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**Thick ice on Lake Pepin stalls
early opening of navigation season**



Photo by Lisa Lund

A little fishing village sprung up on the thick ice on the Mississippi River at Lake Pepin near one of the sampling points this winter. Al Van Guilder, mechanical dredge inspector (left), is on the ice with an auger. Kevin Ressie, a licensed airboat operator, is in the boat.

Command Corner by Col. Jon Christensen

Freezing to flooding, exercise caution for water's altered states in spring



Christensen

by Jeff Pfannes, safety office,
on behalf of Col. Jon Christensen
St. Paul District Commander

Many of us eagerly welcomed the official return of spring and what we hope will be warm, sunny weather. Springtime conditions are very changeable, however, so we need to be prepared.

Watch for icy roads caused by thawing snow, spring rains or mist — especially in shaded areas, on bridges and on overpasses. Remember that these

areas freeze first.

Springtime showers greatly reduce driving visibility. Help improve your visibility by replacing deteriorated windshield wipers. When driving in rain, use the wipers and low-beam headlights. Slow down. If you can't see, pull off the road as far as possible and turn on your hazard lights.

Keep tires properly inflated. This helps fuel efficiency and reduces damage to tires when you run over those inevitable potholes. It's actually safer to roll gently over a pothole you can't avoid, than to brake harshly and lock up your wheels. If steering feels different after hitting a pothole, have your car's alignment checked soon.

Monitor local weather forecasts and road reports after heavy rains, because springtime runoff may cause hazardous, localized flooding.

Be extra alert for children playing in streets. Warm weather and later daylight hours encourage them to be outside more. They may not think about traffic hazards, but we should.

Thawing temperatures can make ice fishing, ice skating and snowmobiling more dangerous. Exercise extra caution. Don't take chances with your life. Practice water safety when swimming, boating and fishing. Consider safe-boating courses offered by the Coast Guard Auxiliary or Power Squadron. [The St. Paul District offers safe-boating courses to employees with duties related to boating and navigation.]

Be sure to safely enjoy our hotter, brighter spring days. Use sunscreen and limit exposure time. Apply insect repellents when appropriate. Learn how to recognize and avoid poisonous, outdoor plants.

If you have a home swimming pool, remove the top cover completely before use. Supervise small children. Make sure that everyone dives safely to avoid hitting the bottom or sides. Construct a fence around the area.

Properly maintain lawn and garden equipment for safe operation. Check outdoor toys and play equipment for broken or missing parts. Inspect yard fences and gates for the safety of small children and pets.



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Crosscurrents

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Jane Groth



Melissa Gulan



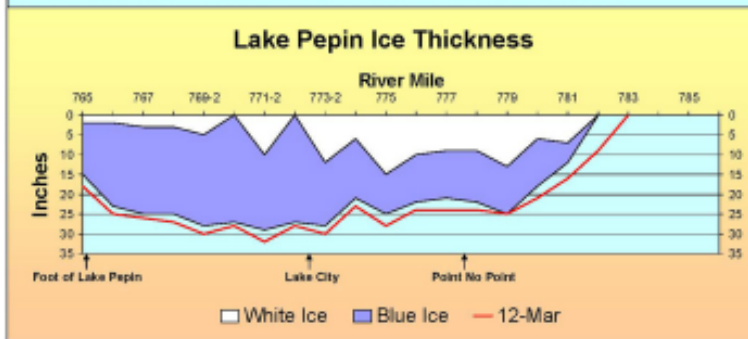
Don Powell



Rich Schueneman

Ice Thickness - UMR Lake Pepin Year 2008													
River Mile	10-Mar			13-Mar			5-Mar			22-Feb			
	Blue Ice	White Ice	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
765	13	2	15	18	16	17							
768	21	2	23	25	24	23							
767	22	3	25	26	25	24							
768	22	3	25	27	26	25							
769	16	12	28	29	28	26							
769-2	23	5	28	28	28	26							
771	27	3	30	31	30	27							
771-2	26	3	29	27	26	24							
771-3	19	10	29	32	31	29							
772	27	0	27	28	28	24							
773	8	16	24	26	27	25							
773-2	16	12	28	28	28	27							
774	16	6	21	23	24	19							
775	16	16	32	33	34	29							
778	12	10	22	24	24	20							
777	12	9	21	24	23	19							
778	12	9	21	24	23	19							
779	12	13	25	26	26	24							
780	12	8	20	21	21	17							
781	9	7	16	18	18	15							
782	open		open	9	11	11							
783	open		open	open	open	9							
784													
785													

