wickets by boarding a steam powered maneuver boat with a crane specifically designed for lifting the dam. The boat is connected to the lock wall by a wire controlled by operators who keep the crew safe from being swept over the dam.

Of the 487 wickets that must be raised at Dam 52, 312 are pass wickets that can be raised and lowered all at once using hydraulics.

The remaining 175 wickets must be raised manually using a 23-foot steel rod similar to a crochet needle and mate the hook-end with the wicket eye — all while fighting the swift current of the Ohio River. When it is pulled up the river current locks it into place.

"That dam is a work pit," said Hall. "You have to constantly stay on it. That's the only way to keep it going." The dam is raised an average of six to eight times per year, sometimes more depending on the water level.

"You have to constantly be watching the river and the levels and not just

the Ohio but the Kentucky River, Kentucky Lake and Barkley Lake," Hall said.

After the dam is successfully raised, trained divers must dive down to assess and repair the weak areas on the worn-out wickets. The average life of a wicket is 15-20 years and usually 20 new wickets are replaced each year.

According to Hall, on days when the dam isn't being raised dives are taking place daily to check on the condition of the wickets.

Even with replacements though, there have been closures of the dam recently. Just last year, in 2017, there were two significant closures.

From Sept. 6-14, the navigation pass was closed to traffic while the personnel raised the wickets. During the raising, crew members found a five-wicket hole which could not be raised.

According to the USACE, the velocity of the current was too much and crews had to wait until water elevations fell.

The second closure was from Oct. 8-14. Due to the rise in the river, the wicket dam was over topped and the maximum locking elevation was reached.

At one point the queue

to dock through was 51 towboats and vessels carrying 564 barges. Locking operations were able to resume once elevations dropped on Oct. 14.

Another piece of the landscape near the dams are the houses which served as homes to employees. According to USACE, when the locks were originally built, the lockmasters and assistants lived on the reservation or nearby to be close by to work with the wickets during river changes.

According to From the Falls City Engineers: a History of the Louisville District, Corps of Engineers, United States Army, 1970-1983, "In the older days, we had to keep closer tabs on the dam and the crew had to work together to put it up or down," recalled Peter English, who had helped build Lock 46 at Owensboro in 1924 and who had retired as its lockmaster in 1973. "Men off duty had to let us know where they could be reached in case we needed them," he said, adding, "When there were changes in the fluctuations of the pool we had to raise or lower the wickets in a matter of a few hours."

At Locks and Dam 52 at Brookport, there are

six houses, one of which serves as the administrative offices.

According to the Corps, the cottages and houses were constructed between 1924 to 1928 for use as residences for the lockmasters and their assistants. Currently the houses are unutilized.

"The last family moved out in 1992," said Hall. "My family lived in one of the brick houses until 1990.

"I loved my job," he continued. "People think I'm crazy, but I loved my job. I did the best I could at keeping the dam in good shape and sometimes my family took a backseat."

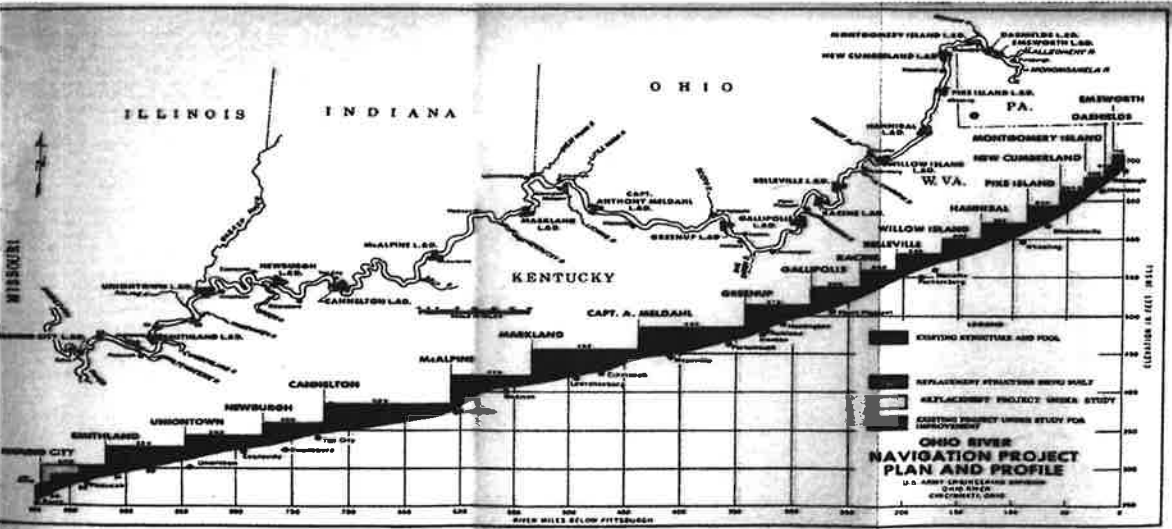
A ribbon cutting for the new Olmsted Locks and Dams will be held Thursday, Aug. 30 at 10 a.m.

