

Our Mission

To be the leading consultant solving the engineering or land surveying problems unique to rural-urban communities and their enterprise—government, business, and agribusiness. And in the process, to build trust and lasting relationships with the people among whom we work and live. ◀

It's still not easy being green

Regulatory conflicts between agencies abound and deter

Drainage districts, boards of supervisors, and farmers face a multitude of regulatory hurdles to maintain compliance, improve conservation, and repair damaged wetlands. Making the essential repairs to Iowa's drainage district facilities—systems that allow both agriculture and nature to coexist—often run afoul of conflicting regulations and agencies.

Even the much heralded Iowa Plan designed to alleviate deadly hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico resulting from agricultural runoff, is not immune of regulatory conflicts. These conflicts stop work, impede

progress and take costly time to resolve. Often the resolutions themselves are less than satisfactory and benefit nobody in any big way.

KPL drainage engineers and clients are wrestling with two such pesky situations currently.

The first, affects the Iowa Plan and similar projects. Says Don Etler, "It was the hope of the proponents of Iowa Plan projects that the projects would be self-funding. That improvements would both mitigate converted wetlands and justify the cost. The plan was for treatment wetlands to be used to offset or mitigate the drainage of farm wetlands in the wetland area being treated."

But, on September 13, in response to a question by KPL to the Natural

Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), it was announced to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) that wetlands created under the Iowa Plan could not be accepted as mitigation for converted farm wetlands.

"The reason given was that created wetlands are of a different type of wetland than the wetlands in drainage districts. NRCS went on to say that they did not have the models available to properly evaluate the mitigation needs comparing the two types of wetlands."

Their action was to reject the use of Iowa Plan created wetlands as mitigation inflicting a major blow to the Iowa Plan.

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Tom Grafft on fire department team for Storm Lake at state-wide meet

Place Third in Annual Training Event

STORM LAKE'S FIRE Department took third place overall at the 132nd Iowa Firefighter's Association Convention held in Perry, Iowa, recently. Firefighters use training skills to compete in nine separate drills. The top four teams in each event are awarded a trophy and points towards the overall team standings. The SLFD earned enough points to finish third place overall—the highest the department has ever placed in the State Convention.

Tom Grafft was a member of the SLFD winning team. ◀



PROJECTS

Aerated lagoon systems in design for cities of Sloan and Kingsley

AERATED LAGOON systems' designs are underway in the Storm Lake office for the cities of Sloan and Kingsley. KPL, represented by John Devitt, Eric Deters, and Neal Kuehl, accompanied representatives of the City of Sloan on a site visit to Villisca's covered aerated lagoon system (LEMNA) September 17. The LEMNA system is what KPL used for the Strawberry Point aerated lagoon system in 2008. John Devitt is working on the design of a similar system for Sloan.

Eric Deters is working on the Kingsley design. This system will use a system similar to LEMNA but from Nelson Environmental. The Nelson Environmental system is known as the SAGR (submerged attached growth reactor) system.

Laurens water meters have been purchased (850) and a contract let for installation. Work on installation should start around October 1.

Construction is nearing completion on the **Newell and Sioux Rapids wastewater projects**. John Devitt reports that each system should be started up and completed in early October.

The **wastewater treatment project for Alta** will use USDA RD funding. Says Neal Kuehl, "This will require that we prebid the major equipment. Requests for Proposals were sent out on September 14; bids to be received on September 28 for the major wastewater treatment equipment. Final design will be completed following an evaluation of the received proposals and a determination on which equipment will be used."

John Devitt reports that bids will be received in late September for a pump station renovation and the addition of solids grinding to the **main lift station in Cherokee**. The project is partially funded with I-Jobs money.

The **Southwest Shoreline Sanitary District** has entered into an option agreement to purchase land from the Buena Vista Solid Waste Commission

for the location of their controlled discharge lagoon system. Soils' borings have now been completed and final design will be completed this fall for a winter bid letting and construction during the 2011 construction season.