Data is listed in inches. Measurements are taken weekly, or as needed beginning in mid-February. Frequency may be increased if appropriate. Measurement locations are duplicated using GPS. Weather conditions can sometimes result in unexpected readings. Blue ice, sometimes called black ice is clear and solid. White ice or snow ice has air bubbles. Together they equal the total ice thickness.
** Three additional readings (769-2, 771-2, 773-2) were taken in a straight line, closer to the WI shoreline as requested by the law industry.



Graphic above shows ice data from the St. Paul District web site.

- 7-8 News and Notes: District public affairs effort wins Kassner awards; promotions, newcomers, retirements, retiree news and more.

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Survey crew weaves around ice fishermen on Lake Pepin this winter

By Lisa Lund

A survey crew from the channels and harbors unit in Fountain City, Wis., starts their ice surveys on Lake Pepin on the Mississippi River every February. The survey data on the ice thickness is used by the towing industry so shippers can gauge the opening of navigation through the lake.

This year, the surveys started Feb. 22, when the crew launched an airboat for the trip from the lower part of the lake near Camp Lacupolis, Minn., to the upper part of the lake near Frontenac, Minn.

This year seemed to be a little unusual on the lake – there was a small village of fishermen on the ice. Because of the extreme cold weather this past winter, the ice has been thick enough for vehicles to drive on the ice into March. Some of these fishermen enter from Maiden Rock, Wis., and travel across the lake. Others drive on at Frontenac.

Now, the crew exercises caution to avoid the fishermen and their ice shacks. When they stop to measure the ice thickness near the fisherman, they hear more than just the airboat engine winding down and the crinkly noise of their frozen-stiff float suits. The whine of ice augers drilling holes and voices of fishermen telling their fish tales break the silence on a still day.

As the survey crew ran the airboat upstream, they stopped to sample the ice at 22 locations, measuring every mile for 18 miles, from river mile 765 to 783, and select points in-between. The ice at mile 771 measured 32 inches thick on March 12.

As the weather warms up, the vehicles, ice shacks and fishermen will start to disappear from the lake. Eventually the ice will be thin enough for the tow boats to pass through the lake and head farther north to inaugurate the navigation season on the Upper Mississippi River. For updates, see <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil> and click on Lake Pepin Ice Measurements.



Photo by Mark Scholl

Steve Tapp, operations manager, Fountain City, Wis., took his first trip in the airboat on the Lake Pepin ice, March 19.



Photo by Mark Scholl

Kevin Ressie (left), boat operator, drilled a hole with an ice auger for Steve Tapp, operations manager, to measure the ice on Lake Pepin on the Mississippi River.

Civil Servants of the Year 2008

Jane Groth



Articles by Shannon Bauer

Position Title: Head lock and dam operator, Lock and Dam 6, Trempealeau, Wis.

Duties: Serve as shift operator in full charge of operation and maintenance of the lock facilities during work shifts when the lockmaster and lock leader are not on site. Responsible for directing and performing lock operations in accordance with the rules, regulations and prescribed procedures for the safe and efficient navigation of all river craft during the navigation season. Responsible for the operation of roller and tainter gate machinery for control of pool water level pursuant to instructions from the water control branch.

Total Years with St. Paul District: Nine years.

Total Years with Federal Government: 10 years.

Education: La Crescent High School, La Crescent, Minn., 1985.

Volunteer and Community Service: First female commander of the La Crescent American Legion Post 595 (2007); YMCA event volunteer; Human Society pet therapy volunteer at hospitals, veterans home and assisted living homes; and Multiple Sclerosis Society annual walk/run event volunteer.

Hobbies: Spending quality time with her daughter and family, staying fit by running in local 5k and 10k events, being able to give back to her community through volunteering

Residence: Onalaska, Wis.

Family: One daughter, 5 years old.

Comments: “This is quite an unexpected honor to receive this award! I am grateful to my supervisor and co-workers who have supported me throughout my career with the Corps of Engineers.”

Melissa Gulan



Position Title: Eastern area engineer, Eastern Area Office, Winona, Minn.

Duties: Construction engineer and administrative contracting officer.