The event is open to the public.

Shuttle service to transport attendees to the ceremony site location will be provided from designated parking locations.

The shuttle loop will run continuously from 8 to 9:55 a.m.

According to Col. Antoinette Gant with the Louisville District, Dams 52 and 53 will be dismantled over time, piece by piece, keeping the environment in mind.



A drawing from a United States Army Corps of Engineers brochure in 1978 shows active and proposed locks and dams along the lower Ohio River.

Turn your unused garage into a money-maker!

The city of Metropolis has passed an ordinance to remove junk cars from the city. However some of these junk cars may be diamonds in the rough with owners

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

City of Brookport
City Hall
7704 South US 45 Rd
Brookport, Illinois 62910

Sealed BIDS for the construction of Lining of Existing Culvert Pipe will be received by the City of Brookport at the office of the City of Brookport, 7704 South US 45 Rd, Brookport, IL 62910 until September 17, 2018, 2:00 p.m. (Local Prevailing Time) and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud.

The Contractor to whom an Award shall be made pursuant to this procurement shall be subject to all applica-

METROPOLIS PLANET

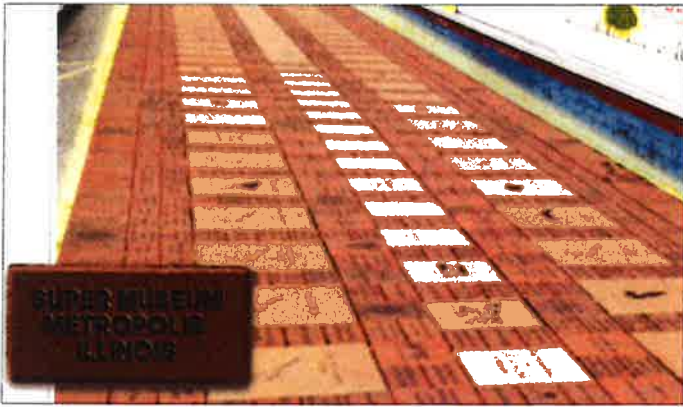
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POSTAL
CUSTOMER

Vol. 154 No. 35

Thursday, August 23, 2018

\$1.25



The Siebert's rendering of the south side sidewalk of the Super Museum and Gift Store. — Photo submitted

Super Museum owners planning a 'super' facelift to the sidewalks

By **Areia Hathcock**
Planet General Manager
ahathcock@metropolisplanet.com

Revitalization on Market Street is still evident on a daily basis, and it will continue with the Super Museum located at 517 Market St. in Metropolis. Adam and Morgan Siebert, owners of the Super Museum, are helping pave the way with a new look to the sidewalks on the north and south sides of their building.

Affectionately called the Ham "Brick" Project after Morgan's father, Jim Hambrick, who founded the Super Museum and Gift Store, orders for personalized red sidewalk bricks are now being taken.

In the spring the Sieberts split

the gift store and the museum, naming the museum a 501(c)3 organization named the Super Museum Historical Foundation. "The purpose of the foundation is the preservation and restoration of the artifacts and building so we can continue for years to come," said Morgan.

That restoration includes expanding the museum area onto the second floor of the building. The first room to be renovated and restored needs a total overhaul including new electrical, flooring, ceiling and central heat and air. The Sieberts estimate the price tag to be between \$30,000-\$40,000 which is where the personalized bricks come into play to raise the funds that are needed.

