



# EXPLORER

## ANNUAL MEETING REPORT BY CHARLES KUEHL

This past year has been one of many triumphs for Lewis and Clark. Finally, we are within reach of our goal of Federal Authorization for Lewis and Clark. It has only taken us ten years to get here, but we are here at last!

At this time I also want to acknowledge the other two senators who were able to appear before the subcommittee that day on our behalf: Senator Rod Grams and Senator Charles Grassley, in support of our authorization and need for federal cost share. I also want to thank Representative John Thune for his testimony as well.

Fortunately, for Lewis and Clark, Senator Tim Johnson is a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. As the committee readied our legislation for final passage, Senator Johnson played a key role in making sure our voice was heard. We also had the benefit of Senator Rod Grams' presence as a former member of the committee. Lewis and Clark also thanks subcommittee chairman Frank Murkowski for their understanding of the drinking water supply issues facing this area and their willingness to move our authorizing legislation forward.

Each of our six senators deserves a great deal of credit for their commitment

– Continued on page 2



*Chairman Charles Kuehl announces the great news of the Lewis & Clark water bill passing the house.*

## LEWIS & CLARK RURAL WATER PASSES THE HOUSE

On a bi-partisan vote, the House of Representatives voted 400-13 to approve legislation authorizing the Missouri River pipeline, along with two other water projects in northern California.

Since the legislation was amended in the House, the Senate will reconsider the bill before it can move on to the President for signing. According to Sen. Tom Daschle, D-S.D., the Senate minority leader, lawmakers are expected to take action on the bill after returning on June 5th.

Representative John Thune, R-SD, had spearheaded the bill in the House and wasn't pleased with the amendment to the bill. "There are no guarantees on this, but this certainly clears the major hurdle," said Thune.

Senator Tim Johnson, D-SD was concerned about the amendment to the bill and suggested the possible difficulty in the extra step now necessary to get the bill passed.

"This is mostly good news," Johnson said. "I remain optimistic that we're going to pass this bill and we're going to get the funding, but this certainly does complicate things."

Representative John Doolittle, R-CA, Chairman of the House Energy and Water Resource Committee, added two California water projects to the bill that required the Senate to reconsider the bill before final passage.

If the Senate isn't satisfied with the new House version of the bill, a committee of

– Continued on page 4



– Continued from page 1



*The LCRWS board members and staff address the membership at the 2000 annual meeting.*



*Members listen to news of the past year during the annual meeting.*



*Sioux Falls Mayor Gary Hanson and LCRWS board member Randy VanDyke visit before the annual meeting gets under way.*

to Lewis and Clark. We could not have done it without their willingness to look past party lines, state lines, and ability to work together in getting the legislation passed. Taking the lead during the final charge through the senate were Senators Tom Daschle, Tim Johnson and Rod Grams. We thank each of these gentlemen for their support and perseverance in assisting Lewis and Clark through the senate.

We were also fortunate that Representative John Thune was able to attend a number of those meetings with us. Representative Thune was key to our being able to meet with top staff members from Speaker Dennis Hastert's office, Representative Cal Dooley from California who is the ranking member of the Water and Power subcommittee, Representative Roy Blunt who is the Chief Deputy Whip, and Chairman Don Young of the House Resources Committee. Additionally, we had a strategy meeting that was attended by Representatives John Thune, Tom Latham and Dave Minge.

On May 23<sup>rd</sup>, after many hours of negotiations, many discussions and planning strategy, Lewis and Clark succeeded again. A roll call vote in the House resulted in a 400 to 13 vote in favor of Lewis and Clark's legislation. What a wonderful day Tuesday turned out to be! It is another day that will stand out forever in our memories.

Where do we go now? Back to the Senate it seems. Because of the changes that were made to our legislation, we must get agreement from the Senate. While we remain optimistic that the Senate will act quickly and agree to those changes, we recognize that it will be no easy task. But as time has shown us, Lewis and Clark is a project that can stand on its own merits and is considered to be non-controversial. We must trust that the senate will do the right thing and agree to the legislation that passed the house. Once we have senate concurrence, we can then go to the President for his signature.

It is appropriate that we also recognize the continued support Lewis and Clark receives from its state legislatures and leaders. Once more, we were successful in receiving grant dollars from each state legislature. South Dakota came through with a \$200,000 grant. Iowa approved a \$60,000 grant. The state of Minnesota decided to appropriate \$610,000 in grant funds through its bonding bill. This appropriation will cover the state of Minnesota's cost share for the first four years of project construction. This continued demonstration of state support for Lewis and Clark sends a strong message to Washington, D.C. that we are indeed serious about this project and that federal support for Lewis and Clark is warranted. Thank you to our local legislators who continue to work with the peers in demonstrating the state's interest in supporting Lewis and Clark's construction. We are eternally in your debt.