Total Years with St. Paul District/Corps of Engineers: 31 years.

Total Years with federal government: 31 years

Education: BS in civil engineering from Purdue University.

Hobbies: Quilting and gardening.

Residence: Winona, Minn.

Family: Husband and four grown (out of the house!) children

Comments: “What an unexpected honor to be selected. It is a reflection on the folks that I have been lucky enough to work within and outside the Corps and in particular the great staff at the Eastern Area Office.”

Awards picnic slated for June 12 at Eau Galle

Mark your calendars for the Summer Awards Ceremony and Family Picnic on Thursday, June 12. This year the event will be held at Eau Galle Recreation Area, Spring Valley, Wis.

Co-chairs this year are Ryan Price, engineering and construction, and John Murphy, engineering and construction.

Stay tuned for more information.

Civil Servants of the Year 2008

Don Powell



Position Title: Civil engineer/project manager, district office, St. Paul.

Duties: Manage the Environmental Management Program for the St. Paul District (1986 to present), including budgeting and project scheduling, selection, planning, design, construction, dedications, site visits and briefings. Coordinate work efforts with other federal and state agencies. Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on flood damage and special projects. Plan district engineer transition activities.

Total Years with St. Paul District/Corps of Engineers: 35 years.

Total Years with Federal Government: 37 years.

Previous Positions/Employment: Study manager for flood damage reduction studies (1978-1986); project manager for dredged material disposal program on Lake Superior (1974-1978); geotechnical engineer (1973-1975); and design work on refuge and hatchery facilities for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1971-1973).

Education: B.S. in Civil Engineering from University of Minnesota

Hobbies: Photography, domestic travel, watching sports, grandkids, do-it-yourself home improvement projects

Residence: Blaine, Minn. (29 years)

Family: Wife, 6 children (4 boys, 2 girls) plus their spouses, 16 grandkids

Comments: "I am honored to receive the Civil Servant of the Year award. My thanks go to the high caliber team members (both Corps and other agencies) that I have been privileged to work with over the years, making it possible for me to receive this award and special recognition."

Rich Schueneman



Position Title: Resource manager, Lake Ashtabula, Valley City, N.D.

Duties: Manage two multiple use water resource projects, including Baldhill Dam/Lake Ashtabula near Valley City, N.D., and Home Dam and Lake near Park River, N.D., with emphasis in the areas of flood control, water supply, recreation and land management activities.

Total Years with St. Paul District/Corps of Engineers: 15 years.

Total Years with Federal Government: 15 years.

Previous Positions/Employment: Director for Valley City Parks and Recreation District (1994-2000); elected city commissioner for the City of Valley City, N.D., two-terms (1994-2002); park ranger for the Corps of Engineers at Baldhill Dam/Lake Ashtabula (1989-1994).

Education: B.S. in resource management, University of Minnesota – Mankato

Hobbies: Hunting, golf, and spending time with my family.

Residence: Valley City, N.D.

Family: Wife of 15 years, two daughters, ages 7 and 10.

Comments: "I am fortunate to have great support from many different professional, community and personal levels. I share this recognition with all the other dedicated employees and volunteers that I work with everyday."

News and Notes

Announcements

District public affairs effort wins Kassner awards

Two St. Paul District personnel won Corps-wide recognition for outstanding writing in the 2007 Herbert A. Kassner journalism competition. **Lisa Lund**, channels and harbors, placed first in the stringer/contractor (i.e. non public affairs) writing category. Her award winning story, “Hydrographic survey crew maps river channel in wake of bridge collapse,” was published in the August-September 2007 issue of *Crosscurrents*. **Shannon Bauer**, public affairs, received second place in the feature writing category. Her story “Memories linger of disaster at East Grand Forks/Grand Forks” was published in the October-November 2007 issue of *Crosscurrents*.

The Corps’ competition is named for Herbert A. Kassner, the public affairs officer for the former Lower Mississippi Valley Division until his death in 1988. The competition recognizes the military and civilian employee print and broadcast practitioners for journalistic excellence in furthering the objectives of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers internal communication program.

Tammy Wick, a previous Kassner award winner and administrative assistant at the Mississippi River Headwaters Office, Grand Rapids, Minn., won

the annual National Public Lands Day Employee Photo Contest with her photo of Colorado National Monument. The photo can be seen at publiclandsday.org/involved/photo_contest.htm. NPLD Web site posted the photo March 19.

