

The Lineup

Today

Mayfield VA Clinic, 1253 Paris Road, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., by appointment, walk-ins as time allows. Visit the clinic or phone 270-247-1131 for appointment.

Senior Medicare Patrol, 1-3 p.m., Senior Center, 1400 H.C. Mathis Drive, 442-8993.

FATHERS, Fathers Asking To Have Equal Rights, 6:30 p.m., second floor, McCracken library.

Blood drive, Lourdes hospital, 1530 Lone Oak Road, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

Blood drive, Wal-Mart, 3220 Irvin Cobb Drive, Paducah, 12:30-5:30 p.m.

Thursday

Purchase Area Chapter of Kentucky Public Retirees, 10:30 a.m., Pizza Inn, 1001 Joe Clifton Drive, combined luncheon, business meeting, 898-7289.

Paducah Toastmasters Sam Sloan Chapter, noon, Farm Bureau Building, 1600 Broadway.

Downtown Kiwanis Club, lunch, noon, Elks Club, 310 N. Fourth St. 441-0825.

Dance, 7-10 p.m., Kaler Music Barn. Band: Duet South. \$5.

Kiwanis Club of South Paducah, dinner meeting, 7 p.m., 1640 S. Sixth St.

Disabled American Veterans, Miles Meredith Chapter 7 of Paducah, 7 p.m., 1133 Murray Ave. Meal at 6:30. Also: weekly Commander Coffee Call, 9-11:30 a.m. Wednesdays.

Lone Oak Woman's Club, 7 p.m., Lone Oak Lions Club Building. Program, "Kenya," presented by Paul Bilack.

Veterans and their families provided counseling and assistance in filing benefits. Paducah, VA Clinic, 2620 Perkins Creek Drive, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., by appointment, walk-ins as time allows.

Western Kentucky Choral Ambassadors Children's Chorus spring concert, 7:30 p.m., St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ferry and Sixth streets, Metropolis, Ill. \$10 for adults; \$5 for students at the door. Advance tickets available at Uniform Headquarters, 232 Lone Oak Road, Paducah, and from members of the Choral Ambassadors.

National Day of Prayer, Community Prayer Service, Dolly McNutt Plaza, Fifth and Washington streets. Music by Joy Trio at 6 p.m., followed by prayer service at 6:30 p.m. Bring a lawn chair.

Tuesday's lottery

Kentucky
Pick 3-midday: 1-3-2
Pick 3-evening: 8-4-1
Pick 4-midday: 7-9-7-4
Pick 4-evening: 9-9-5-5
Cash Ball: 8-12-14-19 CB: 19
3 Line Lotto: 7-11-16-20-30-35

Illinois
Pick 3-midday: 5-2-5
Pick 3-evening: 2-1-1
Pick 4-midday: 8-4-4-1
Pick 4-evening: 9-8-7-1
Little Lotto: 1-3-8-17-32
Mega Millions: 5-23-38-39-54 MB: 3
Est. Mega Millions Jackpot: \$12 million

Seeking to balance river hauling costs

Rather than locking fees, group wants industry sharing costs through taxes already in place

BY JOE WALKER
jwalker@paducahsun.com

The Obama administration wants to charge barge companies locking fees to refill a nearly drained trust fund that pays for modernizing locks and dams to speed up river commerce.

But shippers hauling coal through a maze of locks on the Ohio River system say the plan is unfair because barge tows that use lockless sections — such as the Mississippi River below St. Louis — won't have to pay anything.

Instead, barge firms like Paducah's Crouse Corp. favor revamping the system of paying into the trust fund. Half the money comes from diesel taxes on all river shipping, and half from federal taxes.

"We hope Congress will have the same reaction as it did last year, which is that the locking-fee proposal is a bad idea," said Debra Colbert, spokeswoman for the Waterways Council of Silver Spring, Md.

Colbert and council government affairs lawyer John Moran joined Crouse President Steve Little in meeting with the Sun editorial board Tuesday to discuss the trust fund.

Little serves on the Inland Waterways Users Board, which is working with the U.S. Army



Crane work progresses April 25 on a 200-foot truss as part of moving Paducah & Louisville Railway below Kentucky Dam to make room for the new 1,200-foot lock. Funding has delayed the start of actual lock construction.

Corps of Engineers on a proposal to revamp the trust fund system, as well as lessen construction delays and skyrocketing costs.

The cost of Olmsted Locks and Dam at Olmsted, Ill., now projects at more than \$2 billion, compared with \$775 million when it started a decade ago, Moran said.

Modernizing locks and dams is critical to Paducah, an operations center for the river industry, he said.

"Paducah is really at the heart of the system," Moran said. "And the benefits of these upgrades are being washed down the river, so to speak."