As I close my statement this evening, there are so many who deserve our thanks for their support and commitment to Lewis and Clark. The hallmark of this project has been the ability to work across state lines, local boundaries and political beliefs to develop one solution for many. It has truly been a team effort. Without each of you here tonight, Lewis and Clark could not have enjoyed the successes we have seen over the past year. Each of you played a significant role in helping Lewis and Clark. We cannot thank you enough for your support and commitment. Thank you, each and everyone.

# FEATURE SYSTEM

## MINNEHAHA COMMUNITY WATER



*Minnehaha Community Water, Corp. continues to search for water.*

Minnehaha Community Water, Corp. is located in the most populated county in South Dakota and serves portions of 4 other counties. The population served is estimated at 17,000. Water is distributed by a 1000-mile network of pipeline that ranges in size from 36" to 1".

MCWC's customer base is made up of approximately 3700 individual taps, which serve farmsteads, rural residents, and rural businesses. Included in this number are hookups in 4 small towns where MCWC maintains the distribution system that serves them.

MCWC sells water as a bulk supplier to 5 larger towns ranging in size from 500 to 2700 in population, who in turn, bill their own customers and maintain their own municipal water mains. Feasibility studies are under way for 2 additional towns in the county to receive bulk water supply.

During the original search for a water source of supply for the system, many areas were looked at and investigated. The final decision was made to tap the Big Sioux Aquifer between Dell Rapids & Baltic. The problem with the Big Sioux Aquifer is the shallowness and vulnerability to contamination. It is less than 30 feet to bedrock in some places, with a maximum depth found to date of 60 feet. A series of nine test holes were drilled again this spring with only two showing any potential for future well sites.

Since startup of the original system in 1978 through 1999, one of the constants at MCWC is change. As the Utility Plant in Service total assets have increased from \$6 million to \$21 million, so have other statistics:

- Number of wells in service increased from 5 to 14
- Wellfield production increased from 800 GPM to 3000 GPM
- Water treatment plant capacity increased from 700 GPM to 2800 GPM
- Gallons pumped from the treatment plant increased from 69 million to 654 million
- Water towers increased from 5 to 10 that are owned by MCWC. 6 additional towers, owned by bulk customers, are also monitored and controlled by MCWC
- Miles of pipeline in service increased from 660 to in excess of 1000 miles
- Hookups increased from 1300 initially, to 3700
- Booster pump stations increased from 3 to 8

We here at MCWC hope that the obstacles to authorization and funding LCRWS can be overcome and that construction of the project can proceed in a timely manner. The continued enjoyment of the good life and prosperity depends on a dependable and adequate supply of good quality water.

*"MCWC was built because there was a need for an abundant supply of good quality water in the rural portions of the County. Many shallow wells either did not provide an adequate supply during hot summer months, were contaminated with chemicals, or contained excessive minerals such as iron, manganese, or hardness that made their existing water difficult to use at best."*

*— John Buss,  
MCWC Manager*



**\* Please Recycle This Newsletter!**  
**Pass it on to a Colleague.**



Printed on recycled paper with  
Soy Ink.

– Continued from page 1

representatives from both chambers would meet to work out a compromise version, Johnson said. That process takes longer and would allow conferees to make changes. Furthermore, because the Lewis and Clark bill is saddled with unrelated projects, it invites senators to add still more amendments, which could slow the bill's progress.

Doolittle has opposed Lewis & Clark because he thinks the participants should pay the entire construction cost, as is customary for water-supply projects built by the Bureau of Reclamation. The Senate approved a \$283 million version of Lewis and Clark late last year and the House stripped \$10.1 million in environmental protection measures from the bill.

The cost-share formula supported by Lewis and Clark sponsors and approved by both chambers calls for the federal government to pay 80 percent, the states 10 percent and the towns 10 percent - except for a portion serving Sioux Falls, where the federal government would pay 50 percent and the state and city would split the difference.

## **LEWIS & CLARK RURAL WATER PASSES THE HOUSE AND THE SENATE**

Lewis & Clark Rural Water has passed the House and Senate and is on its way to the President. \$600,000 of funding will be appropriated if the bill is signed to fund engineering for the project.



*Rep. John Thune arrives at the Sioux Falls Airport after the Lewis & Clark Bill passes both House and Senate.*



*Senator Tim Johnson presents the Lewis & Clark members with a check for \$600,000 to help get the project under way.*