Promotions

Daniel Cottrell was selected as the channel maintenance coordinator in the channels and harbors project office, Fountain

City, Wis. He will leave his current position as Park Ranger at Blackhawk Park near DeSoto, Wis., and begin working for at the service base in Fountain City, Wis. in May.

Newcomers

Jane DeLorme, engineering, district office, effective Jan. 14.

Jesse VonGroven, student, channels and harbors, Fountain City, Wis., effective Jan. 7.



Photo courtesy Kurt Brownell



Photo courtesy Scott Tichy

Brownell, Tichy stay fit with cross-country skiing

Kurt Brownell (left), natural resource specialist, LaCrescent, Minn., and Scott Tichy, park ranger at the Lake Ashtabula Project, N.D., both kept fit and enjoyed winter outdoors at the American Birkebeiner, Hayward, Wis., Feb. 23. More than 9,000 skiers participated in the 35th anniversary events from Feb. 21-23, according to the Birkebeiner web site. Brownell skied the 53-kilometer classic race while Tichy skied the 51-kilometer freestyle competition. Both courses wind through forest, go over hilly terrain and finish in town. The freestyle is about 32 miles, the classic about 33. Tichy’s first Birkebeiner was 1992, and Brownell’s first was 1991. Tichy runs half-marathons during the off season.

Retirements

Edward Bankston, attorney in office of counsel at the district office, effective Jan. 3, with more than 34 years federal service.

Richard Beatty, biologist in project management at the district office, effective Jan. 3, with more than 33 years federal service.

Wayne Gustafson, maintenance worker at Lac Qui Parle in Watson, Minn., effective Jan. 3, with more than 27 years federal service.

Gary Jones, information management at the district office, effective Feb. 2, with more than 41 years federal service.

Dave Kitzman, equipment mechanic at Lock and Dam 5 near Winona, Minn., effective Dec. 31,

with more than 25 years federal service.

James Lumaye, park ranger at Pokegama Lake in Grand Rapids, Minn., effective Dec. 31, with more than 22 years federal service.

Steve Moore, lock operator at Lock and Dam 10 in Guttenberg, Iowa, effective Dec. 31, with more than 20 years federal service.

Ronnie Naber, lock operator at Lock and Dam 7 in La Crescent, Minn., effective Dec. 31, with more than 24 years federal service.

Michael O’Keefe, environmental engineer with regulatory branch in Stevens Point, Wis., effective Jan. 3, with

more than 30 years federal service.

Marianne Price, equal opportunity officer at the district office, effective Jan. 3, with more than 37 years federal service.

Dave Robertson, information management at the district office, effective March 3, with more than 31 years federal service.

James Stadelman, program manager in project management at the district office, effective Jan. 3, with more than 32 years federal service.

Frank Star, recreation planner in operations at the district office, effective Jan. 3, with more than 35 years federal service.

James Weinzierl, biologist with regulatory branch at the district office, effective Jan. 3, with more than 28 years federal service.

Gerald Wood, lock operator at Lock and Dam 6 in Trempealeau, Wis., effective March 2, with more than 32 years federal service.

Retiree news

The Montana State University heavy civil construction engineering team, coached by **Dean Peterson**, retired St. Paul District locks and dams project chief, placed second at the 2008 Associated General Contractor’s Associated Schools of Construction national competition, held in Las Vegas, March 8-10. The heavy civil team qualified for the national competition by winning the Region 6 competition against 11 other universities from the Rocky Mountain States.

Peterson is an assistant professor of civil engineering at Montana State University, Bozeman.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo

Left, Kevin Baumgard, assistant chief of operations, and **Tammy Wick**, an administrative assistant at the headwaters project office, represented the district at the Fond du Lac Community College tribal and career fair, Cloquet, Minn., March 19. The school expected 700 students from 15 area schools, mostly high school, to attend.



Postcard from Afghanistan

Things are going good. I've been taking training courses at the Defense Acquisition University. We have most of the projects going again. Been going out on some missions and the crops are growing, but we really need rain. Hope everything's going well there. You guys take care.

Dan Boone, construction representative
P.S. I received the Christmas package (at right). It was great. Thanks.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo
[Dan Boone's home station is Lock and Dam 8, Genoa, Wis.]