The second portion of the

upstairs to renovate will be a smaller room specifically for Perry White's office. White is the fictional publisher of the Daily Planet in the Superman movies. There is also an old freight elevator original to the building built in 1940 they plan to restore.

Restoration to the existing museum will include new electrical, flooring and central heat and air as well as putting all collections behind a display.

"We also want to add interactive monitors," Morgan said. We want to make it educational. We want to be more than a roadside attraction."

The Sieberts are continuously redesigning the displays to

See **SUPER**, page 5A

Olmsted Locks & Dam What will the future hold?

By **Michele Longworth**
Planet Reporter
reporter@metropolisplanet.com

Although no one can predict what the future will hold once Olmsted Locks and Dam is operational, the future appears to be brighter for America's inland waterways. Soon Olmsted will provide a more reliable experience for towboats traveling up and downstream on the Ohio River. But its completion just means that it is the beginning in modernizing more locks and dams.

There are 12,000 miles of commercially navigable waterways that move commerce to and from 38 states. Olmsted Locks and Dam is a crucial point on the inland waterways and has been the Waterway Council's number one modernization project.

Future of the inland waterways

The opening of Olmsted to traffic will complete The Waterway Council's number one modernization priority project but not it's mission. "We seek a fully modernized inland waterways transportation system and have 23 more projects authorized by Congress to achieve that goal," said Mike Toohy, Waterways Council, Inc. president and CEO.

Four are under construction — Kentucky Lock, Lower Monongahela Locks, Chickamauga Lock and LaGrange

Lock. "The rest await construction funding by the Congress, and Waterways Council Inc. will continue to advocate for that outcome."

According to Toohy, in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014, Congress adopted a bi-partisan recommendation from then Representative Ed Whitfield of Kentucky and Representative Cheri Bustos of Illinois, known as the WAVE Act.

"That initiative included criteria to rank the authorized priority projects based upon risk of failure and value of the project to the nation. Thus, the next highest priority project is the Lower Monongahela project, followed by Kentucky Lock, Chickamauga Lock and the LaGrange Lock," said Toohy.

According to the Waterways Council Inc., barges are ideal for hauling bulk commodities and moving oversized or overweight equipment including:

- Coal
- Iron & Steel
- Chemicals
- Petroleum
- Grain
- Aggregates
- Project Cargoes
- Intermodal Containers

According to information from the Waterways Council Inc., barges can move one ton of cargo 647 miles on a single gallon of fuel.

See **DAM**, page 5A

Drug Coalition holds annual meeting

By **Michele Longworth**
Planet Reporter
reporter@metropolisplanet.com

During Tuesday evening's Massac County Drug Awareness Coalition (MCDAC) annual meeting, the crowd in attendance learned MCDAC runs 100 percent on volunteers, and there is a need for more to fight against drug use in the community.

Executive Director Holly Windhorst explained MCDAC was formed in 2012 and is continually evolving.

Windhorst recapped MCDAC's activities for the previous year. The

organization partnered with Massac County Sheriff's Department for the prescription drug take back day and last November, a town hall meeting on opioids was held. After the town hall meeting about 80 people received NARCAN training.

MCDAC held a Truth and Consequences event in May at Massac Junior High School, which Windhorst said was successful, and the group intends to make it a yearly event.

Sabrina Beck, MCDAC executive board member, explained during Red Ribbon Week in October, educational packets are taken to the schools and a brief, daily lesson is held.

According to Beck, there are usually speakers from Center Point Recovery Center in Paducah who come to speak to the high school students during that week.

MCDAC Executive Board Member and founder Natalie Quint spoke briefly about the Harrah's School

See **DRUG**, page 5A

Peggy Meadows addresses the Massac County Drug Awareness Coalition board members at the coalition's annual meeting Tuesday.

— Michele Longworth | Metropolis Planet



J-MG School Board addresses school bus issues

• Tentative budget is announced

By **Linda Kennedy**
Planet News Editor
news@metropolisplanet.com

The majority of Monday night's board meeting of Joppa-Maple Grove School District was the discussion of what went wrong on the first day of school and what improvements have been made or need to be made for the betterment of the students.

"The board followed the suggestion of Durham Bus Service to reduce the number of buses to three, but if this is not working out, we will go back to a fourth bus."