Final approvals are nearing for the **Odebolt controlled discharge lagoon** that will be constructed west of Odebolt. A flood plain permit is pending following agreements from adjacent property owners regarding future construction in the flood plain.

I-Jobs money was awarded to the **Albert City water improvement** project that is currently under construction. Well drilling will start the week of September 20 with the rest of the project starting as soon as controls are delivered.

Ivan Droessler reports that plan development for **horizontal expansions** at the **Sac County and Cherokee County landfills** will be prepared by the end of the year. "Bid letting is scheduled for early spring with construction of both cells to be completed by September 1, 2011.

Tom Grafft reports that the fourth round of **baseline sampling for he Cherokee and Buena Vista land fills** has been completed. The routine semiannual samplings will be finished by the end of September.

In animal waste projects, plan development with permit application and county matrix was completed for **M & C Anderson Poulets**. Says Ivan, "this project involves the construction of two new poulet buildings. This was a rushed design headed up by Steven White. The owner plans construction yet this fall." **Rembrandt Enterprises** is expanding its industrial lagoon. "This will be the **fourth aerated storage cell** constructed onto the existing lagoon system. An expedited construction permit has been requested from IDNR. The facilities plan has been prepared by Tom Grafft, with Steven White heading up plan development."

Bob Payer reports that final plans for the **Ocheyedan River Bridge** are complete with rights-of-ways being completed by another firm. KPL is now developing plans for the roadways approaching this bridge. This bridge will complete both an east and west by-pass for the city of Spencer.



Construction on Newell wastewater project nears completion.

Several projects have been started for the city of **Storm Lake**. One involves the **reconstruction of Vestal** from West Tenth north to the extension of C-49. "Preliminary plans have been submitted to the IDOT with most clearances acquired," says Bob. The **Vilas Street reconstruction** had a bid letting September 16 for repaving Vilas Road in the area of Merrill Manufacturing. "The hope is to complete this construction yet this fall or early next year. Work is underway for **paving streets in the Bargloff addition** and also in the subdivision north of Bargloff. This is located north of C-49 and west of Lake Avenue. Utilities will be installed in conjunction with or prior to the paving of roadways."

Also in the works for Storm Lake are the **reconstruction of a parking lot** south of West Sixth and east of Michigan in the downtown area; and the **paving of McKenna Drive** in the McKenna subdivision on the east side of Storm Lake. These may or may not be completed in 2011.

The community **walking and bike trail in Holstein** has been let to Godbersen-Smith with construction in October and November of this year.

Scott Shevel reports that there is lots of **construction staking** taking place. "We are in the middle of C-29 in Pocahontas County; and doing the dirt work for Highway 71 and Highway 4. We are also doing the construction surveying in Storm Lake for the **Sunrise Park** renovation; construction staking for the **Farm Credit Building** in

Storm Lake; the final platting of **Friesen's Second Addition** has been approved; and we are working with the Storm Lake School System on the former West School Site."

Kent Rode says that paving for the **Fort Dodge Streets project** is finally finishing. "This project has been hampered all summer by wet weather, shady areas, and wet sub grades. Only a little back filling, seeding, and cleanup remain."

The **drain improvements for Wesley** are proceeding to final design for the detention basin and the outlet to the storm sewer pipe.

"We are starting a **drainage study for Clarion**. They have experienced a lot of flooding with five to seven inch rains this summer. We are looking at ways to eliminate damage to houses in the town. Even though this was a 100 year storm, it is possible FEMA money will be available.

"And we are working on design and construction of repairs to drainage ditch crossings and collapsed storm sewer pipe south of **Emmetsburg** — the result of summer flooding. FEMA funds are helping with this work."

Curt Wiseman says the engineering report for **Havelock** for the construction of a **sanitary sewer** collection and facility has been accepted, the USDA development and funding application is complete and awaiting the signature of the mayor and city clerk. "Then we can move forward on the environmental review for the project and on into design."