Created in 1986, the fund has dropped from more than \$400 million to nearly nothing because of heavy spending to replace anti-

quated locks and dams. The old locks require 1,200-foot tows to break apart, greatly increasing the time and cost of shipping. New locks would roughly cut that time in half.

Congress generally supports the river industry, but year-to-year variances in federal construction funding are a problem, Little said.

"There's been an irregularity in the funding stream for some of these projects that no doubt has contributed to construction delays," he said.

A project to double the size of the 1950s-vintage Kentucky Lock received about \$29 million this fiscal year, compared with the \$65 million to \$75 million needed, Moran said. Although crews con-

tinued to move U.S. 62 and Paducah & Louisville Railway to make way for the expansion, they can't start building the lock.

The entire project, which began in 1998, isn't expected to be completed until 2016.

The average locking delay increased from 4.5 hours in 2007 to more than five hours last year, said Don Getty, Kentucky Lock project manager for the Corps of Engineers.

Delays translate into increased consumer costs because one jumbo barge carries the same freight as 70 tractor-trailer trucks or 16 railcars, Colbert said.

Contact Joe Walker, a Paducah Sun staff writer, at 270-575-8656.

Paducah advances \$15,000 for Paxton Park cleanup

Department heads discuss reorganization

BY C.D. BRADLEY
cbradley@paducahsun.com

The Paducah City Commission voted unanimously Tuesday to give Paxton Park Golf Course \$15,000 to address cash-flow problems at the municipal course.

The commission also heard reports from three department heads dealing with reorganization stemming from last month's layoffs of 14 city employees.

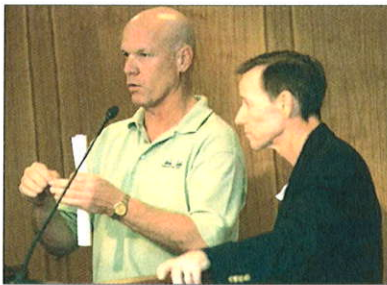
Even under tight budget constraints, the commission agreed that Paxton Park fills an important void in the city.

"If Paxton Park weren't there, there are a lot of children and seniors and others who probably wouldn't play," Mayor Bill Paxton said. The course is named for Paxton's great-uncle, Edwin J. Paxton, late publisher of the Sun.

Danny Mullen, the course manager, said it also serves a social role for Paducahans from all walks of life.

"It's a big part of the fabric of this community," he said. "I realize the position everyone's in. We're trying to do what we can to cut our costs and maintain the course."

The problems stems from two



Mark Thompson, Paducah parks director, speaks to the Paducah City Commission as Paxton Park manager Danny Mullen listens Tuesday at City Hall. Commission members noted the importance of Paxton Park to the city.

rainy springs in a row, which has slowed the expected increase of business as the temperature rises, coupled with the unexpected costs incurred in the aftermath of January's ice storm. Mullen said the course's staff cleaned up most of the debris, an expense not eligible for reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The course operates on a line of credit during the winter that it pays down during the busier summer months, but it's at the limit, Mullen said.

The commissioners said while the budget will involve sacrifices, that must be balanced with maintaining the things that improve the quality of life. Commissioner Gayle Kaler likened the course to the Noble Park pool: costly but compulsory.

Mark Thompson, the city's parks director and a member of the city-owned course's board, said the course received \$36,000 in city funds each of the past two years, and had requested \$39,000 in the fiscal year that begins July 1. The money approved Tuesday would come out of that request.

As commission members consider that budget — City Manager Jim Zumwalt said he hopes to present them a recommended budget May 19, with an all-day workshops planned June 2 — they will weigh major cuts.

Some came already, when the commission approved a plan last month that eliminated more than two dozen positions and reorganized three departments. Engineering absorbed public works, finance absorbed human resources, and information systems inherited geographic information systems from engineering.

The three department heads — Engineer Rick Murphy, Finance Director Jon Perkins and IS Director Greg Mueller — each briefed the commission on the ongoing assimilation. Mostly, they stressed the need to develop a working understanding over the next few months to identify further necessary changes to improve efficiency.

"I've told the staff I'm going to start at paper clips and end at bulldozers" in reviewing the department, Murphy said. "The better the understanding of how the department operates from the ground up that I have and the managers have, the better managers we'll be for the city."

Contact C.D. Bradley, a Paducah Sun staff writer, at 270-575-8617.

Coming Up ...

Miss a day miss a lot. To subscribe, call 800-959-1771.

THURSDAY



News from the local faith communities.

Faith

SATURDAY



The effects of swine flu on the pork market.

Business

MONDAY



Local high school sports coverage: golf, soccer, tennis, baseball.

Sports

WEDNESDAY



The guide to regional entertainment.

Current

FRIDAY

A look at purple martins.

Home

SUNDAY

The public makes suggestions for changes in I.B.L.

News

TUESDAY

Your weekly source for health and medical news.

House Call