Stacey Reames

President, Joppa-Maple Grove School Board

ent of three Joppa students, addressed several issues during the public comment session of the meeting.

"I have several concerns

to the bus routes," said Willenborg. "It just seems there was no forethought before the school year started, from not having staff here before 8 a.m. when

who to contact concerning problems with the buses.

"I understand you have reduced the number of buses from four to three, but having a Pre-K student on the bus for over an hour is just too much," added Willenborg.

Board President Stacey Reames addressed Willenborg concerns, stating, "We flipped end of school times at Maple Grove and the high school, with elementary students being picked up first and then the buses coming to the high school to pick up the high schoolers be-

home. We know it's hard to get into a new routine, but Corey I understand your concerns and I don't want any parent to think we are not concerned about their child's safety.

"The board followed the suggestion of Durham Bus Service to reduce the number of buses to three, but if this is not working out, we will go back to a fourth bus. And, we will certainly look into having a staff member at the school before classes begin to supervise those being dropped off," Reames added. "I realize

DRUG

Continued from front

School Supply giveaway. Quint said this year they pre-packaged the materials so parents and guardians could not bypass the educational materials. MCDAC gave out pencils, erasers and buttons.

Windhorst said MCDAC has been attending the Metropolis Public Library's annual Back to School Bash and while there are other people involved in Project Graduation at the junior high and high school, MCDAC donates money to Project Graduation in effort to assist in providing a drug-free after graduation event for students.

Windhorst shared information about various grants MCDAC receives and re-iterated the organization receives many donations as well, such as an unexpected \$5000 donation at the end of the year from Harrah's Casino.

MCDAC was not successful with its Drug Free Community (DFC) Grant for the 2017 application.

Windhorst said they would consider submitting it again in 2019.

She told those present they need more people to

help read the application to find ways of improving the application so the organization might have a better chance in receiving the grant which is \$125,000.

MCDAC also received a \$1000 Lutheran Synod Grant that was used for Red Ribbon Week.

The organization received funds from the Fifth Annual Golf Scramble, which had 12 teams and 24 hole sponsors.

A first-time trivia event was held in January, which raised \$1378 and plans are to host another trivia night, possibly in November.

The year ending balance for MCDAC was \$17,601, which Windhorst said is double what it was last year. "We're happy with the community support and word is getting out with the kids," said Windhorst.

Massac County Sheriff Ted Holder said he tries to do things that benefits the public, and has learned that when he does that, people usually get behind it.

He said in 2011 he was approached by a 12-year-old Cami Horman about starting a Prescrip-

tion Drug collection point — P2D2 — which would serve as a drop off point for expired or unused prescription medication.

At first, Holder said he was unsure about it. But, he launched that program and twice a year the sheriff's department joins forces with the Drug Enforcement Agency to hold a prescription drug take back day.

According to Holder, since 2011, the sheriff's office has collected 3000 pounds of prescription drugs.

In April, the sheriff's office started a needle amnesty program with the help of MCDAC. The program was launched following numerous calls to the department regarding "dirty needles" being found on playgrounds and in public places.

Holder said he asked some of the inmates to see if having a needle drop off location might work.

Their opinion was it might take some time, but they agreed it would work and drug addicts would use it.

Abby Kaylor and Summer Clapp presented the

idea to the MCDAC members and once they did, the idea snowballed from there. "Everyone saw the need and wanted to help," said Holder.

Johannathan Oberholz, of Southern Illinois Enforcement Group and Illinois National Guard Counterdrug donated an old mailbox and Massac Memorial Hospital arranged for the needles to be picked up, along with the hospital's, with the hospital paying for the cost of the needles to be disposed of.

Holder said since Points Drop was started, three full boxes of needles have been collected. Twenty three of those were "dirty needles."

The box is under surveillance 24 hours a day, and a sign on the box clearly states needles can be dropped with no questions asked.

"Yes, it is working, thanks to all of you," said Holder.

One resident of Haven House, Peggy Meadows, asked who to contact when there is known drug activity occurring and asked if a needle drop box could be located near Haven

House. Holder and Metropolis Public Safety Director Harry Masse stressed the importance of having control of the needle drop box and the need to have it under surveillance.

After a recent post on social media showing needles found under the railroad bridge word spread that Metropolis was "ram-pant" with dirty needles.