The **Livermore sanitary sewer** project has been bid with construction expected to start this fall and work to continue into next spring.

The **Leland sanitary sewer** project has been awarded and construction has started. Nick Frederiksen is the resident project person.

Work on a **water system project for Rolfe** has begun following a preliminary report and presentation to the council. "They will be applying for

USDA Rural Development funding, and design and bidding will be done this fall with construction this winter and into next year.

The **Swea City sanitary sewer** improvements have been funded and 95% of the plans and specs are complete with a bid letting planned for this fall.

Drainage news

Don Etler reports that two drain tile projects are wrapping up construction:

the closure of ag drainage wells in **Drainage District 186, Kossuth County and Joint Drainage Districts 2 and 36 Hancock and Kossuth Counties.** "All projects went well under budget and were on schedule. With the completion of these projects all drainage district wells in Kossuth County have been eliminated." A hearing was held in August for **Drainage District 48, Palo Alto County,** and a full repair of the open ditch was authorized. Bid letting will be in October.

"Wetlands have become a difficult hurdle for drainage district improvement projects. Two projects have been waiting for multiple land owners to secure wetland determinations. **Drainage District 15 in Hancock County and Drainage District 110 in Greene County.**"

Don has also committed a substantial amount of time for IDALS in organizing tiling projects for state department of agriculture cost share funding to six

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News about KPLers

Two weddings in the KPL family

TWO WEDDINGS make KPL news: Dave and Kim Anderson helped celebrate the marriage of their daughter in early August; and Ivan and Mary Droessler celebrated the marriage of their son over Labor Day.

On August 6, **Andrea Anderson and Chad Stegall** were married on the beach at sunset in the US Virgin Islands on St. John. Says Dave, "Kim and I really fell in love with St. John when we visited it and so to celebrate our 30th anniversary, August 9, we decided to return. We asked the kids, who were engaged but hadn't set a date, if they'd like to come along and say 'I do'. It took about a nanosecond for them to say yes. A reception for friends and family was also held in Iowa City where Chad works for American Family Insurance and Andrea works at a law firm.



Chad and Andrea

On September 4, **Jacob Droessler and Heather Jo Johnson** were married in Wauseka, Minnesota. Jacob is the eldest son of Ivan and Mary Droessler and a graduate of the University of Minnesota, Mankato where he was a first string center on the varsity football team usually playing both offense and defense. The couple lives in Grand Rapids where Jacob works for Hammerlin Construction as a construction manager; Heather is a bookkeeper for an accounting firm.

Congratulations

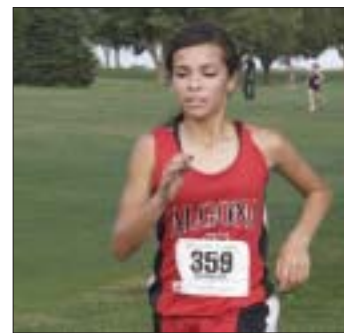
To **Zac Andersen, PE**, who received his professional engineering license this summer.

And to **Lt. Col. Vincent Krepps**, son of Clarence Krepps, on his recent promotion. Lt. Col. Krepps is

stationed in Baghdad and is scheduled to return to the United States in November.

Sports

In Algona, **John Etler, Conner McGuire, and Alex Wiseman** are finishing their senior year on Algona's Varsity Football team. Isaac Droessler, also a senior, plays varsity for Storm Lake. **Tangy Wiseman** finished third overall in at the Storm Lake Invitational cross country on September 14.



Tangy Wiseman



John Etler, Conner McGuire, and Alex Wiseman

Happy birthday

To **Joanne Fraser** whose birthday is October 3; to **Tom Grafft** whose birthday is October 12; to **Clarence Krepps** whose birthday is October 19; to **Kent Rode** whose birthday is November 5; to **La Donna Brummer** whose birthday is November 13; to **Zac Andersen** whose birthday is November 25; to **Diane Edwards** whose birthday is November 29; to **Don Etler** whose birthday is December 4; to **Dave Anderson** whose birthday is December 15; to **Bryan Muhlbauer** whose birthday is

December 21; and to **Barbara Pingel, Mark Wolf, and Tom Mason** whose birthdays are December 23.