According to Masse, the Metropolis Police Department had only 12 reports of dirty needles all year, and of those 12 incidents, 11 of them involved officers picking up the dirty needles.

Masse said if anyone within the city limits finds dirty needles, to call the police department and someone would come to pick up the needles.

He also called prescription drugs, such as opioids, a "seaway," to other drugs, such as heroin.

He did not know what meth was until he moved to southern Illinois in 2005. "It's worse than crack," he said.

Masse said that the majority of theft cases, domestic violence calls,

House. Holder and Metropolis Public Safety Director Harry Masse stressed the importance of having control of the needle drop box and the need to have it under surveillance.

"The message has to get out that we can't tolerate that," said Masse, pointing out he only has two officers working the whole town for each shift and if there were a big vehicle accident or major incident, that could prevent officers from being on the streets.

"Community involvement has got to get better," said Masse, who encouraged everyone if they see something, they should say something.

"If people want to help in the fight against drugs, they can join our coalition and volunteer to help at our events. There is no instant solution to stopping drug use, and we are doing our best to discourage young people from using drugs to begin with. Another way is to keep reporting suspicious activity to law enforcement. Also, dispose of any old prescriptions in the P2D2 box at the Sheriff's Department so that those drugs don't end up in the wrong hands," said Windhorst.

DAM

Continued from front

Faster travel

Barges travel around five miles per hour, but that can vary depending on whether the barge is traveling up stream or down stream. While barge traffic is slow to begin with, having to wait to lock through Dam 52 at Brookport can make it all the more slower.

Brookport Dam has 487 wickets and the new Olmsted Dam will have 140 — fewer wickets that will speed up the process of raising or lowering the dam.

At Brookport, the Corps estimates to raise the dam, it could take workers 72 to 96 hours. Whereas at Olmsted, the time involved in raising the dam may take as little as 24 hours up to 36 hours.

Louisville District Commander Antoinette Gant said the Corps has deemed October 2018 as the time Olmsted to be operational. "As it stand right now, we are looking to be able to make good on that promise," she said.

The only thing that could cause problems in that would be if there were difficulties with the wicket lifter. She said even from the beginning there have been some glitches, but contractors working to make sure the glitches are being taken out.

"We understand and know the reliability of what Olmsted means to the Ohio and lower Ohio River and we want to make sure we are doing our part ... that as lock and dam 52 and 53 are aging out and not capable of being utilized, Olmsted Dam is ready to go and operational," said Gant.

Future of Dams 52 and 53

The biggest concern to many of the employees working at the dams is whether or not they will have a job when Olmsted opens. According to the Corps, when fully staffed there were 20 employees

14 employees at Locks and Dam 53. All employees from Dams 52 and 53 are in the process of being transferred to Olmsted Locks and Dam.

As for the future of Dams 52 and 53, they will eventually be out of service completely by 2020. But, according to the Corps, a final decision has not been made on the removal method.

"We are tentatively planning on using explosives at 53. Blasting will be used for fracturing the concrete caps in the cells but not for total demolition. Otherwise, both 52 and 53 will be removed using equipment to remove the dams," said Todd Hornback, public affairs officer from the Louisville District office.

When Smithland Locks and Dam was completed, that eliminated the need for Dams 50 and 51. The Dam in Golconda was referred to as Lock and Dam 51.

Dams 52 and 53 must be maintained until Olmsted is holding pool and fully functioning properly.

According to the Corps, there will be a contract letting this fall for the start of the demolition of Dam 52 and is expected to be awarded this winter.

This passage from The Falls City Engineers A History of the Louisville District Corp of Engineers United States Army 1970-1983: "After the fixed weir at Smithland was completed, the eleven Tainter gates were lowered against their sills between the piers on Sept. 22, 1980, closing river flow and raising the new pool. It went up at controlled rates by stages to permit the demolition and removal of old Locks and Dams 50 and 51. After parts of those structures that might be used were salvaged, the contractors drilled holes into the concrete of the locks and dams, inserted explosives, and blasted the old structures into fragments

of the two locks and dams ended an era on the Ohio River, because they were the last dams on the Ohio with only single 600-foot locks to handle traffic."

Hornback said the lock chambers and dam will be removed, and the river will be returned to open river. "As far as land and buildings, the land and any buildings will be turned over to General Services Administration, known as (GSA), for disposal. Funds received through this process will be returned to the Treasury. We do not have a schedule at this time for the disposal of the property," explained Hornback.

In Golconda, when the Corps vacated the property, the four houses had been left in a state of deterioration from lack of maintenance.

In 1998, the City of Golconda took ownership of the property and restored it to its original design.

The city and Main Street Golconda Inc. entered into an agreement to renovate the four houses.

In 2002 the site was leased to Dam 51 LLS, a volunteer organization, which maintains the homes and offers them for rental to the public.

At Locks and Dam 52 at Brookport, there are six houses, one of which has served as the administrative offices.

According to the Corps, the cottages and houses were constructed between 1924 to 1928 for use as residences for the lockmasters and their assistants. Currently the houses are unutilized.

As the Olmsted project transitions from a construction site to becoming operational,

Future of the water levels

According to the Corps, the Olmsted Locks and Dam, as with all locks and dams on the Ohio River, is not a flood control or flood

not have impacts on flooding.

The Olmsted Locks and Dam assists with holding a pool for navigation purposes. The project is designed to only hold back-water during low periods of the Ohio River when, if not for the locks and dam system, river traffic would cease due to low levels.

When the river rises, the lock chambers are not needed, the wickets are lowered and river traffic will continue through the open river.

In addition, the Corps' locks and dams can only affect river levels a few feet during low river levels, which will not cause flooding. When river flooding occurs, these projects are also at the mercy of the flood.

Olmsted's pool is expected to be approximately 300 feet. Normal spring flows routinely get to 330 feet.

According to Hornback, when flows get low enough in the Ohio River, normally the dam at Locks and Dam 52 is raised first to maintain minimum water elevation 302 upstream of that dam.

If flows continue to decrease, the dam at Locks and Dam 53 is raised to maintain a minimum water level of 290 between Locks and Dam 53 and Locks and Dam 52.

The process works in reverse when flows are sufficient to sustain or exceed the elevations above, the respective dams are lowered to facilitate navigation on the river, avoiding delays associated with using the locks to get past the dam.

The difference at Metropolis once Olmsted Locks and Dam is fully operational is that river levels will not be allowed to fall to the minimum level maintained by Locks and Dam 53 during very low flows. The new dam at Olmsted Locks and Dam will be raised to prevent water levels from

300 at Paducah and elevation 302 immediately downstream of Smithland Locks and Dam.

As Metropolis is very close to Paducah, it should be expected that during low flows when the dam at Olmsted Locks and Dam is in the raised position, the minimum water level will be slightly lower than the minimum target elevation of 300 at Paducah, and not be allowed to drop to the 290 elevation previously maintained by Locks and Dam 53.

While the change in the river levels up stream from Olmsted is something farmers in particular will be keeping a close eye on, the river industry will be eyeing the impact Olmsted could have on future business, according to Matt Ricketts, president and CEO of Crouse Corp.

Ricketts said the opening of Olmsted Locks and Dam would impact anyone who operates on the Ohio River. He said Dam 52 has been a critical area, as it is the last lock to go through before traveling to the lower Mississippi River. He said it is estimated that between 90 and 100 million tons of commodities pass through that area.

Ricketts said Crouse was among many river industry companies that were affected by the 2017 unscheduled shutdown of Dam 52.

Although he did not have specific numbers, he said during the closure of Dam 52, there were 50 to 60 towboats waiting to lock through up or down stream.

The new locks and dam will cut down on delays by a significant amount.

According to Ricketts, he has seen industry studies, which indicate a significant increase in traffic and the amount of tonnage long-term — in the 2035 to 2040 timeline.

"We're excited Olmsted is coming to comple-

a smooth transition," said Ricketts, who said the increased reliability in river traffic might result in increased business to the river industry as a whole. "We shall see," said Ricketts.

"It's [the inland waterways] the most efficient way to handle increased traffic," said Ricketts, noting the nation's interstates and highways are already congested.

Ricketts said Olmsted was the longest to build and cost more money than originally anticipated, but in 2004, when changes were made in the cost sharing of the Olmsted project and a revised budget was released, the project now will still be completed under that revised budget.

He said the lessons and concepts learned in the construction of Olmsted would be applied to future locks and dam project.

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