Company service

Special recognition to the following KPLers who observed their employment service dates this past quarter: **Justin Anderson** who joined KPL on July 10, 2006; to **Kent Rode** who joined KPL on August 21, 2000; and to **Jon Myers** who joined KPL on August 26, 2006. ◀



Jacob and Heather Jo

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James W. Hudson

JAMES W. HUDSON, known as “Mr. Drainage”, passed away August 16, 2010, in Pocahontas, Iowa. He was recognized as the preeminent drainage attorney in the State of Iowa; and was a founding member of the Iowa Drainage District Association.

Jim practiced law extensively throughout the state; and in 1953, he was appointed by Governor Leo Hoegh to a committee that reviewed and rewrote much of the current Iowa drainage law. He was 84. ◀

GREEN, continued ...

“Efforts are underway to reverse this position, and it is our hope that the NRCS will recognize the need to cooperate with the much needed work being undertaken by the Iowa Plan and in the interim [while models are being perfected] will agree to allow the use of these created wetlands as mitigation sites.”

Another area of conflict involves United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) rules that require that buffer strips, often placed on drainage ditches, not be disturbed during the primary nesting season for game and song birds. This nesting season is a long one: running from May 15 through August 1—also the primary time for all types of drainage district repairs—especially open ditch repairs.

“In the past, waivers have been given to land owners to accommodate these repairs. But, for repairs to Drainage District 41, Branch 6, Pocahontas County, waivers were not granted this past spring. It is our understanding that the USDA will enforce this regulation state wide; and we saw the first evidence this fall for a ditch repair in Palo Alto County.

“And this puts Boards of Supervisors, which hold a legal obligation to repair and maintain drainage district facilities, square in the middle of a major legal conflict. Boards may even find that they will have no choice but to deny the placement of

buffer strips; and may even find it necessary to declare existing one’s to be nuisances.”

If you would like more information on these or similar conflicts, resolutions, or pending rulings, Don Etler, PE, can be contacted at 515-295-2980. ◀

PROJECTS, continued ...

drainage districts to construct improvements in conjunction with discharge treatment wetlands. “KPL has been hired to provide engineering services for **Drainage District 15 North, Palo Alto County and Drainage District 8, Clay County**; and for **Joint Drainage District 36 Pocahontas and Palo Alto Counties**.

“The **Iowa Plan pilot project Drainage District 65, Pocahontas County**, is nearing completion of construction despite very heavy rains all season long. The contractor is on schedule and the work is top notch.”

Ivan Droessler reports that construction of **Drainage District 73, Sac County**, open ditch clean out is done with the completion hearing to be scheduled in October and reclassification to be completed this winter.

The **Pratt Drainage District, Monona County**, two mile open ditch clean out has been excavated and pipe installation has started. Completion is expected December 1, 2010.

Bidding for an open ditch clean out of **McCandless Drainage District Lateral Number Eight, Monona County**, will be held October 20.

And an open ditch survey **Drainage District 34, Lateral Number Two, Buena Vista County**, will be completed this fall after harvest. “This project involves eight miles of open ditch clean out.”

If you have questions about these or similar projects, talk to any of the persons mentioned. ◀

WELCOME ABOARD



Lee Stubblefield

LEE STUBBLEFIELD has joined the Algona office as a drafting/survey technician. Lee comes to Kuehl and Payer from Michigan where he studied architecture and where he was most recently employed. “I was born in Arkansas, Grew up in Illinois—in the Chicago suburbs and spent the last 5 years in Michigan.

Lee, an Eagle Scout, likes to fish and hunt and is both a football and a soccer fan. His team favorites? “I’m a fan of all the Illinois teams and Michigan teams too. ◀